

Behavior of Foreign Tourists Visited Wat Phrachetuponwimolmangkalam

Pranee Pathomchaiwat

Abstract—This research aims to study tourism data and behavior of foreign tourists visited Wat Phrachetuponwimolmangkalam (Wat Po) Sample groups are tourists who visited inside the temple, during February, March, April and May 2013. Tools used in the research are questionnaires constructed by the researcher, and samples are drawn by Convenience sampling. There are 207 foreign tourists who are willing to be respondents. Statistics used are percentage, average mean and standard deviation.

The results of the research reveal that:

A. General Data of Respondents

The foreign tourists who visited the temple are mostly female (57.5 %), most respondents are aged between 20-29 years (37.2%). Most respondents live in Europe (62.3%), most of them got the Bachelor's degree (40.1%), British are mostly found (16.4%), respondents who are students are also found (23.2%), and Christian are mostly found (60.9%).

B. Tourists' Behavior While Visiting the Temple Compound.

The result shows that the respondents came with family (46.4%), have never visited the temples (40.6%), and visited once (42 %). It is found that the foreign tourists' inappropriate behavior are wearing revealing attires (58.9%), touching or getting closed to the monks (55.1%), and speaking loudly (46.9%) respectively.

The respondents' outstanding objectives are to visit inside the temple (57.5%), to pay respect to the Reclining Buddha Image in the Viharn (44.4%) and to worship the Buddha image in the Phra Ubosod (37.7%) respectively.

C. The Respondents' Self-evaluation of Performance

It is found that over all tourists evaluated themselves in the highest level averaged 4.40. When focusing on each item, it is shown that they evaluated themselves in the highest level on obeying the temple staff averaged 4.57, and cleanness concern of the temple averaged 4.52, well-behaved performance during the temple visit averaged 4.47 respectively.

Keywords—Department, Traveler

I. INTRODUCTION

DOMESTIC tourism is important to most people as it will affect to the economy of people in their sources to attract more Thai and foreign tourists to visit. Study the benefit and disadvantage of tourism which impact on the country in personal, economy, social, politics and environment including culture and tradition should be considered specifically.

According to the data of Tourism Authority of Thailand and Association of Tour and Guide Business in 2011, Bangkok is ranked the first top 10 tourist cities. The famous tourist attractions are The Royal Palace, The Temple of the Emerald Buddha (Wat Prakaew), Wat Prachtuponwimolmangkalam

(Wat Pho), Wimanmek Mansion, Pratinung Anuntasamakom (Land Art) and an area around the Ratanakosin Island which having 20,754, 195 persons. [2]

However, the question was headlined in an article on ASTV online manager that "Should the temples be tourist attractions or not?" Patcharin Impitak [9] wrote an article on the newspaper entitled *Traveler Leisure & Business* in a column of *Travel in Trend* by quoting from the project of research institute to develop Thai tourism entitled "Model of Development of the Temple Tourist Attractions in Bangkok" which Phramaha Sutit Apakaro under Wat Sutiwararam as a chief of research project. He got fund supported by the National Research Council of Thailand. The purpose is to study model of development about tourism in Bangkok area that temple should be tourist source or not? To find out properness of temple tour, 9 temples for management of tourism such as Wat Phrachetuponwimolmangkalam (Wat Pho) Wat Sutat, Wat Chanasongkram, etc. were drawn as selected sampling.

The result of the study is that the temples are appropriate for visiting to learn history, culture, architecture, art and Buddhism, but they should be managed in restricted area and tourists must pay respect to the holy places in the temple compound. Besides the regulations to visit, the obvious signs should be exposed to give the information and instruction. [12]

However, it is found that many tourists like to visit Wat Pho most for 8.15 million people per year, and it is ranked to be 24th of the world, Wat Arun visited by 5 million people per year. Wat Rakung 1 million people per year, Wat Saket, 500,000-700,000 people per year. At the same time, Wat Po is scored in provided activities most, secondly are Wat Rakung and Wat Benjamabopit.

It is also found that there are some problems while the tourists are visiting the temple. They are about improper behavior to places, opportunity, culture of Thai good deed, and temple rules. Most of the foreigners do not maintain environment condition, and they lack of principle in visiting places especially Thai tourists. Invasion of shops and services around the compound cause the dispute between the people in the community and the people who make the benefit.

Problem and effect from tourism in temples can be caused from cultural belief in respecting different objects, so the problem occurs in violating life style and culture. If we ignore this problem, it will affect to religion, culture and Thai tourism. As stated above, the researcher wanted to study the actual behavior of the foreign tourists while visiting around Wat Phrachetuponwimolmangkalam. (Wat Pho).

Pranee Pathomchaiwat is an Assistant Professor in Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand (e-mail: pranee.pa@ssru.ac.th).

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A. Concept, Theory and Related Literatures

Tourism means travel of a person from one place to other places temporary and back to former place by intention or satisfaction, aiming to relax, to study, and to get knowledge according to his personal opinion such as cultural interest, environment including seminar or business trip, but it does not earn the living or gain new experiences. [1], [4], [8], [11]

Tourist type can be divided as follow [6], [3]: - domestic and foreign tourists which there are two kinds of them- overnight and not overnight. Their characteristics are as follow: 1. Tourists travel in group- all activities are set according to a program tour (The Organized Mass Tourist) 2. Tourists travel in group- the business entrepreneurs do not plan all activities (The Individual Mass Tourist) 3. Tourists plan for travel by themselves and join the member of locality (The Explorer) 4. Tourists travel by themselves and will live in the village in the locality. (The Drifter)

Each type of tourists behave differently, every behavior, must have target in action such as conservative groups who are honor to their environment, and they still keep the perfect ecology. Foreign tourists who visit the temples may have different target.

Penpat Suwansontichai [10] studied "Attitude and Behavior of Foreign Tourists to Wat Prakaew". The results are most foreign tourists are European, the number of male is closely equivalent to female, are aged between 29-30 years, most of them work as private company employees, aim to travel to Thailand as tourists, most of them have never visited this temple, most of them have never visited other temples in Thailand. They accept news of this temple in low level; hobbies of most foreigners are musicians. Their life styles are spending their free time in traveling, relaxing outside their home, and meeting consumers or co-coordinators. The most favorite tour types are culture and tradition. Most foreigners have attitude toward the temple of its beautiful identity, it is worth to visit and the entrance fee is reasonable, there are sufficient staff to take care of them. Most of them visit the temple for the first time and spend more than 2 hours from Monday to Friday. Foreign tourists have different gender, age, occupation, aim to visit the temple, but they have attitude toward the cost, the personal resource and the places indifferently. They have an experience of visiting other temple in Thailand differently, and they have attitude toward the cost of visiting the temple and the location differently. To perceive the news of foreign tourists has no relation with the total attitude toward visiting the temple, but the cost, the personal resource and the location has relation with it. Their living style has relation with the total attitude toward visiting the temple.

Krisana Dechasurakchon [5] studied "Behavior and Attitude of Foreign Independent Tourists toward Wat Pho (Wat Prachetuponwimonmangkalam)", Samples are drawn by Purposive Sampling. They are 200 independent tourists who visited the temple by their own- not by tour group, or Tour Company. Tools used are questionnaires. Statistics used are percentage, average means and standard deviation, statistic

used in hypothesis are difference analysis by T-test one way variables analysis, chi square analysis, using SPSS Version 15 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Window) The results are as follow: most respondents are European, the number of male and female is closely equivalent. Most of them are Christian, are aged between 21-30 years, work as private company employees. Their revenues are lower or equal to US\$ 10,000. Their main objectives of visiting are tour, and they have never visited other temples. Most respondents visit Wat Pho for the first time. They perceive the news from the journals such as Lonely Planet, Guide Book and tourist sources etc. They spend their time in Wat Pho about 2 hours, and they aim to visit the Art Museum and their interest is eastern history. The period of visiting is 11:00-12:59 p.m., most tourists came with friends and will come back and introduce other persons to visit the temple. It is also found that most tourists have attitude towards Wat Pho, ancient city, services and facilities in a good level and others in a moderate level. The results of hypothesis test are shown as follow:

1. Independent foreign tourists' nationality, gender, age, education, occupation, revenue, main objectives of visiting Thailand and experience to visit other temples are differently. Their perception of news, objectives of visiting Wat Pho and accompany are different with the statistical significant at level of .05
2. Independent foreign tourists who have different nationality and revenues have attitude toward the ancient city, the cost, the personal resources differently with the statistical significant at level of .05 and they have attitude toward services and facilities in Wat Pho indifferently with statistical significant at level of .05
3. Independent foreign tourists who have different gender, religion, and age have attitude toward the ancient city, the cost, service and facilities while visiting Wat Pho differently with the statistical significant at level of .05 However, they have attitude toward the personal resources while visiting Wat Pho indifferently with statistical significant at level of .05
4. Independent foreign tourists who have different occupation have attitude toward the personal resources, service and facilities in Wat Pho indifferently with the statistical significant at level of .05. They have attitude toward the ancient city, and the cost differently with the statistical significant at level of .05
5. Independent foreign tourists who have different aim to visit Thailand have attitude toward the ancient city, the cost, services and facilities in Wat Pho indifferently with the statistical significant at level of .05.
6. Independent foreign tourists who have different experience have attitude toward the ancient city, the cost, the personal resource, services and facilities differently with the statistical significant at level of .05.

Namtip Uschin [7] studied "The Travel Behavior of Japanese Tourists Visiting the Rattanakosin Island: A Case study of: Wat Phrasirattanasatsadaram (Wat Prakaew), Wat Prachetuponwimonmangkalam (Wat Pho) and Wat Arunratchavararam by aiming to study behavior of Japanese

tourists around Ratanakosin Island, and facilities for them and compare the relationship between the Japanese tourists' general data and their travel behavior, their opinion toward facilities provided for them around the island. Samples are drawn by Convenience Sampling. They are 400 Japanese tourists who visited the these areas: Wat Prasiratanasaram (Wat PhraKeaw), Wat Phrachetuponwimolmangkalam(Wat Pho), and Wat Arunrachawaram. Tools used in collecting data are questionnaires, and statistics used are descriptive statistic and inferential statistics: Frequency, percentage Mean and Standard Deviation. Inferential statistics are Chi-square and t-test Analysis in One-way ANOVA. It is found that Japanese tourists come to the temple because of low cost, period of trip (less than 3 days) and they often visit the historical and cultural site. They encounter most persons who have skill in Japanese language and most brochures which contain Japanese data. The general data: age, education, occupation, income per month affect their travel behavior. Age and their opinion toward facilities provided for them around the island are differently.

III. AREA STUDIED AND METHODOLOGY

Population in this study was foreign tourists who visited Wat Phrachetuponwimolmangkalam. Sample groups were the tourists who visited inside the temple, during February, March, April and May 2013. Tools used in the research are questionnaires constructed by the researcher, and samples were drawn by Convenience sampling. There were 207 foreign tourists who are willing to be respondents. Statistics used are percentage, average mean and standard deviation.

IV. ANALYSIS DATA AND DISCUSSION

To analyze data of respondents, the researcher analyzed amount and percentage of respondents by gender, status, age, education to show result of analysis as follow:

A. General Data of Respondents

Result of survey, total 207 respondents are male (42.5%), and female (57.5 %), aged lower than 20 years (10.1%) aged from 20-29 years (37.2%), aged from 30-39 years (26.1%) and more than 40 years (26.6%). Most respondents live in Asia (19.3%), in Europe (62.3%), in America (11.6%), in South America (1.9%), in Australia (3.9%), and in Africa (1%). There were respondents who didn't graduate (25.6%), got Bachelor's Degree (40.1%), and graduated higher than Bachelor's Degree (34.3%). Respondents were Korean (6.3%), Chinese (5.3 %), Japanese (5.8%), American (10.1%), British (16.4%), Australian (4.3%), and other nationality (51.7%). They are students (23.2%), civil servant (7.7%), working with private company (21.7%), work with private enterprises (6.3%), unemployed (14.5%), own business (17.4%) and other occupation (9.2%), They are Christian (60.9%), Buddhist (15%), Islamic (0.5%), no religion (19.3%) and other religions (4.3%).

B. Tourist's Behavior When Visiting the Temples

It is found that all 207 respondents came alone (11.1 %),

with family (46.4 %), with friends (25.6%), came with Tour Company (11.6%), and others (3.3%). There were respondents who have never visited the temple (40.6 %), ever visited once (42 %), twice (14%), more than 3 times (3.4%). There were respondents who have no knowledge about manner in visiting the temples (17.9%), get knowledge about manner in the temples from books (49.3%), learning from leaflets (34.8%), learning from tour companies (26.1%), learnt from Tourism Authority of Thailand (21.3%), and other sources (17.9%).

Questioning of tourist's behavior, it is found that getting dress in revealing clothes are 58.9%, no paying attention to the temple staff's instruction 15.5 %, making a loud noise 46.9%, smoking in the temple compound 21.7%, touching the monk's body 25.1%, imitating the Buddha images while taking photos 22.7% climbing the Chedi 15%, leaving garbage 28.5%, showing affection 11.6 %, sit on the altar 5.3%, other behaviors 1.9%.

Questioning of objectives to visit the temple, the respondents came to worship the Buddha images 31.7%, worship the Reclining Buddha 44.4%, body massage trial 31.4, visit the museum 32.9%, visit around the temple 57.5%, other objectives 5.3%.

C. The Respondents' Self-Evaluation of Performance

In analysis of data by self-evaluation of tourists while visiting the temple, researchers found Mean and Standard Deviation showing self-evaluation of tourist as following table below:

TABLE I
FOREIGN TOURISTS' SELF-EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE IN THE TEMPLE COMPOUND

Self-evaluation of performance during visit temple	level		
	\bar{X}	S.D.	level
1. I dress in appropriate attire.	4.11	1.071	high
2. I follow the obligations in the temple.	4.46	.715	highest
3. I pay respect to the Buddha images.	4.28	.851	highest
4. I am well-behaved while walking in the temple compound.	4.47	.774	highest
5. I obey the temple staff.	4.57	.739	highest
6. I take some photos only the places where are permitted.	4.40	.918	highest
7. I speak in a low voice.	4.35	.760	highest
8. I am concerned to keep the temple clean.	4.52	.775	highest
Total	4.40		highest

From Table I It is found that over all tourists evaluated themselves in the highest level averaged 4.40. When focusing on each item, it is shown that they evaluated themselves in the highest level on obeying the temple staff averaged 4.57 secondly, cleanness concern of the temple averaged 4.52, well-behaved performance during the temple visit averaged 4.47, follow the temple regulations averaged 4.46, take photos only in the places allowed 4.40, speak lower voice 4.35, and pay respect to the Buddha images 4.28 respectively. They evaluated themselves in a high level on dress in appropriate clothes 4.11.

V. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The foreign tourists visited the temples with family (46.4%), have never visited the temples (40.6%), and visited the temple once (42%). They get knowledge of manner from books (49.3%), and the outstanding objectives are to visit around the temple (57.5%), to pay respect to the Reclining Buddha image in the Viharn (44.4%) and to worship the Buddha image in the Phra Ubosod (37.7%) respectively. The inappropriate behavior of the tourists with revealing clothes is the highest score (58.9%) As a result, the regulations to visit, and the obvious signs should be exposed to give the information and instruction.

It is found that over all tourists evaluated themselves in the highest level averaged 4.40. After considering self-evaluation in each item, the tourists' appropriate performance is obeying the temple staff averaged 4.57.

It is noted that result of data analysis of manner in visiting the temple, especially the inappropriate behavior of the tourists with revealing clothes is the highest score (58.9%) which is more than 50 % so the result of analysis can be used as criterion and principle to visit the temples.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to thank the Research and Development Institute, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for supporting this research and special thank goes to Phra Maha Nopparat Aphitchawo for his co-operation in collecting data at Wat Phrachetuponwimonmuklaram.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bunlert Jitungwattana, *Tourist Industry*. Bangkok: Press and design, 2005.
- [2] *Tourist industry business that never die*. Bangkok: CP Books standard, 2005.
- [3] Burkart, a.j., and Mediik S. *The management of tourism*. London: Heineman, 1985.
- [4] Davidson, Rob, *Tourism*. 2nd ed Singapore London: Group Limited.
- [5] Krissana Dechasuruckchon. *Behaviors and Attitudes of Free Independent Tourists towards Traveling at the Wat Prachetupon (Wat Pho)*. Bangkok, Srinakarinvirot University, 2009.
- [6] McIntosh, Robert W., and Goeldner Charles R. *Tourism: principles, practices, Philosophies*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. 1984.
- [7] Namthip Ujjin. *The Travel Behavior of Japanese Tourists Visiting the Rattanakosin Island: A Case stud of: Wat Phrasrirattanasatsadaram Wat Prachetupowimolmangkalam and Wat Arunratchavararam*, Thesis, Pitsanuloke Naresuan University. 2009.
- [8] Nikom Jarumanee. *Tourists and tourist management industry, Bangkok* OS Printing House.1992.
- [9] Patcharin Impitak. "Should the temples be tourist attractions?" Retrieved from ASTV online manager on October 04, 2010.
- [10] Penpat Suwansontichai. *Attitude and Behavior of Foreign Tourists to Wat Prakaew*. Thesis, Bangkok, Srinakarinvirot University, 2004.
- [11] Ploysri Poranun. *Introduction to Tourism*. Chiangmai: Mingmuang. 2001.
- [12] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2004). *Impact: The Effects of Tourism on Culture and the Environment in Asia and the Pacific: Tourism and Heritage Site Management in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR*. Bangkok: UNESCO.