

The Perception of Information Affecting the Tourist Decision-making in Spa Service of Hotel and Resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province

Natnichar Kleebbuabarn

*Faculty of Management Science and Technology, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University,
Thailand*

E-Mail: nusnichar.kr@ssru.ac.th

Abstract

The spa business in hotel and resort has grown continuously and earned a large amount of revenue which the business survival depends on the tourist decision-making. This research was aimed to 1) study the perception of information of tourist, 2) study the decision-making in spa service and 3) study the perception of information affecting the tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province. The sample group was 400 Thai tourists in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province by using the multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that 1) most of the tourist has perceived the information of spa in service quality, promotion and business image, 2) most of the tourist has a decision-making in spa service by web surfing, expertise of staff and other relevant information, and 3) factor of promotion, service quality and business image affecting the tourist decision-making in spa service by 81 percent. In consequence, the perception of information was the key factor of business especially the public relations in service quality and business image which affect the decision-making directly.

Keywords: Perception, Decision-making in Service

Introduction

Tourism is important for the economy, culture, environment, and international relations as it has correlated with various businesses. Tourism is a primary activity creating the relationship and cultural exchange that leads to the economic movement, and the development of life and social quality. Nowadays, there are many types of tourism such as health tourism, agricultural tourism, and cultural tourism (Puttaporn Aksornpairroj, 2016).

Health tourism is a type of healthcare and tourism comprising of medical treatment and wellness by the service of therapy, treatment, and wellness. Wellness business is one of the key services by the Medical Hub (Department of Trade Negotiations, 2011), creating a good image and service quality will support the business growth to the international stage. Department of Health Service Support, Ministry of Public Health has provided the criteria for quality certification of the health spa business, if the business achieves the standard, it will receive the quality certificate and licensed logo "Spa Shop" from the Ministry of Public Health (Department of Health Service Support, 2015).

Spa business has made 14 billion baht in 2011 with an average annual growth rate of approximately 5-6%; 64.47% from spa business in hotel and resort and 21.25% from day spa and other types of the spa (Euromonitor International, 2012). Spa business has made enormous revenue each year and tended to be larger continuously and quickly which is consistent with an analysis of the Office of the National Economics and Social Development Council and

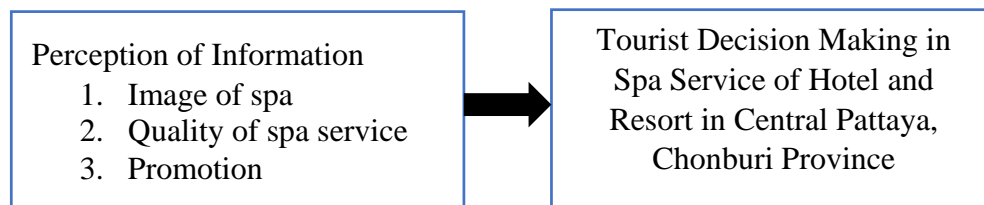
Thailand Development Research Institute (Office of Trade Logistics, 2015). Tourism Authority of Thailand revealed that the tourism of Eastern Thailand has made 312,991 million baht in 2016; 59% from international tourist and 41% from Thai tourist. There are many four and five-star spa businesses in hotels and resorts of Eastern Thailand especially for 800,000 tourists in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province (National Statistical Office, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, 2014)

As the interesting of the growth in the spa business that made enormous revenue each year and tended to be larger continuously and quickly including creating a good image and service quality by using the criteria of information cues such as the image, quality of a product and service, and promotion, as the criteria of perception of information for decision-making. Consequently, the researcher has studied the perception of information affecting the tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province as being beneficial for creating the future strategy and business plan for the entrepreneurs of spa businesses in hotels and resorts.

Objective

1. To study the perception of information of tourist in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province.
2. To study the decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province.
3. To study the perception of information affecting the tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province.

Conceptual framework



Literature review

Concept of Perception of Information

Chomjan Daoduen (2014), said the consumer has considered the quality of a product or service by using the criteria of information cues such as the image, quality of a product and service, and promotion, as the criteria of perception of information for decision-making. Kotler (2012), said the image is the whole of belief, thinking, and impression towards something as the attitude and act towards that thing have correlated with its image. Siripat Chotchuang et al. (2017), said the image affecting tourist decision-making in traveling to an attractive, clean, and safe destination.

Chatchawal Tatsiwat (2011), said the service quality is a concept of evaluation by comparing between the expected service and the actual service, if both are equal or the actual service is greater than the expected service, it will create the service quality and customer

satisfaction which is consistent with Warinyupa Pimsaard et al. (2017), said the evaluation of service received is the service quality perceived by comparing between the expected service and the actual service.

Kayoon Yaibuaklin and Suwimol Manjing (2007), said the promotion is one of the marketing mix as a tool of marketers for introducing products or services to the target market. Chayodom Samibut (2012), said the promotion is stimulation of consumer behavior for purchase as the advertisement or public relations are only for perception.

As the mentioned literature review, it revealed that decision-making is caused by the perception of information regarding the image, quality service, and promotion that leads to acceptance and decision-making. Consequently, this study has focused on the perception of spa information for finding factors affecting the tourist decision-making in spa service.

Decision-making Concept

Decision-making or the consumer decision-making process is a process of consumer behavior in purchasing a product or service, and being a tool of the evaluation of alternatives to create the satisfaction responding the consumer need (Wells & Prensky, 1996) which Kotler and Keller (2009) said 5 stages of the consumer decision-making process to study the consumer behavior were shown in Figure 1;

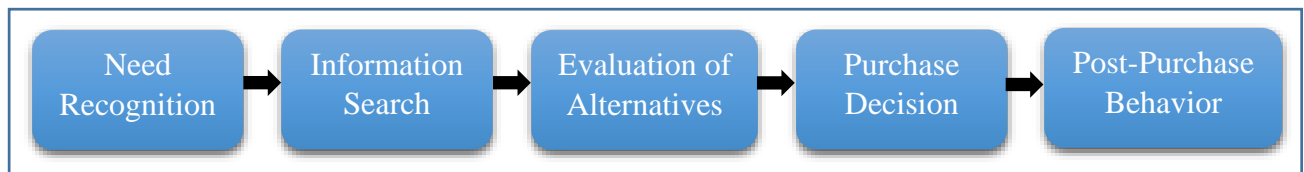


Figure 1: Model of consumer decision-making process

Note. from “*Marketing Management*,” (p.208), by Kotler and Keller, 2009, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Burnet (2007), said a study of consumer behavior is a study of factors affecting the consumer decision-making comprising of; (1) Situational influences: market offerings, demographics, and complexity/buying task, (2) External influences: marketing mix, social/culture, and environment, (3) Internal influences: motivation, learning, personality, and attitude, and (4) Consumer decision-making process: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior.

In consequence, the consumer will consider an effect of decision-making by the consumer decision-making process comprising of the need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, post-purchase behavior, and equipment.

Methodology

The sample group of this study was Thai tourists in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province by using the quota sampling. The data was gathered in July 2020 by using the questionnaire for 400 sample groups by convenience sampling from 47 hotels with 9 copies each. The data was analyzed by using the descriptive statistics; frequency

distribution, percentages, mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (S.D.), and the inferential statistics for the multiple regression analysis.

Results

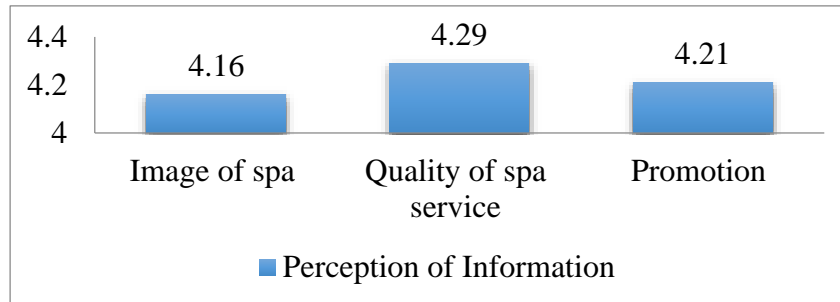


Figure 2: Perception of information of tourist in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province

From Figure 2, it revealed that perception of information of tourist in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province was in highest level, in consideration of each topic revealed that the quality of spa service had the highest average, promotion had the moderate average, and image of spa had the lowest average.

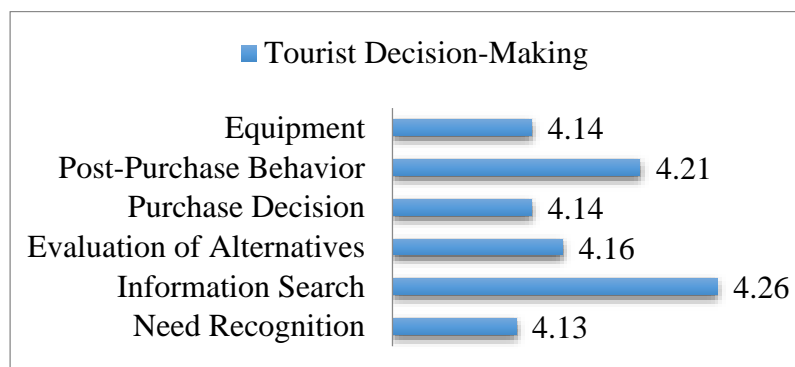


Figure 3: Tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province

From Figure 3, it revealed that the tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province was in high level, in consideration of each topic revealed that the information search had the highest average, post-purchase behavior had the moderate average, and need recognition and purchase decision had the lowest average.

Table 1: Analysis on the proper model for perception of information affecting the tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province

Perception of Information Affecting the Tourist Decision-making in Spa Service	B	S.E.	T	p-value	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	0.359	0.100	3.596	0.000		
Promotion (x ₃)	0.536	0.048	11.223	0.000	0.291	3.231
Quality of spa service (x ₂)	0.217	0.063	3.424	0.001	0.328	4.785
Image of spa (x ₁)	0.150	0.046	3.233	0.001	0.280	3.570
R= .901 , R ² = .812 , Adj R ² = .811 , SE= .325						

From table 1, it revealed that the variables predicted the tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province for 81% were the promotion, quality of spa service and image of spa. The researcher has written the equation of tourist decision-making in spa service of hotel and resort in Central Pattaya, Chonburi Province by the coefficient as follows;

$$y = 0.359 + 0.536 (X_3) + 0.217 (X_2) + 0.150 (X_1)$$

Discussion

The findings of the perception of information of tourist in spa service revealed that the tourist has focused on the quality of spa business; good service equipment, beautiful natural environment, peaceful and comfortable for resting. As spa service is a place for relieving stress, body and mind, the tourist has focused on the quality and expected for relaxation and good health which is consistent with the research of Araya Suksomwang (2014), a study of *Factors Affecting Cross-Cultural Tourists' Perceived Value and Loyalty toward Thai Spa* revealed that the tourist's experience influenced the perceived value of quality and the perceived value of quality was positively correlated with loyalty.

The tourist decision-making in spa service revealed that most of the tourists have decision-making by website surfing, then searching information affecting the decision-making as the technology era that all information can be accessed anywhere and anytime through various forms of technology such as photo and virtual tourist attraction video which is consistent with the concept of Sitthanon & Phajaknate (2015), said the tourism business in Thailand has improved continuously by the technology of publicizing the tourism to be updated. Tourism Authority of Thailand has improved the public relations on the website for providing the needed and relevant information for tourists such as visa application, office hours, and it can be linked to the entrepreneur of tourism business including online shopping for tourism product and service through the social media.

The factors of perception of information affecting the tourist decision-making revealed that all factors affected the tourist decision-making especially the information of promotion as most of the perception is from publicizing the spa service. As spa service is different from other services as its service is for relaxation, then the interesting promotion is the key factor affecting the decision-making which is consistent with the research of Rudee Sermchayut (2020), a study of *Promotion Strategy for Community-Based Tourism* revealed that promotion strategy for

community-based tourism is a tool for attracting the tourist in Thailand 4.0 era that social media has a role on purchase decision-making. Promotion comprised of 5 tools; advertisement, promotion, salesperson, creating news and public relations, and direct marketing. There are many types of research revealed that promotion has significantly improved community-based tourism as it has stimulated the perception and decision-making of the tourist.

Suggestion

Suggestions for implementation

1. Perception of information – the tourist has focused on the quality of spa business, it should be considered on the image such as giving suggestion for customer, staff etiquette, attention to the customer feedback, and creating the unique image that supports the tourist decision-making.

2. Spa business – it should be improved on the website to be updated, interesting and attractive for the customer as most of the tourists have a decision-making by website surfing. Additionally, it should be improved on the staff expertise for the customer satisfaction and repurchase.

3. Spa business – it should be focused on promotion, service quality, and image of spa as affecting the decision-making such as publicizing the promotion, providing additional service free of charge, giving suggestion for customer, staff etiquette, attention to the customer feedback, for future improvement as the more perception affecting the more decision-making.

Suggestions for future study

1. The findings revealed that promotion is the key factor in the digital era as it should be publicized by using digital technology. Consequently, it should study a spa business development by digital technology for more consistency with the current era that leads to creating the future strategy of the entrepreneurs.

2. If the sample group is not focused on a specific group, it will affect a study of factors affecting the decision-making as there are a lot of spa businesses in Thailand. Additionally, it should study the factors of digital marketing for creating perception to the tourist.

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