

THE SATISFACTION TOWARDS ONLINE PUBLIC RELATIONS AFFECTING TOURIST ATTRACTION SELECTION OF SINGLE WOMEN IN BANGKOK

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to study the satisfaction towards online tourism tools in tourist attractions and selection behaviour of single Thai women tourists in Bangkok. The objectives are : 1) to study satisfaction towards online tools in tourist attractions selection behaviour of single women tourists in Bangkok ; and 2) to analyse the differences of satisfaction towards online tourism tools characteristics in tourist attractions selection behaviour of single Thai women tourists in Bangkok regarding their personal characteristics. This is a quantitative research utilising questionnaire surveys with 325 samples.

It was found that YouTube has played an important role with single Thai women tourists as a source of tourism information. The single Thai women tourists search for tourism information on accommodation and its reservation through online tools and travel according to the acquired information. Travel blogs and reviews have influenced the selection of tourist attractions of single Thai women tourists. According to the satisfaction of single Thai women tourists towards online tools in selecting tourist attractions is at high level for the overall aspects, whereas, they satisfy the representation style at the highest level. The hypothesis testing found that only the level of education showed differences toward their satisfaction in selecting tourist attractions at the significance level of 0.05; however, there are no differences on other personal characteristic factors.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Online public, Tourist attractions Selection, Single women tourists

Introduction

Social media is a form of communication that involves information technology, it has various communication styles both in the form of creating and disseminating information. Nowadays, the usage of internet over smart phones and portable devices such as tablets also affect an increasing usage of social media (Phongphut, 2013). Those factors affecting an increasing use of social media are technological developments in advancing the capacity of the network, improving and developing of software programmes as

Individuals or organisations can create and change information (one's status), publish pictures and animation, which other people can express their likes and dislikes, forward, well as the development of the capabilities of computers and mobile devices to be more efficient and diverse in its usage, such as a social networking sites. and comment on the conversation. Micro-blog is a website used to distribute information or short texting in a specific area of interest. Individual can also use the # (hashtag) symbol to connect with groups of people with similar interests.

Websites which provide online video sharing service (Videos and photos sharing websites), are websites that allow users to upload media, images, videos to websites to share with others. Personal and corporate blogs are websites that allow authors to record stories as if they were online diary notes, which can be written in an informal way and can adjust it as often as they want. Web blogs can be used for both individuals and groups or organisations purposes. Wikis and online collaborative spaces are online public opened spaces used to gather information and documents. Groups or discussion areas (Forums, discussion board and groups) are websites or groups of electronic mail that display comments or suggestions of both private and public groups. Instant messaging geo-spatial tagging shows the location with comments and images on social media. Some social media networks are capable to serve for more than one purpose. For example, Facebook is a social network that people can share pictures and animation, or Twitter that is both an online social network and micro-blog that people use to share status, etc. (Williamson, 2013). Technological developments make devices more efficient and cheaper that leads to more attention to the use of social media for business purposes (Dewing, 2013: 2).

Nowadays, tourism is considered a business that many countries around the world are interested in. Tourism business is important to Thailand in many ways such as economic development, infrastructure development, investment,

and job creation. It also helps preserving Thai traditions and cultures. The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) predicted that the number of tourists is likely to increase rapidly in every region of the world (Raetrakulphaibun, 2013). Currently the marketing management is important and plays a crucial role in businesses due to the constant changing environment, especially economic, social, cultural, consumer behaviour and technology. The main aim of the marketing management is for the survival of the organisations. The major marketing management task of executives is the ability to deliver the organisations information to the target consumer (Januvanichai, 2010).

According to TripAdvisor, a website and application that provides crowdsourcing services, that many users around the world use to provide information such as accommodations, restaurants, or tourist attractions to the public. It was found that from 9,181 women tourists world-wide that there is as high as 74% who plan to travel alone. Particularly women travellers from Asia tend to be the same, they are increasingly interested in travelling alone. Especially those women with high professional levels without children are considered one of the most interesting groups, because it is the group with enough income to travel. While, they also have the freedom to travel with enough time. When compared to male tourists, it is found that woman travellers tend to upgrade their seats on the aircrafts better than the male passengers. The Economist report in 2006 that the proportion of working women in the 1940s was only one-third then increased to 2 in 3 at present. The number of working women in the labour market is increasing in all countries. Thailand is no different because women have played an important role in economic development compared with other countries.

This is agreed with the Economist Intelligence Report in 2012 on the Economic Opportunity of women, it was found that Thai women were at the 2nd highest in economic opportunity in ASEAN countries, where Singapore ranked the first. There are 36% of the top executives in Thailand and more than 35% of the board members in the Thai private sector are women. Eventually when women earn higher incomes, they naturally become a powerful consumer group and become a new market.

The role of women in the economy is increasingly important but they seem to get married later or even do not get married at all. Nevertheless, those who got married are more likely to divorce in higher number than the past because women are no longer having to rely on the males' financial support since they can support themselves financially. This leads to a new market called

single women market at the same time the digital age has made online shopping grow rapidly. It was found that women are purchasing products and services online more than men and women have higher frequency of purchase as well as travel. Woman travellers were found to be a group of tourists that have higher rate of return to tourism businesses and related services than men. In addition, women tend to be more careful than men in finding tourism information. This allows marketers to prepare for woman tourists needs and wants such as long-term promotional programmes. The marketers also provide promotions to attract repeated customers as well as to maintain good image through word of mouth methods, because women customers tend to trust information from people with previous experience, such as acquiring recommendations through various web boards (TAT Review, 2015). It can be said that online marketing plays a very important part in tourism marketing. Women tourists are considered an important target group for many tourism businesses and a group with high purchasing power. In addition, women account for 3.6 billion people world-wide or 49.5% of the world population. They also have an influence to motivate their friends and relatives to travel (Keangphan and Wongsaroj, 2017).

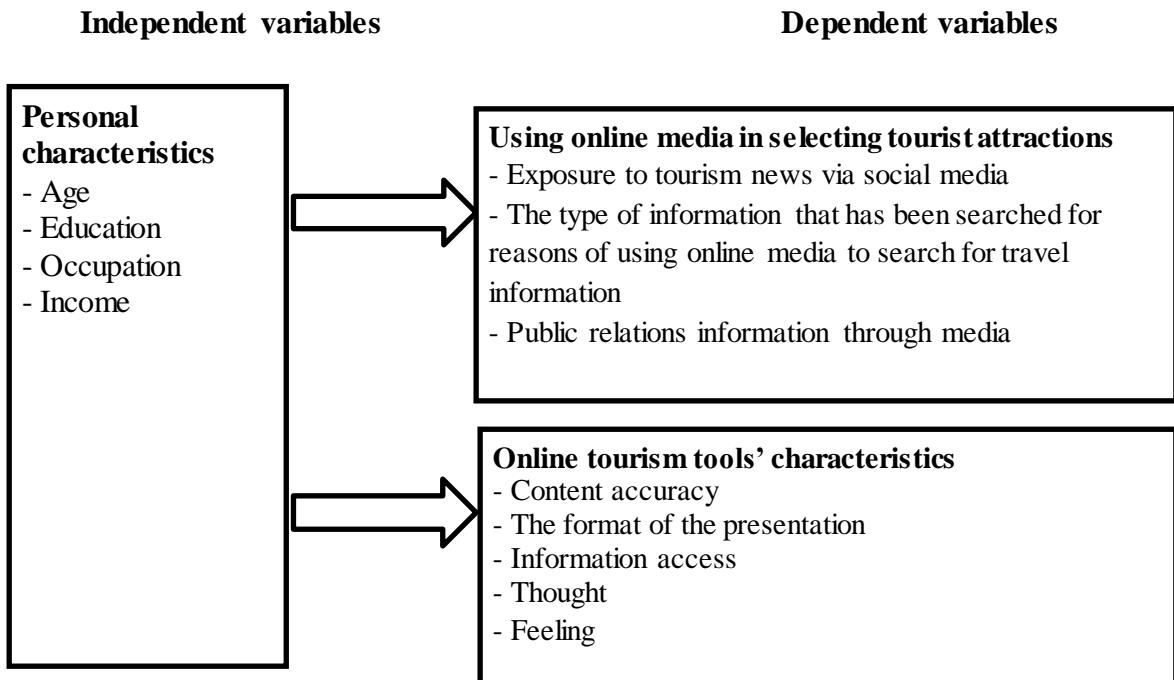
As a result of the above reasons, the researcher is interested to study the satisfaction towards online Public relations affecting tourist attraction selection of single women in Bangkok. in term of satisfied factors as well as areas of improvement and suggestions. The research findings can be used as a marketing guideline of using social media as a tool in order to reach women tourists as well as to stimulate travel decision making.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

1. To study online behaviour of single Thai women tourists in Bangkok towards their selection of tourist attractions.
2. To analyse the differences of satisfaction towards online tourism tools characteristics in tourist attractions selection behaviour of single Thai women tourists in Bangkok regarding their personal characteristics.

Research Framework



Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

There are the differences of satisfaction towards the use of online media in selecting tourist attractions of single Thai woman in Bangkok regarding their personal characteristics.

Hypotheses 2:

There are the differences of satisfaction towards online public characteristics regarding their personal characteristics.

Research Methodology

The research on the satisfaction towards online Public relations affecting tourist attraction selection of single women in Bangkok is a quantitative research. The research methodology is as follows:

A. Population, sampling and sample

Population (N): working women in Bangkok

Sampling and sample size (n): working women in Bangkok from the method of calculating the sample of unknown population (Cochran, 1953), 325

samples were calculated at the confidence level of 95% and the anticipation of 5% by using multi stage sampling as follows:

Step 1 Select specific populations by specifying that the sample is single Thai women tourists only.

Step 2 Use the convenient random method by selecting woman tourists that are convenient and willing to provide information during data collection the survey sites, such as Yaowarat Road, Chatuchak Market and Siam Square. The mentioned places are tourist attractions that Thai women tourists usually visit (Analysis from online discussion boards of sample tourists).

B. Research tools

This research uses the questionnaire as a research tool to collect the information needed for this study. The questionnaire divided into 3 parts as follows:

Part 1. Questions relating to personal characteristics of tourists, such as age, education level, status, occupation, income, with the questionnaire form (Checklist).

Part 2. Questions about behaviour of using online media in selecting tourist attractions of single Thai women tourists (Checklist).

Part 3. Questions about the satisfaction of woman tourists towards online tourism tools' characteristics. The question is in the form of Rating Scale, with the respondents expressing satisfaction with the content at 5 levels, from the lowest to 1 to the highest level of 5.

C. Research tool testing methods

The researcher created questionnaire based on concepts, theories and related research to the study. Then bring the questionnaires to 3 experts to check the accuracy and clarity of the contents with the consistency index in each item. By obtaining the consistency index in each item, most of which is greater than 0.5 or more, IOC (Item-Objective Congruence), in which the researcher has brought the questionnaire content with the value less than 0.5 to revise and re-examine until the question the consistency index is greater than 0.5 per item. Then the revised questionnaire was conducted (Try Out) with a group of 30 samples who are not included as research samples in the later data collection process.

The measure of confidence (Reliability) of the questionnaire by using the alpha coefficient, according to Cronbach's method, which has an alpha

coefficient greater than 0.70.

Therefore, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the overall research questions is 0.88 that is considered that the reliability of the questionnaire is acceptable.

D. Data analysis

This research utilising statistical software packages to analyse the data by using statistics such as descriptive statistics, consisting of percentage, frequency, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics of one-way ANOVA was used in comparing the differences of more than two groups, such as age, education level, status, occupation, and income by determining significance at the level of 0.05, in which case the research results are statistically significant will test pairs using the Scheffe method.

Results

Part 1

The study of personal characteristics of the samples found that single women tourists, mostly aged 30-39 years, accounted for 50.80 percent. Most of the respondents' educational level is bachelor's degree of 53.50 percent. They were employed as company employees with 22.50 percent. Their monthly income is 10,000-19,999 baht at 55.75 percent.

2 Part

The results of the online media behaviour in selecting tourist attractions for women tourists found that the samples had the most exposure behaviour for tourism information via YouTube of 98.80 percent and the least open channel for tourism news is the website of the government agencies (TAT), representing 87.70 percent. Most of the respondents tend to travel according to the information searched accounted for 59.7 percent. By using online media to find the most information about accommodation / accommodation accounting for 95.7 percent. Public relations information via online media that has the most effect on tourist attraction behaviour are blogs / review posts, opinions of people who have used the service in detail accounting for 79.10 percent.

Part 3

The results of the women tourist satisfaction on tourist attraction promotion via online social media related to tourism found that the overall picture was at a high level with an average level of 3.72. Considering each aspect, it was found that single women tourists were satisfied with the presentation styles at the highest level at the average of 3.90, followed by the

feeling of 3.83, ideas is 3.76, data accessing of 3.58, and the least is the content validity of 3.52 respectively.

It can be explained as follows:

1) In term of the presentation style, it was found that online social media were beautiful. The tourism online tools were used the activities and prize drawn in order to attract attention at the average of 3.97. The least mean is the novelty in presenting information at the average 3.76 respectively.

2) In term of feeling, it was found that social media tools made it fun to follow tourism information at the highest average of 4.56, followed by less time in searching for information than other sources, with an average of 3.93, and the least of the average was social media tools made them feel more confident in their travel decisions of 3.00 respectively.

3) In term of ideas, it is found that social media is a means to enable information to be received quickly at the highest average of 3.87, followed by beneficial to travel planning at, 3.80, and the least average is social media tools help creating experience before travel at the average 3.63 respectively

4) In term of access to information, it is found that social media tools is easily accessible at the highest average of 3.97, followed by social media is not complicated to understand at the average 3.54, and the least mean is social media tools be trusted with an average of 3.24, respectively.

5) In term of the accuracy of the content, it was found that social media tools were accurate in the information of tourism at the highest average of 3.52 and the least average was social media tools have sufficient amount of content suitable for the needs with the average of 3.51.

The results of the research hypothesis test

It was found that single Thai women in Bangkok with different educational levels were satisfied with social media tools, which had different behaviour on tourist attraction selection since the significant value was 0.01 less than .05. When considered each aspect, it was found that different educational levels were satisfied with social media tools which affected the behaviour of selecting tourist attractions in terms of presentation styles with the significant value is .00, the aspect of thinking has the significant value of .01, and the sensation of significant value equal to .15. The content validity variable of data access showed no significant difference at the level of 0.05.

Discussion

Using online media tools in selecting tourist attractions among single Thai women tourists, it was found that the respondents had the highest exposure to tourism information through YouTube that agreed with the result of Web Sight The Flight (2019), which surveyed internet user behaviour in Thailand. It was found that the most popular social media among Thai people is YouTube which is 98.80%. Most of the respondents tend to travel according to information has been searched. By relying on online media to find information about accommodations / accommodation in line with the Expedia Group (2019), a global travel platform, the value of online travel bookings in Asia Pacific increased to 5.403 billion US dollars (16.7 trillion baht) from 4.181 billion US dollars (12.9 trillion baht) in 2014, with the proportion of online travel bookings increasing from 44% to 53%. At the same time Hotel reservations are also growing.

The number of tourists booked through the platform increased by 12% and increased revenue by 9%. And public relations information through online media that has the most influence on tourist behaviour is the blog / review post, comments of past users that matched Jainoi (2007) that studied the satisfaction of recipients of the public relations media of Tourism Authority of Thailand found that the sample was satisfied in the public relations media of the Tourism Authority of Thailand at a high level in all 4 aspects, namely internet media, with an average of 4.34, links to other travel websites, providing tourism information, up-to-date tourism information. Regarding the satisfaction of woman tourists towards public relations of tourist attractions through online social media tools related to tourism, the overall picture is found at a high level. When considering in each aspect, it was found that single women tourists were satisfied with the presentation style at the highest level that similar to Kanawong (2015) who studied the research on the success of tourism promotional campaign, "12 must-visit cities" of the Tourism Authority of Thailand. The result of the research showed that tourists have more awareness from social media than the mass media. The present technology has played a large role in human daily life and changed the behaviour of tourists with online media exposure daily.

Conclusion

The single Thai women tourists search for tourism information on accommodation and its reservation through online tools and travel according to the acquired information. Travel blogs and reviews have influenced the selection of tourist attractions of single Thai women tourists. According to the satisfaction of single Thai women tourists towards online tools in selecting tourist attractions is at high level for the overall aspects, whereas, they satisfy the representation style at the highest level. The hypothesis testing found that only the level of education showed differences toward their satisfaction in selecting tourist attractions at the significance level of 0.05; however, there are no differences on other personal characteristic factors. Future research may focus on studies of public relations satisfaction via social media that affect tourist selection behaviour for single women tourists in other countries. A study of factors affecting the decision to travel for single women tourists to lead the way for improvement and developing Thailand tourism to become a destination for the said tourist group.

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