EXPANDING THEMES OF DESTINATION E-IMAGE AND SERVICE QUALITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY USING CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study aims to understand the visitors' attitude towards the island destination (Koh Larn Island, Pattaya, Thailand) and their behavioral intentions and actual behavior, and the discrepancies between both. The conversational interview method was adopted with 40 repeat visitors to understand their positive and negative attitude, the influence of past behavior (if any), intention, and actual behavior towards the island destination, and 30 valid responses were shortlisted for the study that met the study inclusion criteria. The study identified three expanding themes: destination e-image, island destination service quality, behavioral intentions, and actual behavior. The responses revealed more positive feelings of the visitors than negative feelings; also, it indicated the discrepancies between behavioral intentions and actual behavior due to the time, situation, and monetary constraints. This study is novel in identifying the expanding themes in the service marketing domain and exploring visitors' attitudes in detail towards the island destination and their overt behavior. Thus, this is the first study to observe the discrepancies between behavioral intentions and actual behavior in real-time settings.

Keywords: Visitors' Attitude, Destination E-Image, Island Destination Service Quality, Behavioral Intentions, Actual Behavior, Overt Behavior, Qualitative Study.

INTRODUCTION

In marketing literature, behavioral intentions have been researched for more than four decades. Because analyzing the purchase intentions and their association with subsequent behavior provides insights into consumer behavior processes. Thus, marketers use intentions to predict market share, forecast sales, evaluate marketing strategy, analyze advertising copy effectiveness, and understand consumer decision processes. Numerous studies have empirically analyzed the predictive usefulness of intentions (Warshaw, 1980). Several factors determine the behavior, but attitude is the primary factor that leads to action, i.e., behavioral intentions. If a person has an unfavorable attitude, he/she is expected to perform unfavorable behavior, whereas the person with a favorable attitude is expected to perform favorable behavior. Thus, a person's

attitude has a consistently strong relationship with his or her behavior when it is directed at the same target and when it involves the same action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977)

Similarly, Ajzen & Fishbein (2000a) pointed out that the distinction between overall evaluation (attitude) and affect is missing. The authors noted that Thurstone (1931) defined attitude as the *"affect for against a psychological object"*. The authors added that the social psychologists used the term *"affect"* and *"evaluation"* interchangeably, whereas psychologists used the term *"affects"* to refer to *"mood, emotions, and arousal"*. They also pointed out that even though the term *"affect"* is used to measure the attitudinal response, it is evaluative, which uses several semantic differential scales rather than emotional. Thus, they referred to *"attitude"* as *"the evaluation of an object, concept, or behavior along a dimension of favor or disfavor, good or bad, like or dislike"*. Hence, the expected response that reflects the attitude is *"liking or disliking of a person or group of people, and judgments of any concept on such dimensions as enjoyable – unenjoyable, desirable – undesirable, good-bad, or pleasant – unpleasant"* (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000b) In psychology, the theories of attitude, attitude-behavior, and intention-behavior relationships have been widely discussed. The predictive ability of attitude on behavioral intentions and overt behavior are the primary focus of theory and research (Ajzen, 2001).

Similarly, the attitude & behavioral intentions; and behavioral intentions & actual behavior relationships are given more importance by the researchers in the field of service marketing, whereas the development of specific theories, methods, and measures are limited in the field of marketing as the theories are borrowed from social psychology for its applications in consumer or service marketing research. However, exploring the tourists' attitude, intention, and behavior with reference to an island destination in real-time settings with a specific approach is relatively new and can provide a high level of understanding that supports deriving ideal findings.

Therefore, this study aims to understand the visitors' attitude towards the island destination (Koh Larn Island, Pattaya, Thailand), their behavioral intentions and actual behavior, and discrepancies between behavioral intentions and actual behavior. The study is based on the three research postulations: Firstly, to understand the visitors' attitude towards the island destination, their intention and actual behavior, and discrepancies between intentions and actual behavior. Secondly, to explore the reasons behind their intention to visit the island destination; and their overt behavior during and after the visit. Thirdly, to distinguish the positive and negative attitude of the visitors towards the island's destination.

METHODOLOGY

The study sample comprised both locals and ex-pats but was limited to domestic visitors. Expatriates are either employees or those settled down in Thailand for various reasons such as family and retirement. The sample does not include International tourists due to the Covid-19 pandemic as the borders are closed. The target sample consisted of 30 respondents interviewed during their visit to Koh Larn Island, Thailand. The research excluded the same family members, and visitors aged less than 18 and above 60. Since this study aims to understand the intention, behavior, and overt behavior during and after visiting the island destination, the first-time visitors were also excluded from the study. Because excluding first-time visitors would provide

more insights to understand past behavior's influence and favorable and unfavorable attitude of visitors towards the destination.

Furthermore, the results will help us understand whether past behavior or attitude creates intention to visit or exhibit actual behavior. The sample size of the study was not intended to be statistically representative (Britten, 1994) because the *"guiding principle of sampling is to maximize diversity in order to describe the range of phenomena"* (Britten & Fisher, 1993). This qualitative study is ethnographic in nature and adopted the conversational interviewing method. Thus, the researchers did not stick with the fixed set of questions in a fixed order like script reading; but they focused on carefully worded questions to extend the conversation to interpret the interviewee's description and stories (Course | Qualitative Research Methods: Conversational Interviewing | EdX, n.d.$_a$). Few questions were not asked as the respondents themselves opened up about it. Oral consent was obtained from the respondents in the field before starting the conversation. The visitors differ in terms of their education and age to understand the purpose of informed written consent. Thus, informed consent with signature was not considered suitable to adopt in this setting, as the study's objective was to collect the data from the visitors present at the destination. Several studies adopted the purposive sampling method to meet the exclusion criteria. However, this study's major consideration was the respondents' oral consent and their interest to hold a conversation with us; thus, we adopted a mix of convenience and snowball sampling methods. The respondents were not agreeing or comfortable to record the conversation but allowed the researchers to take notes. Since it is a conversational interviewing, we did not scrutinize the respondents initially, but after conducting as many interviews (40 respondents), we scrutinized the responses that met our study criteria, and the final target data consisted of 30.

However, we ensured that they are not a first-time visitor; if they are first-time visitors, we requested them to invite persons accompanied by them who are not first-time visitors to provide more insights and meet the research postulations. One of this project's researchers has passed the certificate course on *"Qualitative Research Methods: Conversational Interviewing"* from MITx and is more aware of the Do's and Don'ts while conducting the conversational interviewing. Also, the main objective of using conversational interviewing is to make the respondent actively engage in the conversation, describe events without asking them any complicated questions, and gain more understanding about their silence, gesture, and interpret more accurately while maintaining the flow of the rich conversation. Thus, this study holds both descriptive and interpretative validity as it captured the facts and description of events on the ground; and accurately interpreted the respondents' conscious and unconscious intentions and beliefs (Course | Qualitative Research Methods: Conversational Interviewing | EdX, n.d.). We did not use rigid data collection such as structured interviews or surveys or close-ended interviews as we want the respondents to open up and shape the direction of our conversation to explore emerging and expanding themes. The conversations were through English and Thai Language. Some of the quoted texts in the article were translated into English.

RESULTS

The study had conversations with 40 respondents, but only 30 responses met the study criteria. The final target sample consisted of 30 respondents with twenty women and ten men who fall in the age group between 23 to 40 years. The majority of the respondents were women. Only five women and two men were expatriate teachers from the Philippines, and all other

respondents were the local people who traveled from the central and northern regions of Thailand. The sample characteristics such as gender, age, and occupation are not central to interpreting results like quantitative research because the study aimed to identify the expanding themes based on the respondents' attitude, conscious and unconscious intentions, and beliefs. The three expanding themes were identified as the result of conversational interviewing: destination e-image, island destination service quality, behavioral intentions, and actual behavior.

Destination e-Image

The first theme that emerged is destination e-Image. There are many definitions and concepts about the image, destination image, and destination online image or online destination image. In general, the term 'Image' is referred as the *"result of the more complex process and is the mental construct developed by the consumer based on a few selected impressions among the flood of total impressions; it comes into being through a creative process in which these selected impressions are elaborated, embellished, and ordered"* (Reynolds, 1965).

Crompton defined the destination image as *"the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination"* (Crompton, 1979). Studies also referred to online destination image or destination online image as the images/words/contents in the websites of tour operators, air transport, hospitality, and destination marketing organization (Govers & Go, 2008); the consumer-generated data (Dwivedi, 2009); photographic and textual data of tourist generated content and national tourism organizations (Mak, 2017); and online content generated by an official tourism organization and user-generated contents including e-Word of Mouth that is e-WoM (Lian & Yu, 2019). On the other hand, Social media is considered as a crucial platform to project destination online image (Syed-Ahmad et al., 2013); and people have begun "*to collect other people's comments and opinions through social media, various websites, microblogs to make their decisions and try to diffuse their ideas through the Internet*" (Lian & Yu, 2019). Also, incongruence in destination image for different platforms from the same provider, different media formats, and information sources was reported by (Lojo et al., 2020). Thus, this section of the study aims to have an in-depth understanding and capture concepts about destination e-image based on visitors' attitude in real-time settings.

"Actually, I used to visit this island more than two times in one year with my family and friends, and I am not sure exactly how I know this place, maybe through them. Mostly, if we see some news or promotional information about this place on Facebook or Instagram, we are motivated to make a travel plan and visit here to have fun" – (Respondent 1)

Respondent 1 instantly said that he/she knows about this island destination through her family and friends, and it seems he/she is very familiar with this place. The attitude is very realistic and favorable. The first-time visitors refer to many information sources and make a travel plan and may have positive or negative feelings, but this study attempts to learn the attitude of repeat visitors in the real-time settings those who are part of positioning the destination in the long run.

"I know this place since my childhood, and we visited here to relax and support the tourism workers to revive from Covid-19. This place is not crowded at present; due to the international travel restrictions, we cannot see the international tourists. Also, I learned about the promotional program 'we travel together' by our Government in an online newspaper i.e., 40 percent subsidy for airfare, hotels, and food at restaurants. So, we came here just like that". - (Respondent 5)

It could be observed that national tourism organizations use Press and Media to promote, and the reach of online newspapers is fast. The attitude of the respondent is positive and immediately reacts to the promotions by Government.

"I know about this place through the Facebook post of my friend, and I really wanted to visit here. I have visited this place once. Whenever I see Facebook and Instagram posts of my colleagues and Facebook friends on an Island or somewhere, I am more likely to make a travel plan and visit that destination'. Now, I am here to chill out with my friends". - (Respondent 8)

This respondent has a positive attitude and immediate instinct to visit the destination.

"I mostly use Facebook and Instagram to post my pictures and sometimes go live while enjoying at the destination. When I get more likes and comments for my posts, I feel happy and share this with my family and friends". - (Respondent 12)

This statement is very realistic, and it positions the destination's electronic image positively.

"I use social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter very often in a day. I used to post my daily activities with pictures, emojis, and texts. Almost all the time I used to check my notifications, Hahaha (Laughing). I quickly react to the comments and messages on Facebook and Instagram to stay connected with my friends". - (Respondent 9)

The above statement emphasizes that social media became a part of people's lives. They are more prone to post almost all major or minor activities in their day-to-day lives to exchange information, gain ideas/knowledge, quick discussions, and stay connected with people and build a virtual network.

"I used to take as many pictures and videos to post on Facebook, Twitter, and Line, as well as add pictures/videos to stories. I regularly share my experience, emotions, and mood on social media. Also, I support the local entrepreneurs at the destination by writing honest reviews on Google, Facebook, and Instagram, so that many tourists will visit the place and support local tourism entrepreneurs. I reply to people's questions about my experience and queries about the place or facilities. I want to be happy and make everyone happy".- (Respondent 18)

The above statement emphasizes the role of search engines and social media in creating destination electronic images. In addition, it reiterates the role and importance of the internet and social media in people's lives. Few studies have mentioned that social media is a platform for creating the overall online image. However, we can understand here that anything reflected electronically, including emotions, posts, photographs, videos, live videos, reviews, texts (e-WoM), materials, news, online promotions (Campaign, influencers, advertisement), and online engagement (discussion, comments, replies, blogs, forums) positions the destination and creates electronic destination image, which in turn influences other people in their social media network to have visit intentions or to perform actual behavior. Hence, the users create the destination e-image in response to their experience at the destination and online promotional programs. According to Pareto's law, even 20 percent of the user-generated content can create an 80 percent effect on the destination's e-image. Thus, most of the repeated visitors have a favorable

attitude, which helps to achieve destination competitiveness, and they are trustworthy in building the destination's e-image in the long-run.

Island Destination Service Quality

Mostly, service quality measurement in academic research comes with the expectation, perception, or pre-established theories in other domains. In the tourism domain, few studies Prayogo & Kusumawardhani (2016); Moon & Han (2019) empirically investigated service quality or experience quality at an island destination, which mainly focused on the hospitality sector (accommodation) or outlined the general experience at the destination in terms of escapism, relaxation, enjoyment, and involvement. Thus, this section attempts to understand visitors' positive and negative feelings towards an island destination in real-time settings, helping to build and achieve destination competitiveness. Most of the visitors' attitude towards the island destination service quality is about the accommodation and more feelings about the island itself and available facilities & accessibility to the island.

"This island is very beautiful. It looks clean and has clear water. The main purpose of my visit is enjoying the beach."– (*Respondent 20*)

The strong theme emerged for island destination service quality from the above statement; this indicates the visitor's positive feeling about the island itself. The point' clears water' is a compliment for the island destination; it could distinguish itself from the other island destination.

"This island has clear and white water when compared to other islands in the neighboring province. I enjoy nature and relax at the beach chair/bed without doing any activity. The beach chair is not expensive to rent".-(Respondent 10)

The above statement again expressed the visitor's positive feeling towards the destination and used a more specific word, *"clear and white water",* to express her feelings. Further, the respondent implied that relaxing is not much expensive.

"This island has a natural beauty with clean and white sands. I like to float, swim, and relax in the sea". – *(Respondent 8)*

"When I came to this island with my friends, I had a lot of fun in water sport activities. We rode in a Banana Boat". – (*Interviewer*)

"There are many activities available here, but I mostly like to swim and enjoy with my friends without involving water sport activities. Also, I am a bit scared of the banana boat because I am not very good at swimming"- (Respondent 8)

Again, the positive feelings reaffirm the island's quality, which creates intentions and makes people exhibit the actual behavior by visiting and enjoying the island.

"This island has very clean beaches, with white sand and clear water. It is easily accessible from the pier through a ferry, and it takes just 30 minutes to reach the island. Speed boats are also available. The popular beaches on this island are Samae and Tawaen beaches. We can rent a motorbike and explore this island's beauty on our own or rent a songthaew or use motorbike taxis, which is not much expensive. It has all facilities, including accommodation, souvenir shops, food shops/restaurants, convenience stores, restrooms, spa, etc. It is not so expensive to reach this island. We can have so much fun-filled memories and relaxation". - Respondent 5

More positive affirmation about the island destination indicates the facilities to reach the island, in the island, and the island itself is considered crucial to building the overall island destination service quality. It also implies the presence of experience quality of the visitors, which co-creates the destination image. Moreover, the word 'not expensive' implies a quality visit for a fair price.

"When I came with my family, we have tasted the fresh seafood from the restaurant. My family liked the Shrimp and Crab very much". - Interviewer

"Yeah, we are fond of seafood. We tasted the seafood from food shops, which is 100 percent fresh and cooked with herbs and sauces in original Thai flavor. The food shop owners are also very kind, and we can feel the good hospitality here". - (Respondent 9)

The above statement again affirms the positive feeling towards Koh Larn Island. Further, it expands the theme of island destination service quality by including the quality of local food, quality of restaurants, and local people's behavior. This section explored visitors' positive attitude towards Koh Larn Island, which also identified and summarised the important elements of island destination service quality. Few people pointed out the aspects that made them feel good and happy at the destination. The quality aspects pointed by the respondents are not the same, but most of them pointed out the aspect *"clear water and white sands"*. This section provided an in-depth understanding of island destination service quality.

Behavioral Intentions and Actual Behavior

In marketing literature and academic research, the terms' behavioral intentions' and *"actual behavior"* are widely used. In the tourism domain, the behavioral intention (Chen Lee et al., 2019) or the visit intention (Khan et al., 2017) or the revisit intention (Prayogo & Kusumawardhani, 2016), or the tourists' loyalty to the destination (Moon & Han, 2019) were widely studied by the researchers. Mainly, it has been conceptualized to understand (i) how destination image affects behavioral intentions? (ii) how service quality affects behavioral intentions?; and (iii) how tourist satisfaction affects behavioral intentions? The Researchers Mechinda et al. (2009) pointed out that loyalty can be both attitudinal and behavioral. Attitudinal loyalty could be the intention to revisit the destination, recommend the destination to others, and tell positive things about the place to others, whereas behavioral loyalty is expressed by the repeated number of visits. The authors Mechinda et al. (2009) stated that the link between satisfaction and loyalty might not be strong in the tourism context. Even though they are satisfied, they do not want to come back because they may seek novelty. The intention to revisit was also measured with time constraints *"I want to visit back Sabang Island next year"* and *"I will definitely visit back to Sabang Island next year"* (Prayogo & Kusumawardhani, 2016), *"Intention to visit India within next 2 years"* (Khan et al., 2017), and without time constraints *"I intend to revisit this destination in the future"* (Moon & Han, 2019) *"Revisit"* (Chen Lee et al., 2019). Chow & Murphy (2011) conducted a study for predicting travel intentions and actual behavior using the quantitative method. A limited number of studies explored actual behavior in real-time settings; thus, this section would provide more understanding of visitors' behavioral intentions and actual behavior. Here, the respondents were asked about their behavioral intentions/actual behavior, and attitude towards the destination before and after their visit. Thus, both positive and negative attitudes reflected towards these dimensions were well noted.

"I want to visit this destination again with my family (Facial expression: Excited). I miss them very much (Facial expression: Disappointment)". - *(Respondent 8)*

The above statement confirms the positive attitude of the respondent towards their revisit intention. However, here, the respondent's unconscious intentions and personal desire can be noticed, and the conscious intentions are understood as the respondent wanted to visit with his/her family. The positive emotion of the respondent is well observed, and disappointment of missing family is also observed.

"Actually, I come from the Northern region of Thailand. Usually, people from mountains like the island. I am a bit different. I am not too fond of the island. However, I came for my friends as they love to spend leisure time on the island. I am not sure whether I will revisit this island again or not; it depends on (Facial expression: Thinking)"- (Respondent 23).

The above response conforms to the negative attitude towards the destination itself. It is not about destination image or service quality or satisfaction, but the visitor does not intend to visit this island, but the actual behavior exhibited is that he/she came for his/her friends and was unsure about revisiting the destination. The respondent exhibited the thinking emotion in his/her face. Still, there is a probability of visiting the destination due to situational constraints.

"Before two years, I visited this destination, and now, I am again here. Right now, I am enjoying and relaxed here. I have clicked many photographs to keep fun-filled memories for a long time. I am interested in revisiting this destination. However, I am not sure when I will come back again to this place (Facial expression: Worried)". - *(Respondent 28)*

The above response from the respondent affirms the positive attitude of the respondent towards the destination. Henceforth, academic researchers always have a question in mind, *"Does behavioral intention transform to actual behavior?"* It is understood that behavioral intentions may or may not transform into actual behavior because the respondent mentioned that he/she visited the destination before two years. It is implied that the respondent was happy in his/her previous visit. Thus, the respondent had an intention to revisit the destination, but he/she could make it only after two years, and again the respondent has an intention to revisit but is not sure when he/she can make it up. The respondent seems to be a bit worried. It implies that the actual behavior could be exhibited based on the situational constraints, time constraints, and financial resources constraints even though the respondent intends to revisit the destination.

"I like this place very much. Six months before I came to this island, and again, I came now. I have plans to revisit this destination for its natural beauty. Also, I have recommended my family and friends to visit this island by tagging them in my Facebook and Instagram posts (Facial expression: Smile)".- (Respondent 9)

The above statement consists of the strong positive expression of the respondent towards the destination. The respondent has visited the island six months before and implies the revisit intention of the respondent. The revisit intention is driven by the island's natural beauty, which implies that the island destination possesses competitiveness. Thus, after realizing its competitiveness, the respondent revisited the island and recommended it to others (his/her family and friends) by tagging them. Thus, this creates the destination e-image and which, in turn, the visitors' friends and family would intend to visit the destination; hence the visitors positively co-create the destination image. The respondent's happiness and positive feelings are well observed.

"I am very much familiar with this island. I plan to visit here to take a break from work. I also intend to visit other new places, however as this place is very familiar and involves fewer expenses, I often travel to this island. If my friends have some other better travel suggestions, I would like to try them". - *(Respondent 5)*

This statement implies the positive attitude of the respondent towards the island. The respondent is very much familiar with this island and implied that he/she exhibited behavioral loyalty. Also, we can note that the visitor can enjoy nature and relax by spending less money. If some suggestions come from the friends of the visitor, he/she may intend to follow the suggestion and desire to switch the destination for seeking novelty.

This section has summarized the respondents' positive and negative attitudes towards the destination, reflecting their behavioral intention and actual behavior. People with positive attitudes mostly exhibit positive intentions, and people with negative attitudes also exhibit an undecided state of mind, but they do not have a negative intention for revisiting the destination. The respondents who possess positive behavioral intentions / undecided state of mind exhibit the actual behavior by visiting the destination due to situational, time, and financial constraints. Hence, there are discrepancies between behavioral intentions and actual behavior. It is also observed that most of the respondents possessed a positive attitude before and after their visit; we could observe this since the study targeted repeat visitors.

DISCUSSION

This study explored and explained repeat visitors' attitude towards Koh Larn Island, which identified the three themes expanding in recent times. The themes of destination e-image, island destination service quality, and behavioral intention and actual behavior were widely studied by researchers in different headings and aspects. However, the themes are expanding, which is unnoticed. Thus, this study explored the uncovered facts and evolving themes in real-time settings using qualitative data collection methods. The main purpose of using this qualitative method is *"to collect and analyze qualitative data to access the lived experience of people, to access their experiences without imposing our own preformed expectations and theories"* (Course | Qualitative Research Methods: Analyzing Data | edX, n.d.$_b$). Under all the three themes, it is noted that the respondents have expressed more positive feelings than negative feelings. To avoid the chaos of immediate response to a trigger, we did not choose the first-time visitors. Also, to avoid interviewer bias, the conversational interview questions were carefully designed to open up their feelings without imposing our theoretical thoughts. The questions in some sections were not asked to let the conversation flow in its own directions. The respondents' positive attitude towards the destination implies the co-creation of destination e-image for building destination competitiveness and positioning the island destination for its service quality. It is also understood that the island's environmental quality is also a crucial factor influencing behavioral intentions. Moreover, the important point to note here is most of the respondents' attitude before and after their visit is positive and destination e-image triggers prospective visitors and creates the intention to visit.

Another interesting point to note here is the repeat visitors' behavioral intention is not so much dependent on other aspects of island destination service quality rather than the island itself. Further, the responses indicated that behavioral intention and actual behavior does not depend on each other due to the time, situation, and monetary constraints. Thus, the reason for exhibiting actual behavior does not depend greatly on visitor satisfaction and behavioral intention. Hence, discrepancies were observed between behavioral intentions and actual behavior. Since this is a qualitative study, the study cannot draw the statistical relationships to draw the proportion of relationships that exists between the three variables destination e-image, island destination

service quality, behavioral intentions, and actual behavior. Nevertheless, the study's findings provide a clear understanding of the evolving themes and their importance for destination marketers. This study also explored the uncovered aspect that lies in the middle of behavioral intention and actual behavior, which explained the reasons for not exhibiting actual behavior even though they intend to revisit the destination and the time taken for exhibiting the actual behavior.

Further, few respondents possessed an undecided state of mind for exhibiting actual behavior, and few already exhibited the actual behavior though they have negative feelings towards the island destination. However, it is understood that the family and friends can influence the respondent's intention to visit the destination either by co-creating the destination e-image or by creating a desire to seek novelty, and as a result, the respondent will switch to another destination. Thus, this study revealed the strong positive attitude of the respondents towards Koh Larn Island. This study is limited to one particular island destination and convenience/Snowball sampling does not represent all the visitors present on the island during data collection. These are the major limitations of the study. Hence, this study could be further expanded by using a quantitative or mixed methods approach to draw the statistical relationships between the variables.

Implications

The implications for destination marketers are exploring tourists' attitudes, tourists' actual behavior before and after their visit, and their engagement in co-creating the destination image. Firstly, the tourism professionals and destination marketers must focus on positioning the island destination based on its natural attributes for building competitiveness than the other essential service attributes like transportation and accommodation. Secondly, they must closely observe the attitude, covert behavior, and repeat visitors' actual behavior to explore the destination e-image co-creation pattern, alter the strategies accordingly, and build a strong positive destination image. Such observations will be beneficial for the destination marketers as these repeat visitors play an important role in expressing positive feelings and mature feedback on service quality attributes than the first-time visitors.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

APPENDIX-I

Questions Asked During the Conversational Interview

Exploring visitors' attitudes, intention, behavior towards Koh Larn Island, Pattaya, Thailand

This study is part of our research project. We aim to explore visitors' attitudes, behavioral intentions and actual behavior towards Koh Larn Island, Pattaya, Thailand.

Part – 1 Introduction

We are researching visitors' attitudes, intentions, and actual behavior to visit this island. First, I would like to thank you for your consent to participate in the interview. I welcome you once again to take part in our study.

I would like to hear about your feelings/experiences/intentions/actual behavior to visit this island. So, let me start with a few sets of questions.

General

1. Where are you coming from?
2. What is your occupation?
3. How long you live in Thailand? (only to foreigners)
4. Who else accompanied with you? Tell us about your travel group.

Subject's knowledge about Koh Larn Island

5. How do you know about this place?

Subject's role in cocreating destination E-Image

6. What type of social media applications you frequently use?
7. How much time do you spend on social media in a day?
8. What are the contents you post on social media?

Subject's behavioral intentions

9. How often you visit this island?
10. What are your intentions to revisit or recommend this place to your family and friends?

Part - 2

Subject's attitude towards island destination and its service quality

1. What is your opinion about this island?
2. What are the leisure activities you involve during this visit?
3. What is the reason for visiting this island?
4. How do you feel about the food, accommodation, and other facilities on this island?

Part – 3 Wrap Up

Well, we have come to the end of the interview. Is there anything else you would like to share with me? Thank you very much for participating, and your data will be kept strictly confidential.

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