

ABSTRACT

Tourists' differ in their levels of satisfaction, hence this is an increasingly important area of study in the tourism industry. Thailand recognizes this and therefore, has opted to develop tourism products in order to improve and generate positive responses. As part of an overall means for improving tourism in Thailand, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has initiated new strategies to create a competitive edge in the market.

Understanding American and Chinese tourists' needs and their perception of destination are associated with tourist satisfaction in viewing Thailand as a destination. The purpose of this study is to compare the level of American and Chinese tourists' satisfaction toward destination attributes in Thailand. The sample size of American and Chinese tourists, in this study, is 390, which is considered adequate to reach the objectives of this study.

The sample size of this study is divided into 195 American and 195 Chinese tourists. In this study, the researcher applied Descriptive research as the research methodology. The researcher used questionnaire as the data collection instrument. The questionnaires are equally framed in English and Chinese version. This study aimed to measure two groups of Chinese and American tourists' satisfaction level using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences or SPSS.

With regard to the personality profile, by using cross-tabulation analysis, American and Chinese tourists mostly were male, aged over 45 years old. They travel in Thailand with their families. Moreover, they are private company employees who hold at least a Bachelor's degree. American tourists mostly take a long period of time to travel while Chinese tourists are more likely to take a shorter journey. The findings indicate that American and Chinese tourists are not significantly different in satisfaction levels in terms of destination attractions and environment, destination facilities and services, accessibility of destination, and destination image. In contrast, American and Chinese tourists have significant differences in satisfaction levels in terms of overall price. However, these four attributes need to be improved to attract tourists. The marketing mix is the main strategy to keep both tourist groups more impressed with Thailand as a destination. Therefore, cooperation from both government and private sectors is the main mechanism to set the same direction in terms of policy and practice.