



# Knowing Our Neighbors

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## **Destination Image and Destination Personality: A Case Study of Hua-Hin Prachubkirikhan**

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### **Abstract**

The study is based on the research of Hosany, Ekinici and Uysal (2006). 400 tourists, who visited Hua-Hin Prachubkirikhan, were sample. The research instrument was questionnaire while the usage statistical techniques were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, principal component analysis, and canonical correlation. It was found that destination image divided into 3 parts consisted of affective, physical atmosphere, accessibility as destination personality had 3 components composed of sincerity, excitement, and conviviality. The result from canonical analysis showed that destination image related with destination personality.

**Keywords:** Destination Image, Destination Personality, Hua-Hin

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## Introduction

Tourism is a human activity possibly traced to the ancient times. In such previous times, the aim of tourism, however, was mainly involved with the surveys, not the relaxation. Thanks to the advanced technology and global transportation, tourism has been dramatically changed. The current economic and political tension also enhance the popularity of tourism as people wish to have a tourism for relaxation, creation, inspiration, relationship, and so on. Tourism does not only make people learn about the culture and tradition but also increases the community's or the nation's economic growth and social development. Brand image makes the brand more popular and provides many benefits; for instance, the brand image makes the products different from the competitors (Lim and O'Casey, 2001); the customers may hold that the products have higher quality (Erdem, 1998). According to the previous researches such as the one of Karande et al. (1997), the brand image was associated with the brand personality. However, for the tourism, the correlation between the destination image and the destination personality should be studied instead (Hosany, Ekinci, and Uysal, 2006).

There are many researches related to the destination image e.g. the studies of Zhang et al. (2014) and Chen, Chen, Okumus (2013). However, only a few researches focus on the correlation between the destination image and the destination personality such as the research of Chen and Phou (2013) investigating the correlation between the destination image and the destination personality of the tourists visiting Ankor Wat, Cambodia. Such research found that the destination image was positively correlated to the destination personality. However, the correlation between destination image and the destination personality of the tourism in Thailand has not been yet studied.

Having a trip, most of the tourists may think about the beautiful destinations, delicious foods, and fabulous atmosphere. Hua Hin is one of the places that can answer this preference. In fact, Hua Hin has been visited by the tourists for ever 100 years. The popularity of Hua Hin increased when the royal palace, namely, Klai Kangwon Palace was built in Hua Hin. Since then, many weekend houses were built at Hua Hin. At present, Hua Hin is full of resorts and golf courses, temples and markets that attract the tourists in Asia and around the world. As such, Hua Hin is the outstanding tourism industrial city that expresses the identity of Thailand supremely.

This research, from the above reasons, aimed to investigate the correlation between the destination image and the destination personality using Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khirikhan Province as the research area.

## Research Methodology

1. This research is the quantitative study surveying the opinions of the Thai tourists visiting Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khirikhan Province on the destination image and the destination personality.

2. The population of this research consisted of 1,062,609 tourists visiting Hua Hin (Department of Tourism, 2010). The sample group was calculated using the Yamane method. Finally, 400 samples were obtained and randomly sampled using the convenience sampling during August 2013 to September 2013.

3. Questionnaire was used as research instrument. The questionnaire comprised three parts of general data of the respondents, the tourism behaviors of the tourists visiting Hua Hin, and the opinions towards the destination image and the destination personality, respectively.

4. The research initially began with the literature review for the conceptual framework, theories and researches compiled from the books, journals and related articles to gain the issues for drafting the questionnaire in accord with the research objectives. The validity of the drafted question was considered by the two experts of marketing and tourism. Only the questions consistent with the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) over 0.50 were selected. The questionnaire adjusted and approved by the experts was tried out with 30 tourists visiting Cha-am District, Petchaburi Province. It was found that the Alpha Cronbach Coefficients of the questionnaire for the destination image and the destination personality were 0.891 and 0.905, respectively, indicating that the questionnaire had high confidence. Therefore, this questionnaire was used in the data collection with the samples.

5. The data were verified whereas the verified data were analyzed using the SPSS program whereas the general data of the respondents and the tourism behaviors of the tourists were analyzed by the descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage.

The factors affecting the destination image and the destination personality of the Thai tourists visiting Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khirikhan Province, were analyzed by the Principal Component Analysis and Varimax Axis. The Eigenvalue of each factor should be high than 1 whereas the factor loading absolute value should be over 0.5 (Hair et al., 2009).

In addition, the Canonical Correlation method was exploited to test the correlation between the destination image and the destination personality.

## Results

1. The general data analysis revealed that most of the samples were female, (n = 247, 61.75%), aged 21-30 years old (n = 184, 46.00%), and single (n = 281, 70.25%). They obtained bachelor's degree education (n = 309, 77.25%). Most of them had a domicile in the central region (n = 172, 33.00%). They were the employees working at private companies (n = 221, 55.25%) and obtained the average household income in the amount of Bt. 30,001 -50,000 per month (n = 270, 67.50%), See Table 1.

Table 1.  
*General Data of Samples*

Description	Frequency (n=400)	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	247	61.75
Male	153	38.25
<b>Age</b>		
Lower than 21 years old	115	28.75
21 – 30 years old	184	46.00
31 – 40 years old	71	17.75
41 – 50 years old	22	5.50
51 – 60 years old	5	1.25
More than 60 years old	3	0.75
<b>Marriage Status</b>		
Single	281	70.25
Marriage	101	25.25
Divorce	18	4.50
<b>Education Level</b>		
Primary School	4	1.00
Secondary School	38	9.50
Vocational	17	4.25
Bachelor Degree	309	77.25
Above Bachelor Degree	32	8.00
<b>Hometown</b>		
Central	172	43.00
Western	124	31.00
Southern	68	17.00
Northern	14	3.50
Northeastern	12	3.00
Eastern	10	2.50
<b>Occupation</b>		
Private Employee	221	45.25
Student / Undergraduate Student	76	19.00
Government Officer	62	15.50
Own Business	35	8.75
Other	6	1.50

Description	Frequency (n=400)	Percentage
<b>Monthly Revenue</b>		
Lower than 10,000 THB	14	3.50
10,001 – 20,000 THB	37	9.25
20,001 – 30,000 THB	25	6.25
30,001 – 50,000 THB	270	67.50
More than 50,000 THB	54	13.50

2. The analysis of the tourism behaviors indicated that most of the respondents used to visit Hua Hin in the previous three years (n = 299, 74.75%); they had most visited Hua Hin for 2-3 times (n = 148, 37.00%); they prepared themselves before the trip for 3-7 days (n = 211, 52.75%); most of them travelled with spouse/boyfriend or girlfriend (n = 188, 47.00%); they used internet for tourist information searching and room reservation (n = 277, 69.25%), See Table 2.

Table 2.  
*Tourist Behavior of Samples*

Description	Frequency (n=400)	Percentage
<b>Used / not used to visit Hua-Hin in 3 years</b>		
Used to	299	74.75
Not used to	101	25.25
<b>How many times they visit Hua-Hin?</b>		
Never	30	7.50
1 time	63	15.75
2-3 times	148	37.00
4-5 times	102	25.50
More than 5 times	57	14.25
<b>How many days they prepare for visiting Hua-Hin?</b>		
Less than 3 days	145	36.25
3-7 days	211	52.75
7 days – 1 month	30	7.50
1 – 3 months	8	2.00
More than 3 months	6	1.50
<b>Who they travel with?</b>		
Spouse/Boyfriend or Girlfriend	188	47.00
Friend	137	34.25
Family	70	17.50
Alone	5	1.25
<b>Which channel they prepare for visiting Hua-Hin?</b>		
Internet	277	69.25
Friend	93	23.25
Television	12	3.00
Magazine	11	2.75
Newspaper	7	1.75

3. The factor analysis results related to the destination image and the destination personality of the Thai tourists in Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khirikhan Province, could be separately concluded as follows:

a. The factor analysis related to the destination image comprised 15 factors that could be divided into three components. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was 0.792 whereas the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was 7548.500 (Sig = 0.000). The three components consisted of affective, physical atmosphere, and accessibility with the total variance of 73.695%, See Table 3.

Table 3.  
Factor Loading, Mean, S.D. of Each Component of Destination Image

Factor	Factor Loading	Mean	S.D.
Component 1: Affective (Eigenvalues = 3.745 Variance = 26.749%)			
Pleasant	0.980	4.44	1.10
Relaxing	0.971	4.54	0.90
Nice Place	0.969	4.59	0.97
Exciting	0.938	4.31	0.96
Component 2: Atmosphere (Eigenvalues = 3.720 Variance = 26.568%)			
Silence	0.977	4.41	1.09
Innocent	0.968	4.53	0.88
Sleepy	0.967	4.60	0.93
Sparse	0.932	4.30	0.92
Component 3: Accessibility (Eigenvalues = 2.785 Variance = 19.895%)			
Lively	0.972	4.57	0.95
Friendly	0.961	4.52	0.89
Interesting	0.951	4.29	0.93

b. The factor analysis related to the destination personality comprised 15 factors that could be divided into three components. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was 0.823 whereas the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was 6617.544 (Sig = 0.000). The three components consisted of sincerity, excitement, and conviviality with the total variance of 93.605%, See Table 4.

Table 4.  
Factor Loading, Mean, S.D. of Each Component of Destination Personality

Factor	Factor Loading	Mean	S.D.
Component 1: Sincerity (Eigenvalues = 3.747 Variance = 34.061%)			
Sincere	0.978	4.31	0.98
Successful	0.975	4.42	0.89
Reliable	0.961	4.54	0.78
Intelligent	0.955	4.14	1.00
Component 2: Excitement (Eigenvalues = 3.717 Variance = 33.787%)			
Original	0.974	4.42	0.91
Spirited	0.974	4.32	0.98
Daring	0.964	4.53	0.80
Excitement	0.938	4.01	1.00
Component 3: Conviviality (Eigenvalues = 2.833 Variance = 25.758%)			
Friendly	0.977	4.30	1.03
Family Oriented	0.970	4.15	1.05
Charming	0.961	4.55	0.81

4. Analyzing the correlation between the destination image and the destination personality by the Canonical Correlation, the affective, physical atmosphere and accessibility factors were correlated to the destination personality whereas the factors of sincerity and excitement were correlated to the destination image. However, the factor of conviviality was not associated with any factors. Note that only the first variate was used since the Canonical Loading value was higher than 0.4, as exhibited in Table 5.



Table 5.  
*Canonical Loadings for Destination Images and Destination Personality*

Items	Variate Number		
	1	2	3
Canonical Correlation	0.54	0.22	0.14
<b>Destination Image</b>			
Affective	-0.78	0.21	-0.32
Physical Atmosphere	-0.54	-0.50	0.08
Accessibility	-0.88	0.45	0.21
<b>Destination Personality</b>			
Sincerity	-0.93	0.08	0.04
Excitement	-0.88	-0.34	0.66
Conviviality	-0.12	-0.91	-0.52

### Conclusion

From this research, most samples were female, aged 21-30 years old, and single. They obtained the education in bachelor's degree level and had a domicile in the central region. The samples worked at the private companies and obtained the average household income in the amount of Bt. 30,001 – 50,000 per month.

The analysis of the tourism behaviors indicated that most of the respondents used to visit Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khirikhan Province, in the previous three years; they had most visited Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khirikhan Province, for 2-3 times; they prepared themselves before the trip for 3-7 days; most of them travelled with their spouse/boyfriend or girlfriend; and they used internet for tourist information searching and room reservation.

The factor analysis related to the destination image comprised 15 factors that could be divided into three components - affective, physical atmosphere, and accessibility whereas the factor analysis related to the destination personality comprised 15 factors that could be divided into three components - sincerity, excitement, and conviviality, respectively.

Analyzing the correlation between the destination image and the destination personality by the Canonical Correlation, the affective, physical atmosphere and accessibility factors were correlated to the destination personality whereas the factors of sincerity and excitement were correlated to the destination image. However, the factor of conviviality was not associated with any factors

In summary, the research findings especially the analysis of factors and correlation analysis indicated that these findings are in accord with the ones of Chen and Phou (2013) and Hosany, Ekinci and Uysal (2006). Hence, it can be reaffirmed that the destination image was correlated to the destination personality. In other words, as a result, it can be concluded that the brand image was associated with the brand personality. However, there are still some limitations of this research in particular the factors used in the analysis as most of them were adapted from the overseas marketing researches and may not be suitable to the Thai tourism contexts. Thus, other methods should be exploited to obtain the factors that are more compatible for the tourism-context researches.

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