

**POSITIONING BASED ON SATISFACTION ATTRIBUTES
IN THE CONTEXT OF A DOMESTIC TOURISM DESTINATION:
THE CASE OF YOR ISLAND, THAILAND**

By

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ABSTRAK

Strategi pemposisian destinasi sering dilaksanakan hanya dalam konteks destinasi utama, tetapi tidak dalam konteks destinasi mini atau kecil. Penyelidikan ini bertujuan memecah tradisi dengan merangka dan mencadangkan satu strategi mengenal pasti pemposisian pasaran yang berasaskan suatu destinasi mini atau kecil iaitu Pulau Yor dalam konteks sebuah destinasi yang lebih besar iaitu Songkla. Bagi mengukur daya saing Pulau Yor berbanding pesaing-pesaingnya maka kepuasan pelancong terhadap aspek penawaran pelancongan di Pulau Yor telah dikaji. Para pelancong tempatan telah dibahagikan mengikut asas sosiodemografi bagi mengenal pasti potensi pasaran untuk Pulau Yor. Penyelidik menggunakan pendekatan kaedah penyelidikan secara bercampur. Setelah itu, penilaian telah dibuat dengan memfokuskan kepada kepuasan pelancong. Data kualitatif daripada temu duga dengan lapan orang pakar pelancongan setempat telah menghasilkan maklumat untuk kaedah analisis SWOT. Data kuantitatif daripada 400 pelancong tempatan telah dianalisis menggunakan kaedah analisis *multidimensional scaling* dan *correspondence analysis*. Hasil analisis ini telah memberikan pelbagai maklumat mengenai persamaan, kelebihan serta kehendak pelancong mengenai imej Pulau Yor dan pesaing-pesaingnya. Selain itu, terdapat juga hubung kait antara ciri-ciri sosiodemografi pengunjung ke destinasi-destinasi tersebut. Pendekatan kaedah penyelidikan bercampur ini juga telah mengetengahkan bahawa pengunjung yang berpotensi melawat Pulau Yor yang patut dijadikan sasaran pasaran ialah mereka yang berumur antara 25 hingga 34 tahun, berkelulusan ijazah sarjana muda dan purata pendapatan antara RM 2000.00 hingga RM 3000.00. Tambahan lagi, ciri kemesraan penduduk tempatan telah diketengahkan sebagai satu ciri yang sesuai dijadikan panduan dalam usaha membangunkan strategi mengenal pasti pemposisian pasaran untuk Pulau Yor. Secara keseluruhannya, tesis ini telah berjaya menunjukkan bahawa strategi mengenal pasti pemposisian pasaran berasaskan kajian adalah strategi yang bukan sahaja sesuai untuk destinasi-destinasi besar, malahan sesuai untuk destinasi-destinasi mini atau kecil.

Kata kunci: Pemposisian, Ciri-ciri kepuasan, Kaedah-kaedah campuran, Pelancongan domestik

ABSTRACT

Positioning strategy is often adopted for major destinations, but not for smaller or mini destinations. This research breaks with tradition by attempting to develop and recommend an optimum research-based market-positioning strategy for a mini destination or a small destination i.e. Yor Island, within a larger area i.e. Songkla. Tourists' satisfaction toward product attributes of Yor Island compared to its competitors was measured to investigate the competitiveness of Yor Island. Domestic tourists were divided based on socio-demographic basis before the potential target markets of Yor Island were identified. The evaluation focused on tourists' post-consumption satisfaction using mixed methods approach. Qualitative data from interviews with eight local tourism experts generated information for a SWOT analysis of Yor Island. Quantitative data from the survey of 400 domestic tourists was analysed using multidimensional scaling and correspondence analysis. Results from using these analytical techniques provided a variety of information on destination image similarities, strengths, and ideals between Yor Island and its competitors, as well as the relationships of major socio-demographic characteristics of visitors to the destinations. The mixed method approach has also highlighted the potential target tourists of Yor Island whose age are between 25-34 years old with at least a bachelor's degree, and monthly income of between RM 2,000.00 to RM 3,000.00. Moreover, it also showed that 'friendliness of the people' is an attribute that could be used as leverage in the development of the Yor Island's positioning strategy. Overall, this study has illustrated that research-based market-positioning strategy is applicable not only to major destinations, but to a mini or small destination as well.

Keywords: Positioning, Satisfaction attributes, Mixed methods, Domestic tourism

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NESDP	: National Economic and Social Development Plans
TAT	: Tourism Authority of Thailand
WTO	: World Tourism Organization
WTTC	: World Travel and Tourism Council
UNEP	: United Nations Environment Programme
UNWTO	: United Nations World Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This study is concerned with understanding the concept of positioning, within the context of domestic tourism in Thailand. Destination positioning is a concept that has been widely discussed and applied within the context of global competition (as will be described in the literature review section). However, little empirical evidence is available in the literature on how the concept can be applied to help a domestic tourism destination compete with its competitors. Domestic tourism is an important area of research because as the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 1999¹) has predicted domestic tourism of developing countries in Asia, Latin America, Middle East and Africa, will grow faster than tourism worldwide, both in the number of tourists and tourism receipts, estimated at 10 and 3-4 times respectively.

In Thailand, the Thai government has paid constant attention to domestic tourism. The number of domestic tourists and tourism receipts continue to increase since 1999 (see Table1.1). The support for domestic tourism in Thailand can be seen from the campaigns by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) such as “Thai Tiew Thai” (Thais Travel Thailand) and “Tiew Thai Pai Dai Took Duen” (Travelling Thailand) to encourage Thai people to travel inside the country. The implication of this policy is that each mini destinations in Thailand will now have to compete against each other in order to attract the same market i.e the local tourists. As with any competition, only the strongest, most unique and most innovative in its marketing approach will be able to stand out in the eyes of the market.

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