

The Religious Tourism Trends to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations, Behaviors, and Tendencies to Revisit

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Abstract— This study sought to 1) understand behaviors of tourists in religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations, 2) understand concerns of Thai tourists towards the experiences of religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations., and 3) understand the effects of the experiences of Thai tourists towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations on the decisions to revisit. The data was collected from the sample group that consisted of 400 Thai tourists who had made religious trips to make wishes to sacred things at religious destinations in Bangkok by the means of a questionnaire. The research hypotheses were then analyzed using the Multiple Regression Analysis method. The result suggested that 1) tourism experiences in the aspects of spiritual escapes, services, learning and aesthetics were affected Satisfaction towards wish making for love in religious destinations with a statistic significance ($R^2 = 0.80$), and 2) the overall satisfaction in religious tourism that affected decisions to of the tourists to revisit was in a high level of 78.00% ($R^2 = 0.78$).

Index Terms— Religious Tourism, Making Wishes to Sacred Things, Satisfaction, Revis

I. INTRODUCTION

Religious tourism has long been a popularized tourism format among Thai tourists since the format includes not only Buddhist religious places that are considered valuable attractions which reflect cultural aspects, concrete and abstract resources but also places that heal those in despair, in need, or those with certain worries who seek escapes. This form of tourism has proved to be one of the most effective that can meet the needs of many.

Thailand has seen a major increase in the number of tourists with interests in religious tourism trips especially the ones that involve making wishes in sacred destinations. According to a behavioral survey conducted in Bangkok in 2018 by Brand Matric Research, Co., Ltd., the result found that the majority of Thai tourists preferred religious tourism activities that include sightseeings to sacred places in and making wishes to sacred things at 67%, which was 36.9% higher than the previous study result in 2016 [1] The main reason for Bangkok to become a destination for tourists with interests in this tourism format could be the cultural diversities, convenient facilities, transportations from attractions to attractions, etc.

The rising religious tourism trend to make wishes to sacred things had come to the attention of the researcher to see the importance of improving religious tourism destinations in order to provide better services that match with religious tourism behaviors and maximize satisfaction and influence revisits. The study started with a selected group of Thai tourists who had visited religious destinations in Bangkok to provide a result that could be used as a guideline for improving religious destinations both situated in Bangkok

and every other province of Thailand effectively to eventually transform into a unique tourism format that attracts more domestic and foreign tourists alike into religious tourism of Thailand.

II. PURPOSE OF STUDY

1. To understand behaviors of Thai tourists in religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations.
2. To understand concerns of Thai tourists towards the experiences of religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations.
3. To understand the effects of the experiences of Thai tourists towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations on the decisions to revisit.

III. RELATED STUDIES

Chidchom Kanchula [2] studied the factors that influenced the tendencies of tourists to revisit Koh Kred, Nonthaburi and learned that that the 7P's of Marketing Mix (product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence), attitudes and earnings had positive influences towards revisit decisions with a static significance at a P-value of < 0.01 .

In another study, Surachet Amsun [3] sought to create a supportive guideline to influence revisits to destinations by locals in Chiang Mai and found that the main factors which influenced revisits from tourists to the destinations were attractions and activities. The guideline emphasizes preservations of natural resources and cultures of the locals to influence revisits from tourists.

IV. RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

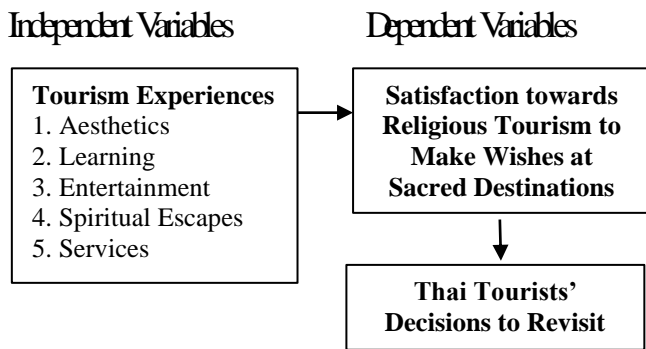


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Using the research conceptual framework, research hypotheses were generated as the following:

1. Experiences in religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations affect positive satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations.
2. Satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations affect decisions to Thai tourists to revisit.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Population and Sample Group

The selected population for this study consisted of an uncertain number of tourists in religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations in Bangkok at first. Therefore, the number of the population within the sample was calculated using an infinite population calculation formula [4] with a reliability of 95 percent ($\alpha = 0.05$). The calculation of the sample group found the most appropriate number of participants to be at least 384. The researcher, then, decided to have 400 participants for the ease of calculation and analysis presentation.

B. Research Tools

The tools applied in the collection of data was a questionnaire with 6 sections, with the first three sections being Section 1 Experiences of Making Wishes for Love at Religious Destinations, Section 2 Satisfaction towards Making Wishes for Love at Religious Destinations, and Section 3 Decisions of Thai Tourists to Revisit. The next two sections, Sections 4 Personal Information and Section 5 Behaviors of Thai Tourists in Religious Tourism to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations, utilized the Likert Scale question format to provide single-answer and close-ended questions. The questionnaire concluded with Section 6 Concerns and Additional Suggestions.

C. Data Analysis

The Inferential Statistics method was selected to analyze the data along with Multiple Regression Analysis at a significance of 0.05 to test the research hypotheses.

VI. RESULTS

1. Behaviors of Thai Tourist in Religious Tourism to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations.

The result showed that most of the tourists learned about religious destinations mainly from social media platforms, traveled to the destinations using Bangkok's Mass Transit Systems or personal vehicles as alternatives, and aimed to make wishes to improve work, money, luck and love, consecutively. Personal flower sets or those sold at each destination were the most preferred choice to use in the rituals, with food or fruits being special alternatives.

2. Experiences in Religious Tourism to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations.

The result found that 1) aesthetics-wise, most tourists felt calm, relaxed and energized after making wishes at the destinations, 2) learning-wise, tourists found that, at the destinations, they came to know more about the history and backgrounds of the different religions in Thailand, 3) entertainment wise, the tourists enjoyed and were impressed with interesting activities and new wish-making activities provided at each destination, and 4) services-wise, the tourists found that the destinations had decent services such as restrooms, security, etc. for tourists.

3. Satisfaction toward Religious Tourism to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations.

The result found that the tourists were highly satisfied with religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations and reported that they were satisfied with activities provided at each destination the most, with satisfaction in facilities and value for money in second and third places, respectively.

4. Decisions to Revisit

The result showed that the tourists were highly determined to revisit their destinations to make wishes again in the future and were reportedly intended to spread the news and recommend others to make wishes at the destinations as well.

5. Hypothesis Test Results

5.1 Experiences in Religious Tourism to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations Affect Tourism Satisfaction.

The hypothesis test result is shown in the following Table 1:

Table 1 Stepwise Multiple Correlation Coefficient Values of the factor Positive Satisfaction towards Tourism Experiences.

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig	R ²
	B	Std. Error	β			
Satisfaction towards Religious Tourism to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations	0.60	0.02	0.78	25.62	0.00	0.78

Dependent Variable: F = 133.85*, Durbin-Watson = 1.76

The hypothesis test result found, in tourism experiences that affect positive satisfaction, that tourism experiences affected tourism satisfaction at a high level of 80.00% (R² = 0.796). Out of 5 secondary variables, there were 4 that affected tourism satisfaction with a static significance (p<0.05), which were Aesthetics (β = 0.10), Learning (β =

0.16), Spiritual Escapes (β = 0.40), and Services (β = 0.30).

5.2 Experiences in Religious Tourism to Make Wishes at Sacred Destinations Affect Tourism Satisfaction.

The hypothesis test result is shown in the following Table 2:

Table 2 Stepwise Multiple Correlation Coefficient Values of the factor Positive Satisfaction towards Decisions of Thai Tourists to Revisit.

Tourism Experiences	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig	R ²
	B	Std. Error	β			
1. Aesthetics	0.09	0.04	0.10	2.22	0.03	0.80
2. Learning	0.13	0.04	0.16	3.35	0.00	
3. Entertainment	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.61	0.54	
4. Spiritual Escapes	0.30	0.04	0.40	6.83	0.00	
5. Services	0.22	0.03	0.30	6.43	0.00	

Dependent Variable: F = 656.46*, Durbin-Watson = 1.67

The hypothesis test result found, in satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations, that positive satisfactions affected decisions of Thai tourists to revisit at a high level of 78.00% (R² = 0.78).

VII. SUGGESTIONS

1. The participants in this study all agreed that information provided by each destination through the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Line Official, etc. could be improved much further and that there could have been more interesting backgrounds or stories could be shared for tourists to learn.

2. The result showed that tourists prefer and feel welcome to learn about history and background of each destination besides making wishes for love at the destinations only. Each destination is, then, advised to have information and proper staff ready for presentations for tourists who are excited to learn more about the place and best practices when making wishes for love.

VIII. CONCLUSION

1. Tourism experiences in spiritual escapes were found to affect satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations the most. The obtained result was also found to be in accordance with that of Paweeda Samanketgon's [5] who studied tourist experiences to improve religious tourism in Thailand. The result found that one of the most influential factors that attracted tourists to

religious destinations in Rattanakosin are spiritual escapes.

2. Tourism experiences in services affected satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations. This result was similar to Duangthip Nakrathok's finding [6] that summarized the tourism influences of tourists to make wishes for love at famous religious destinations in Bangkok and suggested a guideline to provide information about each destination and best practices for tourists to learn the culture, meet new experiences, understand multiple cultural aspects in order to impress and elevate religious tourism experiences.

3. Tourism experiences in learning affected satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations, as also suggested by Paweeda Samanketgon [5] who studied tourist experiences to improve religious tourism in Thailand. The result found that one of the most influential factors that attracted tourists to religious destinations in Rattanakosin is learning.

4. Tourism experiences in aesthetics affected satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes at sacred destinations. Paweeda Samanketgon [5] who studied tourist experiences to improve religious tourism in Thailand also found that one of the most influential factors that attracted tourists to religious destinations in Rattanakosin are aesthetics.

5. Satisfaction of tourists affected decisions of Thai tourists to revisit was at a high level of 78.9%. The result also explained that when tourists have satisfaction towards religious tourism to make wishes each sacred destination,

whether they be the locations or when their wishes are granted, they tend to revisit the destinations or even share their positive experiences with others, which is a result of loyal attachments formed with the places that have granted them wishes. This result was found to be relatable to that of Krittidetch Anan's [7] who suggested a guideline to build Thailand food tourism loyalty through empirical values and found that tourists become loyal to food tourism in Thailand by having valuable experiences that would maximize their satisfaction.

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