

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Nowadays, in the globalized world, people need to work and live in a competitive society. Some restless activities push them to feel more pressure. Therefore, they try to take the opportunity to seek balance in their lives by getting away from the workday routine as often as possible. One way to relax is to travel no matter what kind of traveling: shorter trips during the week and on weekends, longer journeys during the holidays. Anything that they can do to get away from home. Their destinations depend on their own satisfaction.

Some people love to escape from their chaotic lives to some historical countries, for example, our country, Thailand. Thailand is well known in different aspects ranging from its culture, nature, cuisine, hospitality, and world class accommodation at reasonable prices to different market segments, such as eco-tourism for youth, beach resorts for honeymoon couples, spa and health tourism for mature tourists. Tourists can enjoy seeing the rich heritage such as beautiful temples while riding on elephant back, cruising along canals and rivers or bicycling around the ruins and monuments.

Tourists can travel anywhere in Thailand depending on their own interest. With many interesting activities, many tourists are impressed and come back to visit Thailand again and again. From the below table it is expected that there will be an increasing number of tourists to Thailand year by year. This implies that Thailand's sight seeing will still be attracting foreign visitors in the next few years.

**Table 1. Number of Tourists From Different Countries Visiting Thailand**

<b>Region</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
All countries	13.72	14.49	15.30	16.16	17.07
East Asia	7.86	8.24	8.64	9.06	9.50
Asian	3.55	3.80	4.06	4.34	4.64
Malaysia	1.36	1.38	1.41	1.44	1.47
Singapore	0.90	0.95	1.01	1.07	1.13
China	1.01	1.06	1.11	1.15	1.20
Hong Kong	0.48	0.49	0.50	0.52	0.53
Japan	1.33	1.38	1.43	1.47	1.52
South Korea	1.05	1.12	1.19	1.27	1.37
Taiwan	0.24	0.19	0.15	0.12	0.10
Europe	3.29	3.52	3.76	4.02	4.30
France	0.31	0.34	0.36	0.39	0.42
Germany	0.51	0.53	0.56	0.58	0.61
Sweden	0.32	0.36	0.41	0.47	0.53
Great Britain	0.82	0.90	0.98	1.07	1.17
US	0.85	0.91	0.97	1.04	1.11
Canada	0.16	0.18	0.20	0.23	0.25
South Asia	0.60	0.64	0.68	0.73	0.78
India	0.46	0.52	0.59	0.66	0.74
Oceania	0.67	0.75	0.84	0.94	1.05
Australia	0.57	0.64	0.72	0.81	0.91
Middle East	0.40	0.44	0.49	0.54	0.59
Africa	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.09

Note. From [http://www.sri.cmu.ac.th/~gms/tourism/download/Forecasting\\_Foreigner.htm](http://www.sri.cmu.ac.th/~gms/tourism/download/Forecasting_Foreigner.htm), 2006

Unit: million people

The following table is a survey of popular provinces and cities in 2006, which tourists visited. Ayutthaya is one of them and ranks the fifth, about 3.49% of all visitors who come to Thailand have frequented the province.

***Table 2. Number of Tourists Visiting Places in Thailand***

<b>Numbers of tourists</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1. Bangkok	37.9 %
2. Pattaya Chonburi	12.53 %
3. Phuket	8.83 %
4. Chiangmai	6.28 %
5. Ayutthaya	3.49 %
6. Krabi	2.88 %
7. Samui island	2.67 %
8. Hat Yai	2.51 %
9. Hua Hin	1.40 %
10. Pang Nga	1.29 %

*Note.* <http://www2.tat.or.th/stat/download/tst/621/Summary%20of%20Domestic>, 2006

Ayutthaya, although it is a small city, has a magnificent and fascinating history. For 417 years, Ayutthaya was the capital city of Thailand. This period saw not only the most glorious prosperity of Thai people, but also the creation of civilization of mankind which was witnessed by civilized countries. Even though Ayutthaya was ruined by wars, the present remainders are evidence that show the genius and the great ability of Thai ancestors who sacrificed to initiate cultural development and prosperity. Moreover, what makes Thai people proud of our ancestors is that UNESCO declared the historical Ayutthaya to be a World Heritage Site on December 13, 1991.

Located 76-km north of Bangkok, the present capital city, Ayutthaya invites discovery and imbues in one a feeling of humility, for it has awe-inspiring and eye-catching structures that have withstood the test of time. Its impressive heritage has become the bedrock of Thai society and shaped the Thai way of life. At the height of its glory, Ayutthaya was one of Asia's most prosperous cities with glorious temples, palaces and pavilions.

At present, the number of tourists visiting Ayutthaya has been increasing. The table below shows the number of hotels and visitors in Ayutthaya (2001-2005).

***Table 3. Number of hotels and visitors in Ayutthaya (2001 – 2005)***

Items	2544	2545	2546	2547	2548
	(2001)	(2002)	(2003)	(2004)	(2005)
Number of hotels	23	23	21	27	32
Number of rooms in hotels	1,421	1,421	1,421	1,446	1,707
Number of visitors	2,801,828	2,833,860	2,711,607	3,023,933	3,260,589
Thai	1,654,587	1,679,305	1,726,132	1,915,975	2,158,228
Foreign	1,147,241	1,154,555	985,475	1,107,958	1,102,361
Number of tourists	611,334	588,906	447,412	582,661	625,674
Thai	402,669	375,008	326,383	413,926	455,300
Foreign	208,665	213,898	121,029	168,735	170,374
Number of excursionists	2,190,494	2,244,954	2,264,195	2,441,272	2,634,915
Thai	1,251,918	1,304,297	1,399,749	1,502,049	1,702,928
Foreign	938,576	940,657	864,446	939,223	931,987

*Note.* Tourism Authority of Thailand, Central Regional Office: Area 6 Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya

Each tourist has been attracted to explore the magnificent architecture and atmospheric charms tracing (turning) back to the glory and prosperity in the past. In Ayutthaya, tourists can enjoy seeing the rich heritage, such as beautiful temples while riding on elephant back, cruising along canals and rivers or bicycling around the ruins and monuments.

This research is to investigate the most popular reasons that make tourists come to visit Ayutthaya province and to ask opinions of tourists about their impression of Ayutthaya and places they visited.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

### **Main problem:**

To what extent are foreign tourists satisfied with services and facilities provided in Ayutthaya province?

### **Sub-problem:**

1. Which characteristics of Ayutthaya province affect foreign tourists' satisfaction?
2. What problems do foreign tourists face when traveling in Ayutthaya province?

## **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study consists of one main objective and one sub-objective as follows:

### **Main objective:**

To investigate the most popular reasons that make tourists travel to Ayutthaya province

### **Sub-objective:**

To ask opinions of tourists about their impression of Ayutthaya and places they visited.

To ask if there are any problems the tourists face while travelling in Ayutthaya.

## 1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definition of the terms mentioned in this study are as follows:

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Conceptual definition</b>	<b>Operational definition</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Tourist	One who is traveling for pleasure	Person who travels to Ayutthaya province	Male or female visitors to Ayutthaya
Sight-seeing	The act of visiting famous or interesting places, especially as tourists	Historical places in Ayutthaya	- Temples - Ancient palaces
Destination	The place that someone or something is going to	Exact places that tourists decide to visit in Ayutthaya	- downtown of Ayutthaya - other districts of Ayutthaya
Package	A set of related things or service sold or offered together	A set of sight-seeing places and entertainment for visitors	Sight-seeing places or program for foreign visitors in Ayutthaya province
Culture	The ideas, beliefs, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a society	Historical places in Ayutthaya including the way of living of people in Ayutthaya	-food -elephant show etc.
Leisure	Time when you are not working or studying and can relax and do things you enjoy		Traveling, swimming, exercising, etc.

Holiday	A time of rest from work, school, etc.	A period of time when tourists travel to another place for pleasure	
Host	One who entertains guests	Local people who settle in Ayutthaya	Male or female
Attitude	The opinions and feeling that people usually have about something	The opinion and feelings that international tourists have toward traveling in Ayutthaya	Level of agreement; Strongly agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, Strongly disagree

## 1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Within the time and money constraint, the researcher selected to study Ayutthaya province only because this province is the researcher's hometown and is regarded as one of the most important world's heritage. The questionnaires were distributed to only foreign tourists who visited Ayutthaya province and used the services and the facilities there. The main content of the survey is composed of questions to collect the demographic information of respondents, their travel information, degree of their satisfaction with services and facilities of Ayutthaya province, the factors influencing their satisfaction, the problems they face, and their suggestions to improve the tourism in Ayutthaya province.

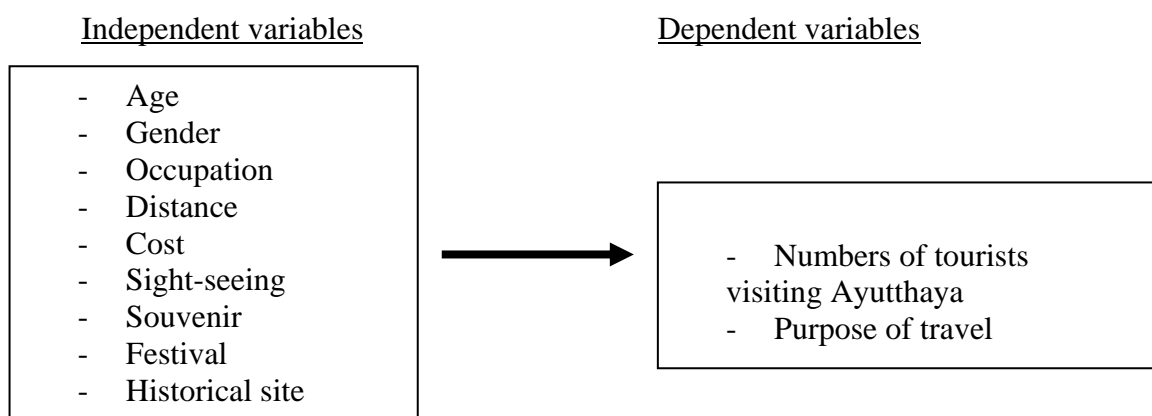
## **Variables**

### **Independent variables:**

The independent variable of this study are the factors related to demographic factors, cost, sight-seeing, souvenir, purposes of travel, etc.

### **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variable of this study are the numbers of tourists who come to visit Ayutthaya province.



## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

1. The result of this research will be useful for the tourism in Ayutthaya province.
2. The findings of this study will be beneficial for those who want to conduct further research in this field.

## **1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the background, research problems, objectives, definitions of terms, scope of the study and significance of the study. Chapter two is the literature reviews. Then, chapter



three provides the explanation of methodology, including the samples, materials, procedures, and data analysis. Chapter four presents the findings. Chapter five summarizes the study, discussions, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.