

THE USE OF THAI-SEAFOOD AS A TOURIST SUPPORT AMENITY TO PROMOTE TOURISM IN COASTAL AREA ROYAL COAST, THAILAND

by

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the context of coastal restaurant business in Hua-Hin and Cha-am which are two part of “Royal Coast area” in Thailand. The objectives are: 1) to survey the potential of Thai seafood as a tourist support amenity in tourist destination toward the restaurant entrepreneurs’ opinion of Thai seafood to promote the potential of tourism and 2) to demonstrate the model of the potential of the use of Thai Seafood to promote tourism in coastal area that assists in maximizing customers’ satisfaction. The population included 150 medium restaurants in Royal Coast. The survey was conducted by on-site questionnaire distribution on a sample of 150 restaurant entrepreneurs. The researcher followed up the entrepreneurs’ opinion results through the data collection of both quantitative and qualitative approaches from the entrepreneurs. The use of the Statistic Program and the advanced of Statistic Program was employed to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. The result found that there are 6 influential Components strategy for the use of Thai Seafood to promote tourism in Royal Coast area which were (i), Readiness of Thai-seafood Preparation Strategy (ii) Establishment of Thai-seafood Value-Added Strategy, (iii) Culinary Décor Strategy, (iv) Individual Hygiene Strategy, (v) Perfect Arrangement of Table Setting Facilities, and (vi), Equipment’s Sanitary.

KEYWORDS

Thai Seafood, Royal Coast, Restaurant Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

Food plays an important role for tourism and hospitality industry in all destinations (Mcintosh W. Robert and Goeldner R. Charles, 1995). Seafood plays an important role and stimulates the number of tourist arrival in beach destination, Royal Coast Area which comprises of Phetchaburi, Prachuabkhirikhan, Ranong and Chumporn province and well recognized as a Thai Seafood heaven. In Royal coast area, the tourists enjoy eating out in night markets, street vendors, and various dining outlets (Chang & Hsieh, 2006). Food is also considered as an attraction for travelers and stimulates most competitive tourism products against competitions from other countries or area. (Zeithaml and Bitner.,2000) According to Royal Coast which has the potential to become a food destination because of its perfect location and infrastructure. Delicious food and friendliness “Land of Smile” make Thailand, especially the coastal area more popular as a Thai -Seafood destination for many tourists. The uniqueness and diversity of Thai seafood food are major components that contribute to coastal areas positive destination image. Food plays an important role for both domestic and international tourists who experience the destination. Hence, it is very essential for the government and private sectors to enhance their collaboration in promoting local food in order to attract more tourists (Hsin-Hui Hu And H.G. Parsa., 2011).

The study focuses on food tourism in Royal Coast (Hua-Hin-Cha-Am), Thailand among the paternal beach destination locating next to Hua-Hin and Cha-am. As for the reason, Thai- Seafood is meaningful and honorable for beach destination. The restaurant entrepreneurs are important stake holders who utilize the local Thai-seafood as an identity or signature of beach destination, enrich the rate of employment and local agriculture purchase as a raw ingredient for cooking Thai-seafood with different menu and different kinds of seafood. Therefore, it’s very important to find the way of how to use Thai seafood as a tourist support amenity to promote tourism in coastal area. This can be implemented by demonstrating the model from the entrepreneurs’ starting point of view toward today Thai Seafood in order to gain more benefits for local employment, local agriculture purchase, and generate the food & beverage income (Pattarapong Burusnukul; Margaret Binkley; Piyawan Sukalakamala.2009).

The objectives: 1) to survey the potential of Thai seafood as a tourist support amenity in tourist destination toward the restaurant entrepreneurs' opinion of Thai seafood to promote the potential of tourism, and 2) to demonstrate the model of the potential of the use of Thai Seafood to promote tourism in coastal area.

METHODOLOGY

To study the use of Thai Seafood to promote tourism in coastal area, Royal Coast, from the entrepreneurs' perspective. The research focus on the current business situation, the main target market tourists, the popularity Thai seafood, the dining budget, the way of how to use the Thai Seafood as an amenity to support tourism in Coastal area, the impact of the use of Thai Seafood to promote tourism in coastal area toward the local community and local people, the reason in dining with Thai Seafood, and the reason of traveling to coastal area. The researcher identified the limitations that are worth of being heightened in this paper.

1. The research is mix method, qualitative and quantitative, using Focus Group and In-Depth Interview, and questionnaire. The SPSS and advanced statistic are employed for questionnaire's analysis.

2. Research themes are the practical and management of the use of Thai Seafood as a support amenity to promote tourism in coastal area by analyzing the SWOT of the current situation. Then integrate the analysis with the survey of the restaurant entrepreneurs in Royal Coast area to demonstrate the practical model of the use of Thai Seafood as a support amenity to promote tourism in coastal area.

3. The population

3.1 The government or the representatives of government who support and are in charge in coastal area tourism (10 people)

3.2 The representatives of private sectors (10 people/business)

3.3 The experts or specialists (5 people)

3.4 The main population for the questionnaire survey are the restaurant entrepreneurs in Royal Coast area (100 restaurant entrepreneurs)

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Current coastal area restaurant market situation

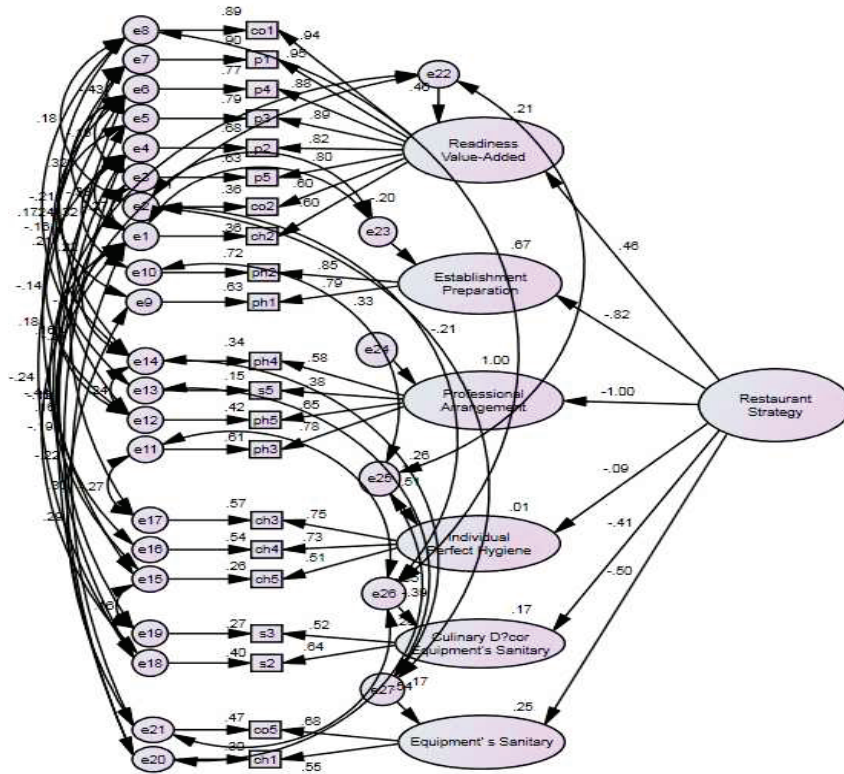
Most of medium restaurants are independent restaurants and have strength in its beach location. The Royal Coast area has a fresh-seafood day by day preparation, clean with high standard by ordering some seafood from the local market. Hence, the Thai-Seafood becomes a signature of beach destination. From the above reasons, Thai-Seafood motivates tourists' mind to visit the beach destination especially the high-end tourists. Thai-Seafood stimulates the tourist financial payment from the quality of seafood and service, the freshness of raw seafood, the cleanliness of Thai-Seafood, the kitchen and the chef's sanitary, the price of seafood respectively. Besides, the restaurants also employ the local people and support local agriculture product. The findings from the restaurant perspectives are as the followings.

The tourists mostly dine with the Thai seafood are the High End tourists which is 39.3 %, the Long stay, 23.8% , the Backpackers, 21 % , the FIT (Foreign Individual Traveler) 16.0 % ,respectively. The popularity of Thai Seafood is 35.3% for crab, 32.5% for prawn, 17.3 % for fish, shell 10.5%, and 4.5% for squid. The budget of Thai tourist is 500-1000 baht, 47 % , less than 500 baht, 24.5 % , 1001-1500 baht,15.3 % , and more than 1500 baht, 13.3 % , respectively. On the other hand, the foreigners 's budget are more than 1500 baht, 62.0 % , 1001-1500 baht,27.5 % , and 500-1000 baht, 5.8 % respectively. The perspectives of the use of Thai seafood as the support amenity to promote tourism in coastal area are the standard's control of food product and service, the signature or identity of beach destination, and the suitable seafood price. The benefits toward the local community and local people are the economic growth, the better standard of living, the local employment respectively. The reason of dining with Thai seafood are the freshness of Thai seafood ($\mu = 4.06$) , the taste of Thai seafood ($\mu = 3.95$) , and the cleanliness and hygiene of cooking process. ($\mu = 3.73$)

The demonstration model of the use of Thai Seafood as a support amenity to promote tourism in coastal area

The result of the second purpose of the study indicated the 'RECIPE' Model. There are 6 influential strategies for the use of Thai Seafood to promote tourism in Royal Coast area. They were (i) Readiness of Thai-seafood Preparation Strategy (ii) Establishment of Thai-seafood Value-Added Strategy, (iii) Culinary Décor Strategy , (iv) Individual Hygiene Strategy, (v) Perfect Arrangement of Table Setting Facilities, and (vi), Equipment' s Sanitary.

FIGURE 1
THE DEMONSTRATION MODEL OF THE USE OF THAI SEAFOOD TO BE
AS A SUPPORT AMENITY TO PROMOTE TOURISM IN COASTAL AREA



Index Value	Criteria Consider	The Statistic obtain from the analysis
χ^2 / df (CMIN/DF)	< 2	1.769
P	≥ 0.05	0.000
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.947
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.912
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.953
TLI	≥ 0.90	0.968
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.979
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.979
HOELTER	> 200	272
RMR	< 0.08	0.035
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.044

The overall result from all index values pass and fit significantly in the analysis

After considering from all index values which pass perfectly from the criteria consider and the statistic obtain from the analysis, the researcher will later showed the important element of the RECIPE model which is suitable and fit to the empirical data and can be as a support amenity to promote tourism in Coastal Area as the following detail below:

TABLE 1
THE COMPONENT OF RECIPE STRATEGY TO BE AS A SUPPORT
AMEENITY TO PROMOTE TOURISM IN COASTAL AREA

	Factor					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
(i) Readiness of Thai-seafood Value-Added Strategy						
The cooking area is hygiene	.936					
The Suitable of Seafood Price	.909					
The fairness of seafood price	.890					
The discount of seafood payment	.869					
The variable of food price	.825					
Setting price by comparing to other restaurants	.788					
Zoning the kitchen functionally	.686					
The Chef wear the hair cover	.621					
(ii) Establishment of Thai-seafood Preparation Strategy						
The cleanliness of facilities on the table		.827				
The unexpired facilities on the table		.771				
Establishment of Thai-seafood Preparation Strategy						
The reliability of restaurant			.675			
The various of seafood			.642			
The variety of facilities on the table			.585			
The Cleanliness of tables and chairs			.561			
Establishment of Thai-seafood Preparation Strategy						
The hygiene of chef				.783		
The art of cooking from the chef				.752		
The correct menu cooking of the chef after taking order from the server				.728		
Individual Hygiene Strategy						
The beautiful art decoration					.766	
The spicy ,delicious of seafood taste					.628	
(vi) Equipment' s Sanitary						
The Kitchen floor is clean						.660
The chef wear a clean uniform						.556

Readiness of Thai-seafood Value-Added Strategy

According to the restaurant entrepreneurs' opinion, the result suggested that the restaurants need to focus on the cleanliness of the cooking area or place where they use as a facility to prepare, conduct and mix-all ingredients altogether with the secretarial recipe. Although the customer cannot see all cooking area scene or background, they may have seen more or less whether the cooking area is hygiene. Moreover, the entrepreneurs have to design the separate of each kitchen functionally and the chef are essential to wear the hair cover to ensure the sanitary of Thai seafood product .If these are ignored, the customers won't revisit to dine as a repeated guest and will spread out negative word of mouth to another first visit guests. This impression of the Thai-Seafood can't attract their mind to visit Hua-Hin or Cha-Am. Beside this, the Thai Seafood price has to be appropriate, various and fair for both Thai and foreign customers by comparing their price according to the market and neighboring restaurants and give a discount to the customer occasionally (Wyckoff, D.D., 2001).

Establishment of Thai-seafood Preparation Strategy

The restaurants ought to establish clean dining table's facilities and make sure of the expiration dates of the facilities by checking day by day and shift by shift. This is necessary because when the customers face unprepared facilities on the table setting, their perspectives will concentrate on the errors before dining. This failure doesn't represent the readiness of restaurant service and Thai Seafood as a main product. (Lovelock, C. H., 2007, Walker & Lundberg., 2005)

Creating Professional Arrangement of Table Setting Facilities

The restaurants are likely to be trustful or reliable for the customers by providing different kinds of the facilities on the table, such as fish sauce, tomato sauce, spicy salad sauce etc., and frequently cleaning both chairs and tables whenever the customers walk out of the restaurant and get rid of the stain and dirty point of the tableware, chairs, and table clothes. (Bloemer, J., deRuyter, K. & Wetzels, M., 1999)

Individual Hygiene Strategy

The individual hygiene of the chef is very important because it's the image of the restaurant as chef is likely the main key indicator who cooks with confidential recipe. Thai-Seafood has its special spicy and sour taste which is an identity and Thai pride, the culture from the ancestor to Thai people. If the chefs are not healthy, it effects directly to the customers who may defect that disease unexpectedly. Consequently, the Thai-Seafood can't attract tourist's mind in decision making to visit the beach destination as their bad reputation of unsanitary aspect. Moreover, the communication skills in taking food order from the waiters or waitresses accurately are extremely important for all restaurant entrepreneurs. (Anthony Koutroumanis, 2005, Kirti Dutta and Umashankar Venkates., 2007, Lemmink, J. and Mattsson, J. 2002., Sun, T., Horn, M. and Merritt, D., 2009)

Perfect Culinary Décor Strategy

The culinary décor is an art of food science which Thai chef and Thai people have lots of ability, for example, fruit & vegetables craving, Thai Seafood menu decoration, the tactic of natural Thai product decoration, such as banana leaf folding, etc. While the customers enjoy the art of Thai-seafood décor, they can enjoy the Thai spicy food as its unique taste is different from other kinds of food from other countries. Therefore, while Thai-Seafood has to emphasize the spicy as a standard taste, it may adapt to the individual customer appropriately. (Chandon, P. and Wansink, B., 2007, Howlett, E., Burton, S. and Kozup, J. 2008).

Equipment's Sanitary

The equipments' sanitary is likely to focus on kitchen floor without deep stain along with the uniform dressing of the chef to ensure the clothes hygiene. The back of the restaurant service area has to concentrate on the cleanliness. This can be prepared by cleaning before the kitchen opened for the customers, drain with any unused cotton to ensure the staff's security while working, and the sanitary or hygiene of the cooking process before serving to the customers. (Chihyung OK., 2004, Hwang, Johye. 2005, Khare, A. and Inman, J.J. 2006)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of Thai-Seafood as an amenity to promote the tourism in coastal area, Royal Coast Thailand, may use the "RECIPE" model to modify and deal with their restaurant businesses. For the restaurant entrepreneurs' perspectives of the use of Thai-seafood as an amenity to promote the tourism in the coastal area, there are 6 implemental strategies. They are including Readiness of Thai-seafood Value-Added Strategy, Establishment of Thai-seafood Preparation Strategy, Creating with Professional Arrangement of Table Setting Facilities, Individual Hygiene Strategy, Perfect Culinary Décor Strategy, and Equipment's Sanitary and Equipment's Sanitary.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Future research should focus on other provinces in Royal Coast areas which are Ranong and Chumporn province in order to strengthen the scope of area.
2. Future research may focus on all coastal beach destinations in Thailand to demonstrate the model in Macro application for restaurant entrepreneurs.
3. Future research may study another restaurant types that are Quick-Service, Midscale Moderate Upscale (or Casual Theme) , and Upscale Business Dining (or Industry).

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