

DEVELOPING TOURIST ATTRACTIONS TO PROMOTE CULTURAL TOURISM FOR BUSINESS COMPETITION OF UDON THANI, THAILAND

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Abstract

It has been observed that tourism culture is of tremendous importance and relevance in the growth of the economic growth of the country. Among many advancements, the efficient source of emerging market had altered the concepts of tourism. This study examined the critical characteristics and veracity of resources that are essential to the growth of the economy. Therefore, the current study objective is to check the impact of tourist attractions to promote cultural tourism for enhancing the local economy of Udon Thani, Thailand. The self-administered questionnaire was distributed among of 380 tourist for data collection by using a convenient sampling technique. The researchers used deductive approach and cross sectional research design. In addition, Partial Least Square (PLS)-Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) findings shown that pull and push motivation have positive and significant association promote the cultural tourism for enhancing the local economy of Udon Thani, Thailand. Along with these findings, the current study added a body of literature and is considered to be pioneer study along with significant results contribution.

Keywords: Tourist Attraction, cultural tourism, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Tourism development in the areas of Thailand is not new. It has a history of rich culture, attractions for the tourists and the places are worth to be seen as the temples, palaces, lifestyle and the most important the services and the products with a high quality presented with the best to develop the tourism Culture. According to Butowski (2019), the growth of tourism necessitates a variety of offerings in terms of services, goods, and quality, which is a crucial component in promoting tourism and essential for promoting cultural tourism. Thailand is a country rich in historic architecture, canal lifestyle, and trading on floating boats. Furthermore, traditional cultural presentation by beauty and control, acting as a main aspect of promotion for cultural tourism in Thailand (Swangjang & Kornpiphat, 2021).

In the existing dynamic and global conditions, tourism places in the central region of Thailand face some challenges and stiff competitions in terms of proving significant food and service quality. In general, it can be seen that tourist attraction can play a very crucial role in the development of cultural tourism in Thailand (Hongnual et al., 2021; Sasong, 2021). Besides, tourist attraction such as motivational factors also impacts the overall growth and development of cultural tourism in any country and region of the world Bimonte and Punzo (2016). The

recent statistics and surveys conducted by the tourism ministry of Thailand indicate that the role and significance of tourist attractions have decreased at some level (Chongbut & Chapman, 2021). Due to the reduction in the performance of tourist attractions, the growth of cultural tourism also affected on a large scale (Chulaphan & Barahona, 2021). There is a piece of evidence that a research study by Rico (2016), have expressed the importance of tourism and the development of tourism in the region of tourist places. These studies are sufficient examples of promoting tourism culture importance and value. But there is a gap in mentioning the key factors that how cultural tourism is developed with the help of implementing the best tourist attractions (Fuchs & Sincharoenkul, 2021).

Keeping in mind previous conversation, it had been observed several gaps from previous discussion. Firstly, the preceding researches have more concentrated on other developed economies (Benjamin, Bottone, & Lee, 2021; Godovykh, Ridderstaat, & Fyall, 2021; Sulistyani, Firzal, Yesicha, & Sari, 2020) but had limited attention on developing countries especially Thailand. Secondly, previous studies had inclusive findings (Man Cheng, So, & Nang Fong, 2021; Mathew, 2021; Obradović & Stojanović, 2021; Sobaih, Elshaer, Hasanein, & Abdelaziz, 2021). This results had shown that there is a need of time to conduct a research in future. This a reason, the current study objective was to check the impact of tourist attractions on cultural tourism development for enhancing the local economy of Udon Thani, Thailand. “The study was divided into five main sections, introduction, literature review, research methodology, data analysis and conclusion.”

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of tourism development (TTD)

In the past few decades, the theory of tourism development helps tourism industries of different countries in improving the level of tourism in their regions and famous tourism destinations. This theory plays a very significant role in enhancing the overall structure of tourism of any particular region and country. According to the theory of tourism development sustainable and continuous growth in tourism sectors is very essential and this mainly done through proving good services and facilities to visitors and tourists. This theory explains that facilities like accommodation, good quality food, and effective quality of services, transportation, and also recreation are very necessary for developing effective tourism planning and system. Keeping the entire system of tourism balanced and sustained with a greater number of visitors; the growth and development of this theory are very essential for the tourism industry of any particular country and state (Sriviboon, 2022; Kerdpitak & Heuer, 2021; Mekhum, 2020; Stankova, Tsvetkov, & Ivanova, 2019). The main objective of this theory is to provide knowledge to tourism industries and sector that they provide best and accurate services to individuals and visitors and also implement an effective tourism strategy that provides an entire comfort level to tourists as well as transportation sector of that region. According to this theory, the motivation level in tourists also plays a significant part in improving the overall development of cultural tourism. This theory suggests that when developing a tourism plan and development strategy the management of the tourism sector should consider the quality of food

and services as well as the importance of motivation level (Sakdiyakorn & Sivarak, 2016; Sangchumnong, 2019; Sangchumnong & Kozak, 2018; Kerdpitak et al., 2022). Planning and execution of effective development strategies is the major objective of this theory.

Pull motivation and Cultural Tourism Development

Since the initialization of research on tourism topics, several scholars and researchers have focused on identifying the factors and reasons why individuals travel to tourism places (Sinha, Sofique, & Gantait, 2019). Some researches evaluate that motivation and behavior of tourists is an important and significant predictor of their revisit to that place. Push motivation of an individual or tourist is a type of behavior that tourist forces themselves to revisit the destination place and to complete a tour to satisfy a need and also attain some objectives. A significant level of pull motivation in a tourist force him to visit tourism destination which the growth of cultural tourism. In his last visit and tour if an individual entertained with good food and service qualities then the tourist has a significant level of pull motivation and revisits that destination. This directly enhances the overall development and growth of cultural tourism. The positive mediating impact of pull motivation is also supported by the theory of tourism development. This theory plays a significant part in demonstrating the role of motivation in the overall growth of tourism. The theory of tourism development exhibits that motivation like escape, prestige, and pull motivation can motivate tourists to travel to their dream place which positively influences the process of cultural tourism growth. Therefore, the following hypothesis formulated.

H1: Push motivation had a significant relationship with the cultural tourism development.

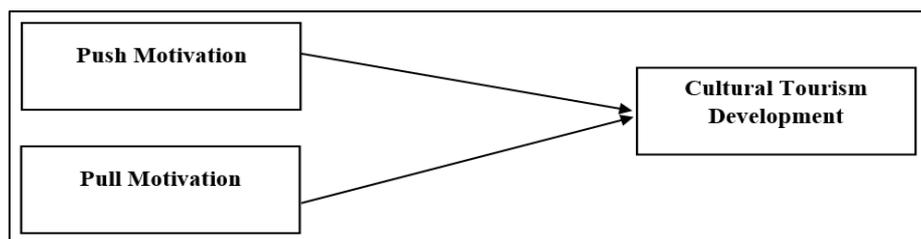
Pull Motivation and Cultural tourism Development

According to research by Aranburu, Plaza, and Esteban (2016) tourists, and individuals (that want to visit) motivation is an important factor that can enhance the growth of the tourism industry. Individual motivation is a combination of requirements and wants that develop tourist extend to visit a destination and also entertain from attractions and attractive places. A study by Kavita, Swartz, and Green (2017), manifests that pull motivation is a type of motivation or behavior that a tourist feels drawn towards, which directly impacts the overall performance and development of the tourist industry and sector. The level of pull motivation can mainly be sustained by envisioning the desired results coming significant. This type of motivation level can indirectly influence the process of cultural tourism growth this is because by ineffective products and services in tourism areas the level of pull motivation in a visitor increase and this directly affects the level of CTD (Dahri et al., 2019; Jitraphai, Arunotai, & Tiangtrong, 2017; Luangsa-Art, 2016). In the past few decades, several theories have demonstrated the role of motivation, but the motivation aspect of the theory of tourism development is the most significantly applied model to manifest visitor behavior and attitudes. The theory of TD explains some aspects of the motivation level of tourists and according to this theory motivation also affects the level of tourism development. The entire above discussion leading to the following hypothesis,

H3: Pull motivation has a significant and positive relationship with cultural tourism development.

Based on previous discussion, Figure the predicted the research framework of the study which consist of two independent variables namely, push motivation and pull motivation and one dependent variable cultural tourism development.

Figure 1: Research Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research paper, the information or data collecting tool was a questionnaire technique which is one of the most efficient and fast techniques of collecting data from respondents. This technique was mainly chosen by the researcher of this study due to the effecting benefits of this technique as with the help of this method a researcher can be able to analyze quickly and effectively. This type of method is very significant mainly when respondents are scattered far and wide, then this technique provides many benefits to the analyst of the study than other techniques like interview and observation. With the help of the questionnaire method, it is easy for an analyst to plan, develop, and manage the entire process of data collection. The questionnaire of the given study was mainly consisted of four items which include the tourist attraction elements like push and pull motivation, and the last one is cultural tourism development. These above-mentioned variables of the model including push and pull motivation were evaluated and measured in this research mainly with the help of a five-point Likert scale where different scales were set to gather data related to quality products and services as well as the level of cultural tourism development. The main benefit of using this scale is that this type of scale gives clear data about the topic and also fulfills the demands of the researcher. With the help of this scale, it is easy for analysts to conclude the study and research. A five-point Likert Scale also helps in developing supportive results and graphs from participants. Before testing and measurement as well as data gathering, the study questionnaire was checked by some tourism experts in Thailand to identify the effectiveness of the listed items and questions. The process of data gathering was mainly conducted in Udon Thani, Thailand during the last tourism season in 2021. The places mainly include music assembly, traditional games areas, and crafting birds and other animals. During the data gathering process, a self-managed questionnaire paper was provided to individuals and tourists after the attraction process finished. A total of 380 visitors show some interest in participating in the process of data collection through the convenient sampling technique, all the visitors returned an entire and useable paper of questionnaire, which mainly enabled the use of the structural equation

modeling (SEM) technique for further process. In this research study, the level of reliability and validity was mainly evaluated with the help of using CFA as well as SEM methods to identify the appropriateness of the proposed study hypothesis.

DATA ANALYSIS

The study was based from both of descriptive and inferential basis which was done by software's respectively.

Descriptive Analysis

Out of 380 participants, about 70% were local visitors and tourists, and the rest 30% were international visitors. According to the table of gender, the number of male respondents was 211(55.5%), and the female was 169(44.5%). According to statistics and data collection processes, the majority of the individuals were single (52%). The age also indicates that most of the individuals were found between the ages of 25-35 years (39.5%), 35-45 years (24.2%), and more than 45 years (3.9%). The data also manifest that most of the participants in the data gathering process were government employees and some of the respondents were private firm's workers.

Measurement and Structural model

The present study had used the Smart-PLS 3.28 for analysis. The smart PLS is considered to be better software which is suitable for the complex model. The data was analyzed by measurement and structural model. The assessment of the model was based on two validities convergent and discriminant which was also assessed by various other researchers (Ahmad, Farhan, & Fareed, 2019; Ahmad et al., 2020; Bhatti et al., 2019). Therefore, the convergent validity has been assessed. For the convergent validity, Cronbach alpha recommended value is 0.7, factor loading is 0.5, and composite reliability is 0.7 and average variance extracted recommended value if 0.5. These values were recommended by several researchers (Hair et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2014). The Table.1 predicted values had shown that construct convergent validity is verified because the construct values are above from above recommended values.

Table 1: Measurement model

Variable	Item	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Cultural Tourism Development	CTD1	0.828	0.842	0.892	0.685
	CTD2	0.765			
	CTD3	0.727			
	CTD4	0.771			
Push Motivation	PUM1	0.732	0.877	0.880	0.697
	PUM2	0.742			
	PUM3	0.747			
Pull Motivation	PLM1	0.841	0.859	0.887	0.639
	PLM2	0.901			
	PLM3	0.845			

Note: CTD-cultural tourism development, PUM-push motivation, PLM-pull motivation

In addition, the second step to measure the measurement model is discriminant validity. There are three recommended procedures which has been measured in the extant literature, namely Fornell and Larker, cross loadings Fornell and Larcker (1981). The Fornell and Larker shows that all square roots of AVE diagonal values should be greater from below values. The Table.2 predicted values shows that constructs fulfill the criteria of Fornell and Larker. Secondly, the cross is being used for the evaluation when the instrument is not considered to be more than base instrument. The cross loading values should be equal to the factors loadings (Hair Jr et al., 2017) . Thirdly, the hetrotrait monotrait correlation (HTMT) correlated values should be less than 0.85 or 0.90 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). The Table.3 predicted values had shown that construct fulfill the criteria of HTMT.

Table 2: Discriminant Validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)

	CTD	PUM	PLM
CTD	0.732		
PUM	0.156	0.892	
PLM	0.196	0.377	0.778

Note: CTD-cultural tourism development, PUM-push motivation, PLM-pull motivation

Table 3: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	CTD	PUM	PLM
CTD			
PUM	0.588		
PLM	0.473	0.563	

Note: CTD-cultural tourism development, PUM-push motivation, PLM-pull motivation

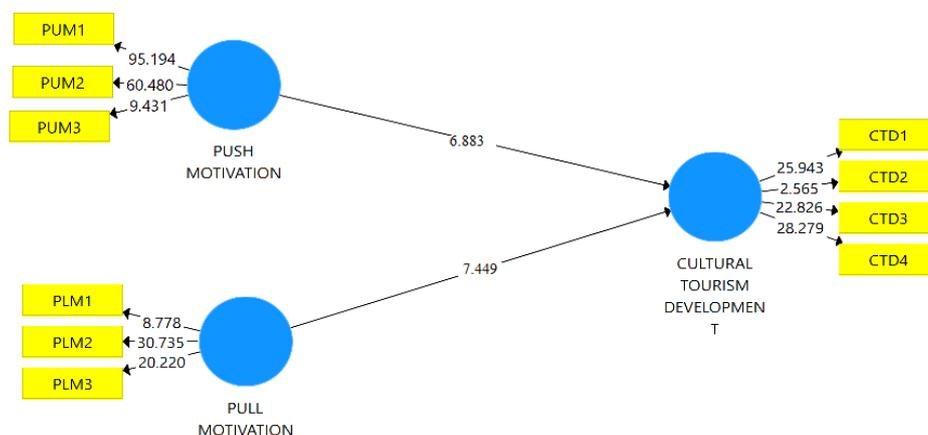
The next step is to test the research hypothesis after the model assessment. For this purpose, the 500 resampling technique had been applied by using bootstrap in PLS-SEM. The study PLS-SEM results had shown that Push motivation (PU) has significantly and positively association with the cultural tourism development (CTD) local community of Udon Thani, Thailand that supports to hypothesis 1. This result had shown that when the PUM had increased then the cultural development of the tourism had also increased. This results had shown that the Thailand played an important role to motivate the tourist to develop the CTD. On the other hand, it is also found that pull motivation (PLM) had also a positive and significant association with the CTD that supports to hypothesis 2. This shows that PLM is considered to be important indicator to enhance the CTD of Thailand. All of the above hypothesis results are predicted in the following Table.4 below.

Table 4: Hypothesis Results

Relationships	B	SD	T Statistics	P values
PUM ->CTD	0.279	0.041	6.883	0.000
PLM -> CTD	0.320	0.043	7.449	0.000

Note: CTD-cultural tourism development, PUM-push motivation, PLM-pull motivation

Figure 2: Structural Model



DISCUSSION

The given study identifies the tourist attraction impact on cultural tourism for enhancing the local economy of Udon Thani, Thailand. The initial results of this research demonstrate that push and pull motivation directly influence the process of cultural tourism growth in a significant way. This is mainly because research by (Zhang et al., 2021), argued that pull motivation can impact positively by providing quality of excellence in products and services, also by providing quality of conformity to some degree can also affect the overall process of growth of cultural tourism. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding the direct impact of pull motivation (tourist attraction) on the CTD of Thailand was accepted and supported by the results of the study. Moreover, the verdicts of SEM model also suggest that push motivation can significantly influence the association CTD this is mainly because according to (He, Cheng, Swanson, Su, & Hu, 2022) push motivation is a type of behavior of tourist that insist him to revisit tourism place and destination, due to this the level of growth of cultural tourism is enhanced. Hence, the hypothesis regarding the role of push motivation has been accepted. These results are consistent with the previous studies who have same results (Chamarro, Cobo-Benita, & Herrero Amo, 2021; Milićević, Bošković, & Lakićević, 2021; Naja et al., 2021; Tien et al., 2021; Văduva et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study very briefly describe that tourism is developed only by understanding the value of its rich cultural significance and the role of tourist attraction provided to the visitors with the view that these services create a positive impact in promoting tourism. The study expresses that a survey was conducted to gather information and the number of visitors and the local people was the sample of the study. The conclusion was that tourism is developed and promoted by just providing the best tourist attraction. The study has a broad point of view and this is very helpful for the researchers of the future about tourism and the managers, tourists, and also for the organizations at the national and international levels. This study is a very

detailed description with an explanation of the key factors promoting the best cultural tourism. Despite their favorable implications and applications the given research paper also has some limitations. First, the model of the given study focuses only on the direct impact of tourist attraction which is the initial limitation of this study. Therefore, the researcher of this research believes that future studies should focus on considering other variables and factors like poverty alleviation, etc. Second, the results of this study are limited to local economy of Udon Thani, Thailand, so, due to this limitation; it is highly recommended for future researches that they should focus on other parts and regions of Thailand. Moreover, the study is limited on cross sectional research design in which data was collected at first time, to increase the research generalizability, a future research could be done on other longitudinal research design that could enhance the scope of the study.

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