Research Report

Relationships between destination quality, tourist satisfaction

and destination loyalty: A case study of Phuket Island

ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคุณภาพของแหล่งท่องเที่ยว ความพึงพอใจ และ

ความภักดีต่อแหล่งท่องเที่ยว: กรณีศึกษาเกาะภูเก็ต

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บทคัดย่อ

คุณภาพของแหล่งท่องเที่ยว (destination quality) เป็นองค์ประกอบสำคัญในการรับรู้ของ นักท่องเที่ยวที่มีต่อแหล่งท่องเที่ยวนั้นๆ รวมถึงอาจมีผลต่อการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำของนักท่องเที่ยว ทั้งนี้ คุณภาพของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่มีลักษณะเป็นเกาะ (island destination) มักพบว่า สิ่งดึงดูดใจด้านชายทะเลจะ เป็นปัจจัยสำคัญที่ก่อให้เกิดความพึงพอใจของนักท่องเที่ยวและการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำ อย่างไรก็ตาม ยังมี งานวิจัยอยู่น้อยที่จะค้นหาคำตอบลงลึกต่อไปว่ายังมีปัจจัยอื่นอีกหรือไม่ (นอกเหนือจากสิ่งดึงดูดใจด้าน ชายทะเล) ที่จะก่อให้เกิดความพึงพอใจของนักท่องเที่ยวและการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำอีก ดังนั้น เพื่อเติมเต็ม ช่องว่างองค์ความรู้ในประเด็นที่ยังขาดการศึกษาดังกล่าวในบริบทของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่เป็นเกาะ การวิจัยใน ครั้งนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อค้นหาปัจจัยด้านคุณภาพของแหล่งท่องเที่ยว (dimensions of destination quality) ที่มีอิทธิพลต่อความพึงพอใจของนักท่องเที่ยวและการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำ โดยมุ่งศึกษาเกาะภูเก็ต ซึ่งถูกเลือก เป็นพื้นที่กรณีศึกษาเนื่องจากเป็นจุดหมายปลายการท่องเที่ยวที่สำคัญของประเทศและเป็นแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่ เป็นเกาะที่มีศักยภาพสูงในการดึงดูดให้นักท่องเที่ยวกลับมาเยือนซ้ำ การศึกษาในครั้งนี้เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูล จากนักท่องเที่ยวชาวต่างประเทศจำนวน 438 คน ที่เดินทางมาเกาะภูเก็ต โดยใช้การเลือกตัวอย่างแบบบังเอิญ และใช้แบบสอบถามเป็นเครื่องมือวิจัย โดยใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนา ได้แก่ ค่าร้อยละ ค่าเฉลี่ย ส่วนเบี่ยงเบน มาตรฐาน และสถิติเชิงอ้างอิง ได้แก่ การวิเคราะห์เส้นทางอิทธิพล (path analysis) และการวิเคราะห์สมการ โครงสร้าง (Structural Equation Modeling) ด้วยโปรแกรมสถิติสำเร็จรูป AMOS ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า แบบจำลองเส้นทางอิทธิพลของคุณภาพของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่มีผลต่อความพึง พอใจของนักท่องเที่ยวและการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำของเกาะภูเก็ตที่ผู้วิจัยได้พัฒนาขึ้น มีความกลมกลืนกับข้อมูล เชิงประจักษ์ โดยพิจารณาได้จากค่าดัชนีความกลมกลืน ได้แก่ chi-square = 448.44, df = 209, chi-square/df = 2.14, NFI = 0.91, CFI= 0.92, และ RMSEA = 0.07

การศึกษาในครั้งนี้มีข้อค้นพบที่สำคัญ คือ ปัจจัยด้านคุณภาพของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่เป็นเกาะในด้าน สิ่งดึงดูดใจทางชายทะเลไม่ใช่เป็นปัจจัยเดียวที่มีอิทธิพลทางตรงต่อการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำของนักท่องเที่ยว แต่ ยังมีปัจจัยในด้านของ "คน" และ "ความปลอดภัยของนักท่องเที่ยว" ที่ส่งผลทางตรงต่อการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำ นอกจากนั้นผลการวิจัยยังพบประเด็นที่น่าสนใจต่อไปอีก คือ ถึงแม้ตัวแปรต้นเหตุทั้งสามตัว (ชายทะเล คน และความปลอดภัย) จะมีผลต่อตัวแปรตามโดยตรง (การกลับมาเยือนซ้ำ) แต่ปัจจัย (ตัวแปร) ที่สำคัญมากอีก หนึ่งปัจจัยที่ส่งผลต่อการกลับมาเยือนซ้ำในกรณีของเกาะภูเก็ต คือ ความพึงพอใจของนักท่องเที่ยว ซึ่งเป็น ตัวแปรคั่นกลางที่มีค่าขนาดอิทธิพล (effects) มากกว่าสามตัวแปรต้นเหตุข้างต้น ดังนั้น การวิจัยในครั้งนี้จึง ให้ประโยชน์ในแง่ของงองค์ความรู้ในเชิงทฤษฎีระหว่างความสัมพันธ์ของตัวแปรทั้งสามตัวในบริบทของ แหล่งท่องเที่ยวประเภทเกาะ อีกทั้งจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการวางแผนและการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวของเกาะ ภูเก็ตต่อไป

คำสำคัญ: คุณภาพของแหล่งท่องเที่ยว ความพึงพอใจนักท่องเที่ยว ความภักดีต่อจุดหมายปลายทาง ภูเก็ต

Abstract

Destination quality is an important element of tourists' perception towards the destination, and it may affect tourists' decision to revisit the destination. In the island-based destination, the quality of beach attraction (scenery and cleanliness) has been argued to contribute to tourists' satisfaction and their likelihood to re-visit the destination. However, little investigation has been made to find out which particular dimensions of destination quality (besides beach attraction) contributing to tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in the island destinations. To order to fulfill such research gap, this study has a main objective to find out the destination quality dimensions that influenced tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty to Phuket. Phuket, the world famous island in the southern part of Thailand, was selected as a site of investigation due to its high potential to promote destination loyalty. Data were collected from 438 international tourists visiting Phuket through a convenience sampling method, using self-administered questionnaires. This study employed descriptive statistics (percentage, mean, and S.D) and inferential statistics (path analysis) to analyze data. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach by AMOS was used to find out which particular destination quality dimensions affecting tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in case of Phuket. According to the SEM results, the measurement model was valid and fit the empirical data with the acceptable level of fit (chi-square = 448.44, df = 209, chi-square/df = 2.14, NFI = 0.91, CFI= 0.92, และ RMSEA = 0.07). Interestingly, the study revealed that, in the case of island destination (Phuket), beach attraction was not the only factor contributing to tourists' loyalty but people and tourist safety also played the essential components to retain loyal tourists to the island. Therefore, the findings of the study not only contribute to the theoretical implications disclosing the closed relationships between the three variables but also yield the managerial implications to promote Phuket's tourism.

Key words: destination quality, tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty, island, Phuket

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Aswin Sangpikul

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Chapter 1
Introduction

This chapter aims to provide the overview of research project including research background, objectives, contributions, hypotheses and definitions of key terms used in this study.

1.1 Research Background

Currently, tourism has become a popular global leisure activity due to the high revenues generating to the country's economy. For Thailand, the tourism industry is one of the largest and important sectors for the nation's economy due to the significant impacts to employment, business growth and revenue circulating throughout the country. Although the tourism industry in Thailand has been growing during the past decades, the market competition within the region is likely to be intensified and more competitive within the region. Today, all ASEAN countries are intensively competing each other to promote their tourism activities with the aim to increase the number of in-bound tourists. Each country has allocated large amount of budgets to promote and develop marketing campaigns to attract more tourists to the destination.

In order to stay competitive in the tourism market of the region, it is essential for Thai tourism marketers and authorities to develop effective marketing strategies to attract more international tourists to Thailand. One of the most effective marketing strategies which has been widely used in most businesses (including tourism industry) is building **customer loyalty** to increase repeat customers (Oppermann, 2000; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Today, customer loyalty has been implemented as one of the powerful marketing tool in the competitive market for both tourism and non-tourism industries. In the tourism context, the concept of customer loyalty may be referred as "**destination loyalty**". In particular, tourism can be perceived as a product (or destination) which can be resold (revisited) and recommended to other people (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). The issue of destination loyalty (or post-purchase behavior/behavioral intention) has a contribution to generating revenues to the tourism industry. The more the number of tourist revisit the destination, the greater the revenue the businesses can earn. In order to examine the concept of destination loyalty, it is important to explore what makes loyal tourists (repeat visitors). A review of literature indicates that one of the most important factors contributing to loyal tourists is "**tourist satisfaction**" (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Many studies reveal a close relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Several scholars argue that satisfied tourists are more likely to return or revisit

the same destination, and are more willing to share their positive travel experience with their friends and relatives (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Chi & Qu, 2008). Today, it is not surprisingly that there is an abundance of tourist satisfaction studies in relation to other factors such as tourist behavior, travel motivation, and destination loyalty. Although there are several prior studies investigating the relationships between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty, **however**, there should be more factors affecting those two variables, and worth for further investigation.

A review of literature indicates that product quality has a relationship with customer satisfaction and loyalty (Alexandris, Kouthouris, & Meligdis, 2006; Oppermann, 2000). Product quality is a critical factor affecting customer satisfaction as well as being a predictor of repurchase intention. **Yet,** most past tourism research examined such relationships in terms of services of tourism business (e.g. hotels, restaurants, airlines). Little effort has investigated the product quality in terms of a tourist destination or a place (Lopez-Toro, Diaz-Munoz, & Perez-Moreno, 2010). Today, travelers in a new millennium are better educated, and more aware of what constitutes high quality product and value for money (Jennings et al., 2009). In the tourism context, it is therefore important for destination managers to concentrate on the quality of tourist destinations. Because quality development is one of the important strategies that many tourist destinations are currently using to increase their competitiveness in international tourist markets (Lopez-Toro et al., 2010) **However**, studies examining the relationships between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty in Thailand is very limited. In the international context, despite past research has examined these relationships between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty in different areas of investigation (e.g. festival, theme parks, rural areas), scholars **have not yet** to specifically examine such relationships in the island destination. In case of the island destination, it can argue that tourists visit island destinations mainly because of beach tourism attraction (sea, sand, sun), and they are more likely to revisit that destination due to such attraction. In particular, researchers **have not yet** to find out what other dimensions of the destination quality influence tourists' re-visitation in the case of island destinations. In this study, it is assumed that there might be other factors (dimensions) of the destination quality directly affect tourists' loyalty to Phuket. Importantly, since quality of the destination varies from place to place due to different factors (e.g. level of development, infrastructure and facilities), the relationships of the above three variables may be different, and are worth for in-depth investigation for a particular tourist destination.

Therefore, this study aims to fulfill such **research gap** by exploring the island destination for a case of Phuket island with the **main objectives** to examine the effects of destination quality dimensions on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty to Phuket. Examining which particular dimensions of destination quality affecting tourists' loyalty will contribute to a better understanding on the determinants of destination loyalty and expand related literature, particularly the island-based settings. The findings are expected to assist destination managers to carefully refine or determine appropriate tourism development and strategies to retain loyal tourists, and to promote Phuket's tourism.

In this study, Phuket is selected as a focus of investigation to examine such relationships because Phuket is positioning itself a world class destination (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2015). More research is needed to provide a better understanding on the quality of tourism resources in Phuket, and to find out a particular dimension of destination quality influencing tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Thus, the findings will be useful for local authorities to gain the in-depth information (feedback) from visitors in order to make appropriate development for Phuket and stay competitive in the AEC market. In addition, Phuket has a high potentiality to promote destination loyalty (repeat visitors). The city has attracted people of all ages from all over the world for decades. Besides the beautiful beach coastal lines, it has a variety of tourist attractions and activities to offer such as nature, culture, facilities, and entertainment. Phuket, therefore, is an appropriate destination to examine the important issues between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty.

1.2 Research Objectives

The main research objective of this study is to **examine the effects of destination quality dimensions on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty to Phuket**. In particular, this study also has the following specific research objectives:

- To analyze tourist perception on destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty of international tourists visiting Phuket
- To examine the influences of destination quality (independent variable) on tourist satisfaction (moderating variable) and destination loyalty (dependent variable) through the structural equation modeling (both direct and indirect effects)

1.3 Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature review (see chapter 2), the following 4 hypotheses have been formulated based on the theoretical framework (relationships) of the three variables (destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty).

H1:   Destination quality has a positive *direct effect* on destination loyalty.

H2:   Destination quality has a positive *direct effect* on tourist satisfaction.

H3:   Tourist satisfaction has a positive *direct effect* on destination loyalty.

H4:   Destination quality has a positive *indirect effect* on destination loyalty through
            tourist satisfaction

1.4 Research Scope

There are 3 parts of research scopes needed to be mentioned as follows:

1) **Content:** This study examined the relationship between destination quality, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Among them, destination quality was established as independent variable while tourist satisfaction was a moderating variable, and both of them were argued to influence destination loyalty (dependent variable).

2) **Subject investigated**: Subjects being investigated were independent international tourists who were visiting Phuket for their holiday/leisure, aged 20 years old and above.

3) **Area of investigation:** Phuket was selected as an area of investigation to reveal the relationships between the three variables. This is because Phuket is claimed as a world class destination with high quality of destination features. However, little research has examined such relationships by using Phuket as the case study of the island destination.

1.5 Research Contributions

In terms of academic contribution, due to the lack of literature on the relationships between destination loyalty, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty in the case of island destination, the result of the study will advance the existing knowledge and provide a better understanding of the relationships between the three constructs through the structural equation model (SEM). In particularly, this study aims to find out which particular dimensions of destination quality affect tourists' loyalty to Phuket. It is expected the results of the study will contribute to expanding the related literature and learning more about the determinants of destination loyalty in

the case of island destination (Phuket); helping to better understand the causal relationships between the three important variables. Moreover, the findings may assist in teaching and learning for the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality in related courses such as Destination Management, Tourist Behavior, and Tourism Marketing. Finally, the study will be useful as a secondary source for further research on related topics.

For the managerial contribution, the findings will be valued for destination managers and local practitioners to better understand the dimensions (factors) associated with tourists' perception on destination quality of Phuket as well as tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. The knowledge will enable them to develop or deliver more appropriate tourism products, services, and facilities responding to tourists' needs/wants and expectations. Knowing which particular dimensions associated with Phuket's tourism quality will help the authorities develop appropriate policy and management to improve local tourism's standard. In particular, the result of destination quality will assist them to make greater development or improvement in tourism destination resources in order to enhance tourists' loyalty and their re-visitation and recommendations to families/friends. The more likely tourists intend to visit Phuket, the more likely they also visit Thailand and other parts of the country; thereby spreading more tourism revenues. In addition, the SEM findings and the variables (constructs) being examined will provide guidance for developing more effective marketing strategies such as tourism campaigns, public relation, advertising, and other media to increase the number of repeat visitors.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Several technical terms are used in this study. In order to better understand the context of this study, the definitions of technical terms are provided as follows:

Destination quality refers to tourists' perception on the standard of the tourism attractions, services and facilities that meet the requirement or expectation of the tourists (Rajaratnam et al., 2015).

Tourist satisfaction refers to an overall evaluation of the level of fulfillment or emotion with the destination through the outcome of pleasant or unpleasant (Zabkar et al., 2010).

Destination loyalty refers to tourists' intention to revisit the same destination, and their intention to recommend the destination to their friends/relatives (Toyama & Yamada, 2012).

Destination attributes refers to the components of tourism industry in a particular destination. They are the basic tourism products and services such as accommodation, dining, shopping, tourist attractions, leisure activities, and accessibility (Chi & Qu, 2008).

A construct refers to an idea or concept established by combining several pieces of information or knowledge. It is a creation of something such as an idea or system by making various things fit together (Longman Dictionary, 2006).

Latent variable refers to a variable that is not directly observed but it may be measured via an observable variables. In this study, latent variables are destination loyalty, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty.

Observable variable refers to a variable that is directly observed or measurable. For example, "are you satisfied with this trip?" or "how do you perceive the cleanliness of beaches in Phuket?"

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter aims to review related literature on tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty, and destination quality. Its purpose is to provide general knowledge and overall concepts regarding the research topic as well as to establish a conceptual framework.

2.1 Overview of Tourism in Phuket as an island destination

Tourism has been recognized as the economic activity which rapidly grows into the world's largest industry. With the rapid growth of tourism industry in Thailand, toady tourism has been regarded as one of the most important tools used to boost economies and promote country's development. The growth of tourism in Southeast Asia has developed very fast and each country is attempting to promote tourism to generate revenues to the country (Marzuki, 2012). Every nation has developed various marketing campaigns to persuade tourists to visit its state by promoting attractive tourist destinations, local culture, food, architecture, folklore and man-made tourist attractions. As tourism industry makes lots of benefits to the country, the Thai government has established various national policies to develop Thailand's tourism continuously. Thailand, the leading tourism state of the ASEAN, has various major tourist attractions located in different parts of the country both natural and cultural heritages. Among the major tourist destinations, Phuket is one of the most famous places for beach tourism among international tourists. Phuket is Thailand's the largest island and the only province-island in the country. As an island destination, Phuket has many beautiful natural attractions, particularly the beaches and small islands. Phuket, therefore, is well-known for island tourism or 3S tourism (sea, sand, sun). It is not only famous for island tourism (tourism that promotes beach attraction as the main product) but also is recognized for its charming local culture (Thai, Chinese and Muslim) and historical attractions. According to Marzuki (2012), Phuket has experienced tremendous development since 1980s. Many construction projects have been carried out on the islands with the main purpose to accommodate tourism development. Rapid investments by the government and private sector have significantly turned Phuket into a popular tourist destination and a shopping paradise for local and foreign tourists. As a result, Phuket has attracted millions of people from all over the world for decades. Since Phuket is rich in the natural resources, particular the image of beach tourism, and becomes the top tourist destinations in Thailand, it, therefore, was chosen as the area of investigation on the destination loyalty due to its high potentiality to attract loyal/repeat tourists.

2.2 Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

Customer (tourist) satisfaction is an important concept found in the core of marketing (Kozak, Bigne, & Andreu, 2004). In general, customer satisfaction is the result of the evaluation and comparison the perceived performance of goods/service with expectation (Hill, 1986 cited in Heung & Cheng, 2000). Expectations are compared with actual perceptions of performance as the goods or services are consumed (Bitner, 1990). If performance exceeds expectations, the result is customer satisfaction, however, when expectations exceed performance, the result is customer dissatisfaction (Bitner, 1990; Heung & Cheng, 2000). In relation to tourism, the concept of customer satisfaction has been long used in the tourism literature. According to the tourism literature, **tourist satisfaction (TS)** may be measured through several approaches. For example, a model of expectation/disconfirmation (Chon, 1989 cited in Yoon & Uysal, 2005), in this model, tourist satisfaction may be measured through the result of tourists' evaluation and comparison with the perceived performance of products/services with expectation (Heung & Cheng, 2000). If performance exceeds expectation, the result turns to be satisfied, however, when expectation exceeds performance, the result becomes dissatisfied. **Another concept of tourist satisfaction**, particular at the destination level, scholars define tourist satisfaction as an overall evaluation of the level of fulfillment with the destination through the outcome of pleasant or unpleasant (Zabkar et al., 2010). With this concept, tourist satisfaction is measured through the assessment of the cumulative destination experience rather than individual attribute (Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). This is because tourist satisfaction is concerned with the affective outcome of tourists' experience with a bundle of tourism supplies at the destination. It is, therefore, more appropriate to measure tourist satisfaction in terms of emotional state with the overall destination performance (Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). **With this regard, the current study employed the latter concept to measure tourist satisfaction in Phuket since this concept seems to be related to the aims of the study** (see details in chapter 3).

In overall, tourist satisfaction is important to successful destination marketing because it influences the choice of destination, the consumption of goods and services, repeat visits, word-of-mouth publicity, and destination loyalty (Fornell, 1992; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Kozak et al., 2004). An understanding of tourist satisfaction is a basic tool used to evaluate the performance of destination products and services (Schofield, 2000 cited in Yoon & Uysal, 2008). Monitoring tourist satisfaction is, therefore, an important task for destination authorities/planners to get feedback and detect problems that cause tourist dissatisfaction which may have a negative impact on future visitation (Reisinger & Turner, 2003). Therefore, it is argued that an assessment of tourist satisfaction can help destination authorities adjust their efforts on enhancing tourists' travel experience, improving the quality of products/services, and developing effective destination marketing

strategy (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Yoon & Uysal, 2008). In the tourism literature, prior studies reveal a significant relationship between tourist satisfaction, intention to return, and positive word-of-mouth communication (Beeho & Prentice, 1997; Hallowell 1996). Satisfied tourists are likely to recommend destinations they have visited to their friends and relatives or express favorable comments about the destination (Beeho & Prentice, 1997; Ross 1993). On the controversy, dissatisfied tourists may not return to the same destination and may not recommend it to other tourists (Chen & Chen, 2010). Even worse, dissatisfied tourists may express negative comments about a destination and damage its market reputation (Reisinger & Turner, 2003). In a study of tourists visiting Mallorca, Spain, Kozak & Remington (2000) reported that the more satisfied the tourists were with their visits, the more likely they were to return and recommend the destination to others. This strongly suggests that destinations that can identify attributes that satisfy tourists increase their chances of having loyal tourists.

Loyalty is generally defined as customers' intentions or behaviors to re-buy or re-patronize certain product/service; thereby causing repetitive same-brand purchasing (Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1995; Oliver, 1999). The concept and degree of loyalty is one of the critical indicators used to measure the success of marketing strategy (Flavian, Martinez, & Polo, 2001 cited in Yoon & Uysal, 2005). In marketing literature, loyalty measures a consumer's strength of affection towards a brand (Backman & Crompton, 1991). It is based on a consumer brand preferences or intention to buy the brand. Customer satisfaction, customer experience, value, service quality, performance, price, and brand name may contribute to loyalty (Backman & Crompton, 1991; Oliver, 1999). In relation to tourism literature, **destination loyalty (DL)** refers to tourists' intention to revisit the same destination, and their intention to recommend the destination to their friends/relatives (Toyama & Yamada, 2012). The concept of destination loyalty has been widely examined among tourism scholars to develop effective ways to attracts more tourists to their destinations (Kim & Brown, 2012; Toyama & Yamada, 2012; Mechinda, Serirat, & Gulid, 2009; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Destination loyalty is an important indicator used to develop competitive advantages of the destination and effective marketing strategy (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). In general, destination loyalty may be measured through tourist's intention to revisit the same destination, and their intention to recommend the destination to others (Toyama & Yamada, 2012). Of these two measures, repeat visitation is considered as a very strong indicator of future behavior (Mechinda et al., 2009).

In the tourism literature, there were empirical studies revealing that tourist satisfaction is a strong indicator of repeat visitation and recommendation of the product/service to others, which is the main component of loyalty (Chi & Qu, 2008; Kozak, Bigne, & Andreu, 2004; Toyama & Yamada, 2012; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). If tourists are satisfied with their holiday destination, they are more likely to return to the same

destination, and recommend that destination to other people (Kozak, Bigne, and Andreu, 2004; Toyama & Yamada, 2012).

A review of literature indicates a number of studies conducted to measure the relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Kozak et al. (2004), for example, explored satisfaction and destination loyalty by comparing between non-repeat and repeat tourists in Calpe, Spain. The finding revealed some significant differences in destination loyalty between first-time visitors and repeat visitors (e.g. season time to visit Calpe and leisure activities). In particular, the finding indicated that the level of satisfaction and the number of past visits considerably influence tourists' intentions to make repeat visits. Yoon and Uysal (2005) investigated the effects of satisfaction on destination loyalty in Northern Cyprus. The findings revealed that satisfaction was found to directly affect destination loyalty in a positive direction. Also, satisfaction was determined to be a medicating construct between travel motivation and destination loyalty. The study suggested that destination managers should establish a higher tourist satisfaction level to create positive post-purchase tourist behavior to sustain destination competitiveness. Another study by Valle, Silva, Mendes and Guerreiro (2006) explored the relationship between travel satisfaction and destination loyalty in Arade, Portugal. The study established a direct causal relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty intention. The study showed that tourists experiencing higher satisfaction levels revealed favorable intention behavior: the willingness to return to Arade and to recommend it to others. Chi and Qu (2008) examined the impact of tourist satisfaction (attribute satisfaction and overall satisfaction) on destination loyalty in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. They examined the impact of the attribute satisfaction separately from the overall satisfaction on the destination loyalty. The study revealed that tourists' destination loyalty was influenced by high satisfaction. In particular, both attribute satisfaction and overall satisfaction influenced the destination loyalty. The study suggested destination managers focus on establishing a high tourists' satisfaction level so as to create positive post-purchase tourist behavior. A recent study by Toyama and Yamada (2012) explored the relationships between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in Takayama City, Japan. The findings disclosed that the overall satisfaction had a direct influence on destination loyalty. The study suggested that destination authorities reduce the risk of unsatisfactory experience by improving destination's services and quality in order to create tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

In sum, although there is a number of prior studies investigating the relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty, fewer scholars have attempted to examine an important variable like destination quality in an association with tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Destination quality is regarded as an important variable that may influence tourists' revisitation. When tourists visit a destination, they also perceive the quality of the destination attributes (e.g. visitor attractions, hotels, food, culture,

transportation, and safety). Like tourist satisfaction, it may be argued that tourists are more likely to return to the same destination if they have perceive that the destination attributes are good and have quality. Therefore, an interesting variable like 'destination quality is worth examining its effects on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. In particular, it is worth knowing which particular dimenion of destination quality has the impact on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty to Phuket (island destination). Phuket is claimed as the leading tourist destination in Thailand and South East Asia. Thus, more research is needed to mirror or reflect the quality of Phuket's tourism attributes.

2.3 Destination Quality

According to the literature, a destination refers to the location of a group of attractions, tourist facilities and services (Kim & Brown, 2012). The combination of these features makes up the tourism products at the destination (Zabkar et al., 2010). **In relation to destination quality** (or perceived destination quality), **it may be defined as a visitor's perception or evaluation on the standard of tourism products at the destination (a group of attractions, tourist facilities, and services) that meet the requirement or expectation of tourists** (Cong, 2016; Rajaratnam et al., 2015). Destination quality, therefore, may be related to tourists' perception on the overall performance of the tourist attractions, tourism services/facilities and infrastructure offered by the destination. **In this study,** we assume that tourists perceive the quality of destination attributes when that attribute performs similarly or better than their expectation. However, they may perceive less quality when that attribute performs lower or worse than their expectation.

A review of related literature indicates that there are some studies examining tourists' perception on destination quality in different aspects. For example, Baker & Crompton (2000) explored the relationship between quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions in a festival setting. The study revealed that performance quality influenced on satisfaction, meanwhile, the satisfaction did not fully mediated the effect of quality on behavioral intentions. In particular, the performance quality had a stronger effect on behavioral intentions than satisfaction; suggesting that high performance quality encouraged participants to be more loyal (returning and spreading positive word-of-mouth about the festival). Cronin, Brady, & Hult (2010) examined the effects of quality, value and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service industries (i.e. healthcare and sports). They found that the three variables directly influenced behavioral intentions. In particular, the variable like quality had a greater direct effect on behavioral intentions than the other two variables, meanwhile quality also directly affected value and customer satisfaction. Kim, Holland, & Han (2013) investigated how the service quality and perceived value affected tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in a case of theme park areas in Orlando, USA. The study found that service quality and perceived

value affected tourist satisfaction, at the same time, both variables also had direct paths influencing destination loyalty. The study suggested that service quality measurement and improvement are essential aspects for enhancing destination loyalty, particularly the tourism services. Rajaratnam & Nair (2015) examined the direct effect of destination quality on tourist behavioral intentions in rural tourist destination in Malaysia. It was revealed that destination quality of rural tourism destinations had a significant positive influence on tourist satisfaction. Moreover, the study revealed that tourist satisfaction was an important variable mediating the effect of rural destination quality on behavioral intentions. The study suggested that the quality of destination attributes (e.g. nature, tourist attractions, local culture, amenities, security), perceived by tourists, should be maintained to sustain the competitiveness of the destination.

In sum, although there are prior studies examining the relationships between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty in different areas of investigation (e.g. festival, theme parks, service industries, rural areas). Researchers are **not yet** to specifically investigate the influence of destination quality dimensions affecting destination loyalty, especially in the island destination. In particular, the relationship among the three variables can be varied due to different level of tourism development at the destination, and such relationship has **not yet** been fully explored in Thailand's tourist destinations, particularly the island destinations. Generally, tourists visit island destinations due to the attractiveness of beach tourism (sea, sand, sun), and they are more likely to revisit that destination mainly because of this attribute. In other words, it may argue that the quality of beaches at the destination may have a close linkage to tourist loyalty. **However**, researchers have not deeply find out what other factors or dimensions of the destination quality influence tourists' re-visitation in a case of island destination. This study, therefore, especially aimed to explore on such gap by focusing on the case of Phuket island. Phuket has high potentiality to attract repeat visitors, and worth investigating to find out other dimensions of destination quality influencing tourist loyalty to Phuket.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study has been developed based on the above literature revealing a relationship between destination quality, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Kim, Holland, & Han, 2013). **Firstly**, a number of studies have investigated the linkage between tourist satisfaction and revisitation (behavioral intention). Several scholars (Hsu, 2003; Toyama & Yamada, 2012) argue that generally satisfaction leads to repeat visit (re-purchase). This is on an assumption that when tourists are satisfied with the destination or their trips, they are more likely to return or revisit the same destination. Moreover, they may be happy or willing to share their positive travel experience with their friends and

relatives (Chi & Qu, 2008). With this assumption, there have been many studies revealing the positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty (Chi & Qu, 2008; Hsu, 2003; Toyama & Yamada, 2012). Today, it is not surprisingly that there is an abundance of tourist satisfaction studies in relation to behavioral intention or destination loyalty; thereby contributing to the development of appropriate tourism marketing strategies.

Secondly, during the past decade, international scholars have examined various factors affecting tourist satisfaction. This is because understanding the determinants of tourist satisfaction may help destination managers develop more appropriate tourism policies and strategies. One of the important variables found to influence tourist satisfaction is the quality of products (e.g. service quality of hotels, restaurants, and tour operators) (Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). Generally, it is argued that a product with high quality would contribute to customer satisfaction (Zabkar et al., 2010). Similarly to tourism, the destination with high quality of tourism attributes (tourism supplies) may lead to tourist satisfaction, and this may result in the increased loyalty and future visitation (Rajaratnam et al., 2015). In recent years, scholars have examined the impact of destination quality on tourist satisfaction. They disclosed that destination quality has the positive impact on tourist satisfaction (Chi & Qu, 2008; Zabkar et al., 2010). Interestingly, researchers also found that destination quality affected tourists' behavioral intention through satisfaction (Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). In other words, when tourists perceive that the destination attributes meet (or exceed) their expectation, they are likely to be satisfied with the destination or their trips, and consequently this may influence their future visitation. Therefore, destination quality is regarded as an important variable associated with tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Thirdly, a recent study has confirmed that destination quality had the direct impact on destination loyalty (Zabkar et al., 2010). In particular, it was indicated that destination quality had a stronger direct effect on behavioral intention than satisfaction (indirect effect). This suggests that the quality of destination attributes (tourism supplies) tourists perceive at the destination has a significant impact on tourists' behavioral intention. In another view, it may argue that when tourists perceive that a place they visit is a quality destination (meet/exceed tourists' requirement), they may be more likely to return to the same destination (loyalty). This argument may imply to the improvement of the destination attributes (tourism supplies). Thus, the understanding of these variables and their relationships will help local authorities better determine or develop more appropriate tourism strategies for the destination. Importantly, since the quality of destination attributes vary from place to place due to different factors (e.g. level of development, infrastructure and facilities), the relationships of the above three variables may be different, and worth investigating for a particular tourist destination. **Finally**, based on the above discussion, destination quality may directly affect

destination loyalty and tourist satisfaction meanwhile it also indirectly affects destination loyalty through tourist satisfaction. These structural relationships have been established as show in figure 1, and they were formulated as research hypotheses in section 2.5.
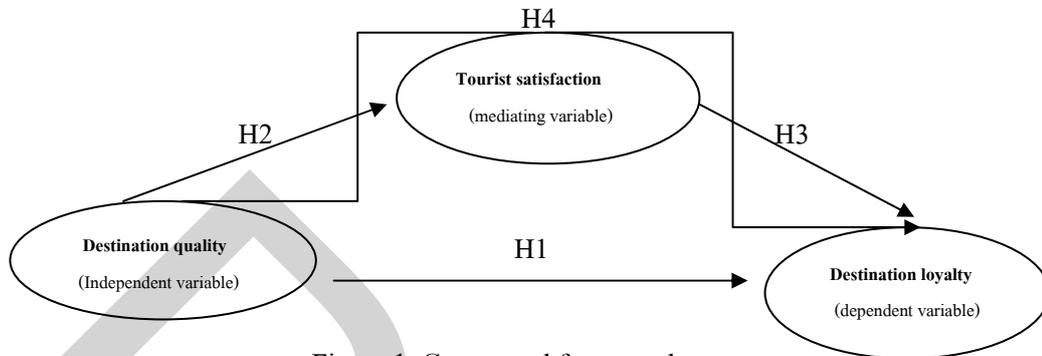
Figure 1: Conceptual framework

According to Figure 1, there are 3 unobserved variables or latent variables: 1) destination quality 2) tourist satisfaction and 3) destination loyalty. Among them, destination quality is an independent variable while tourist satisfaction is an intervening variable, and destination loyalty is a dependent variable. Each latent variable also has a set of observed variables.

2.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on the proposed structural model (Figure 1) and literature review, the following 4 research hypotheses were formulated to reveal the relationships of the three variables (destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty).

H1:   Destination quality has a positive *direct effect* on destination loyalty.

H2:   Destination quality has a positive *direct effect* on tourist satisfaction.

H3:   Tourist satisfaction has a positive *direct effect* on destination loyalty.

H4:   Destination quality has a positive *indirect effect* on destination loyalty through
         tourist satisfaction.

Chapter 3

Research Methodologies

This chapter aims to describe research methodologies employed to investigate the relationship between destination quality, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty of international tourists to Phuket. The objective of this chapter is to discuss about population, samples, sampling method, research instrument, pre-testing, data collection, and data analysis.

3.1 Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Method

The target population in this study was independent international tourists (age 20 years and above) who were visiting Phuket for holiday and leisure purposes. According to the statistical report by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2015), the number of international tourists to Phuket was 8,155,850 people. This study used a sample size estimation by Yamane (1978). By using Yamane's formula of sample size with an error of 5% and confidence coefficient of 95%, the estimation for the sample size was 400 people. Due to the characteristics of the population in this study, a non-probability sampling by a convenience sampling method was employed.

3.2 Research Instrument

Questionnaire was used to collect the data. It consisted of 4 sections: 1) tourists' demographic information 2) destination quality 3) tourist satisfaction and 4) destination loyalty. Each section has details as follows:

- **Tourists' demographic information**: There were 8 general questions regarding demographic information of the respondents.

- **Destination quality:** According to the literature, a destination refers to the location of a group of attractions, tourist facilities and services (Kim & Brown, 2012). The combination of these features makes up the tourism products at the destination (Zabkar et al., 2010). With this regard, the measurement of destination quality was modified from a concept of "six A's" (i.e. attractions, access, amenities, available packages, activities, and ancillary services) developed by Buhalis (2000) as well as a review of related studies as a guideline to create destination quality items (Cong, 2016; Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). All destination quality items were adapted to be suitable for Phuket's destination features. Through the literature review and academics discussions, there were 22 destination items for measuring Phuket's destination quality. Respondents were asked to rate their

perception/evaluation on Phukets' destination quality items on a 5-point rating scale (1=very poor and 5=very good). These rating scales (poor or good) were employed from related studies as they are argued to be more appropriate as a quality indicator of the destination rather than a scale of "agree" or "disagree" (Assaf & Tsionas, 2015; Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000). Sampled questions were, for instance, "How do you perceive the cleanliness of beaches in Phuket", or "How do you perceive the service of local transportation in Phuket".

- **Tourist satisfaction:** In this study, tourist satisfaction **was not** measured based on traditional method by asking tourists about their satisfaction on individual destination attributes/items (e.g. beaches, people, services) because the satisfaction items may be too similar to those of destination quality items, and may produce unreliable finding through the SEM analysis. Therefore, this study has employed another approach ‑ **the cumulative tourist satisfaction experience** ‑ to measure tourist satisfaction on their trips to Phuket. The cumulative tourist satisfaction experience aims to measure tourist satisfaction based on destination experience (not individual destination items). International scholars argue that tourist satisfaction is concerned with the affective outcome (emotion) of tourists' experience with a bundle of tourism supplies at the destination (Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). It is, therefore, more appropriate to measure tourist satisfaction on the overall destination experience or trip experience rather an individual attribute. With this regard, prior studies measured tourist satisfaction in terms of emotional state with the overall destination performance (Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). In this study, there were five statements to measure tourist satisfaction (trip experience) which were developed from previous research (Rajaratnam et al., 2015; Zabkar et al., 2010). Some of the five statements were, for example, "I really enjoy my visit to Phuket", "I have positive feeling with this destination", and "My visit to this destination exceeds my expectation". Respondents were asked to rate their trip satisfaction on a 5‑point Likert scale (5=strongly agree to 1=strongly disagree).

- **Destination loyalty:** Most prior studies have measured destination loyalty on two items: (1) the intention to revisit the destination in the future and (2) the likelihood to recommend the destination to other people (Chi & Qu, 2008; Kim & Brown, 2012; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Following the literature, this study asked the respondents to rate their intention to revisit Phuket in the near future and their likelihood to recommend Phuket to their relatives/friends by using a 5‑point Likert scale (1=least likely and 5=most likely).

3.3 Pre-testing

According to Cavana et al. (2001), researchers should conduct a pre-test to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research instrument before gathering data. For this study, there was a pre-test conducted before the final data collection. The reliability test was conducted to measure an internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The first draft of questionnaire was distributed to 50 randomly selected foreign visitors returning from Phuket at the Southern Bus Terminal. A reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) was performed for all questionnaire items with a result of 0.83, well above a value of 0.70, indicating an acceptable reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994 cited in Chi & Qu, 2008). The validity test (face validity) was also undertaken with the same samples to obtain feedback and comments on the clarity and appropriateness of the research questions. Based on the pilot test, some modifications (e.g. wording, revision of some sentences) were revised, and the final version of the questionnaire was developed.

3.4 Data Collection

The data for this study were collected by a self-administered questionnaire method in Phuket during June 2016 (due to time frame of research project). Due to the characteristics of the population in this study (infinite population), a non-probability sampling method by a convenience sampling method was employed. The data were collected at major tourist attractions in Phuket. The areas of data collection were spread throughout Phuket island such as city areas (old town, shopping areas) and famous beaches (Kata, Karon, Patong). During the surveys, the respondents were asked if they would be interested to participate in the survey. Once they agreed, questionnaires were distributed on site and collected by researcher team (researcher and college students). All research respondents received small souvenirs for their participation. Generally, it is normal to receive unusable or incomplete questionnaires for a survey method. To increase more reliability on data analysis, this study distributed 450 questionnaires to international tourists in Phuket. Finally, a total of 438 complete questionnaires were retuned and usable for final data analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

The SPSS and AMOS statistical software packages were used to analyze the data. AMOS was employed in this study because it works inside the software SPSS, which was available to researcher (author) and used to treat the data. Descriptive statistics were used to describe general information of the respondents whereas Path analysis was employed to test hypotheses and relationships (direct and indirect effects) between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty. The proposed model was tested by using a SEM method by AMOS software.

In relation to score interpretation on the rating scale (five-point scale from 1 - 5), the following table is the score range for data interpretation applied from previous research suggestions (Naina, 2009; Sangpikul, 2008; Thongkundam, 2012).

Score range	Interpretation for destination quality	Interpretation for tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty
4.21 – 5.00	Very good	Very high agreement
3.41 – 4.20	Good	High agreement
2.61 – 3.40	Fair	Moderate agreement
1.81 – 2.60	Poor	Less agreement
1.00 – 1.80	Very poor	Very less agreement

Chapter 4

Research Findings and Discussions

The purpose of this chapter is to present research findings, hypothesis tests, and discussions. In order to easily understand the content of this chapter, it is divided into 4 sections as follows.

Section 4.1:   Profile of research respondents

Section 4.2:   Findings of destination quality, tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty

Section 4.3:   Structural equation model analysis (SEM) and hypotheses testing

Section 4.4:   Research discussions

Section 4.1: Profile of respondents

Table 4.1: Profile of research respondents

Characteristics	Descriptions	Number (n=438)	Percent (100%)
Gender	Male	235	54.0%
	Female	203	46.0%
Age	20 - 30 years	78	18.0%
	31 - 45 years	172	39.0%
	46 - 59 years	125	29.0%
	60 years or older	63	14.0%
Marital status	Married	223	51.0%
	Single	185	43.0%
	Divorced/Separated/Widowed	30	6.0%
Education	Bachelor degree	254	58.0%
	Master degree or higher	109	25.0%
	High school or lower	75	17.0%
Occupation	Company employee	145	31.0%
	Government officer	79	18.0%
	Independent/self-employed	62	14.0%
	Business owner	44	10.0%
	College student	33	8.0%
	Unemployment	25	7.0%
	Housewife	23	6.0%
	Retired	21	5.0%
	Others	6	1.0%
Monthly Income	US$ 1,000 or lower	51	11.0%
	US$ 1,001 – 2,500	120	27.0%
	US$ 2,501 – 3,500	169	40.0%
	US$ 3,501 – or higher	98	22.0%
Number of visit to Phuket	First time	289	66.0%
	2-3 times	118	27.0%
	4 times and more	31	7.0%
Regional base	Asian tourists	234	54.0%
	European/Australian tourists	204	46.0%

According to Table 4.1, most of the respondents (54%) were males and 46% were females. Most of them were in the age group of 31 – 45 years old (39%). More than half of them were married (51%), and the majority (58%) had education at the college level (bachelor degree). The respondents came from different occupations, for example, 31% were company employees, 18% were government officers, 14% were independent/self-employed, and 10% were business owner. Approximately 40% of the respondents had monthly income in the range of US$ 2,501 – 3,500 while 27% had income in the range of US$ 1,001 – 2,500. Among 438 respondents, 66% were first time visitors, while 27% visited Phuket 2-3 times, and 7% returned to Phuket 4 times and more. In overall, there were 51% Asian tourists and 46% European tourists (including Australia and New Zealand).

4.2 Findings of Destination Quality, Tourist Satisfaction, and Tourist Loyalty

This part will present the findings of destination quality, tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty, respectively.

Table 4.2: Mean score of tourist perception on destination quality items in Phuket

Destination items	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation* (quality perception)
1. Beauty/scenery of beaches	4.30	0.85	Very good
2. Friendliness of local people	4.27	0.72	Very good
3. Helpfulness of serviced staff	4.24	0.89	Very good
4. Hotel services	4.22	0.79	Very good
5. Cleanliness of beaches	4.19	0.72	Good
6. Food hygiene	4.17	0.91	Good
7. Restaurant services	4.15	0.89	Good
8. Shopping facilities	4.12	0.64	Good
9. Tour/travel agent services	4.11	0.81	Good
10. Cultural attractions	4.09	0.85	Good
11. Tourist information	4.05	0.70	Good
12. Nightlife and entertainment	4.02	0.78	Good
13. Tourist safety	4.01	0.64	Good
14. Price of goods and services	3.82	0.99	Good
15. Convenience of traveling within city	3.80	0.87	Good
16. Honesty of vendors/merchants	3.78	0.75	Good
17. Police availability	3.66	0.76	Good
18. Cleanliness of city	3.60	0.88	Good
19. Quality of road	3.53	0.72	Good
21. Safety of transportation	3.51	0.88	Good
20. Service of transportation	3.39	0.74	Fair
22. Price of transportation	3.37	0.81	Fair
Overall mean	3.93		Good

* based on a rating scale: 5= very good and 1=very poor

Table 4.2 shows the mean score ranking of tourists' perception on destination quality items in Phuket. The top four quality items (very good level) were 1) beauty/scenery of beaches (mean=4.29), 2) friendliness of local people (mean=4.27), 3) helpfulness of serviced staff (mean=4.24), and 4) hotel services (mean=4.22). Meanwhile, most items fell in the good level (mean between 4.19-3.51). However, the less quality items (mean score below 3.40) were 1) service of transportation (mean=3.39) and 2) price of transportation (mean=3.37). The overall mean score was 3.93 (good level).

Table 4.3: Mean score of tourist satisfaction in visiting Phuket

Items	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation* (agreement level)
1. I am satisfied with my decision to visit Phuket.	4.18	0.88	High
2. I really enjoy my visit to Phuket.	4.15	0.81	High
3. My visit to Phuket is worth for my money and time.	4.11	0.79	High
4. I have positive feeling with Phuket.	4.08	0.75	High
5. My visit to Phuket is better than my expectation.	4.04	0.96	High
Overall mean	4.11		High

* based on a rating scale: 5= strongly agree and 1= strongly disagree

Table 4.3 shows mean score ranking of tourists' opinion on their trip satisfaction in visiting Phuket. The highest agreement item was a satisfactory decision to visit Phuket (mean=4.18), followed by an enjoyable visit to Phuket (mean=4.15), and a valued visit for money and time (mean=4.11), while the items like a positive feeling with Phuket was ranked the fourth (mean=4.08) and a visit to Phuket better than expectation (mean=4.04) was ranked the fifth, respectively. The overall mean score was 4.11 (high agreement level).

Table 4.4 Mean score of destination loyalty items to Phuket

Items	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation* (agreement level)
1. Likelihood to return to Phuket	4.12	0.88	High
2. Likelihood to recommend Phuket to friends, family, relatives.	4.23	0.82	High
Overall mean	4.18		High

* based on a rating scale: 5= strongly agree and 1= strongly disagree

Table 4.4 shows mean score of respondents' opinions on Phuket's loyalty. Based on the finding, the respondents rated their likelihood to return to Phuket with an average score of 4.12 while the likelihood to recommend Phuket to their friends, families, and relative was rated at 4.23. The overall mean score was 4.18 (high agreement level).

Section 4.3:   Structural Equation Model Analysis (SEM)

This section presents data analysis by using the structure equation model (SEM) method by AMOS. The SEM method was utilized in this study because it allowed researcher 1) to examine the relationships among the latent constructs and observed variables 2) to test hypotheses, and 3) to estimate the overall fit of the hypothesized model to the data (Imcharoen, 2011). SEM has the advantage of a structure model, which provides an accurate picture of the relationship among the established constructs.

Prior to hypotheses testing, structure equation model (SEM) by AMOS software was used to examine 1) the measurement model and 2) the structure equation model (Arbuckle, 2007). Before discussing about them, two steps of testing these two models were conducted based on the following methods proposed by Byrne (2001). The first step is to determine if the overall fit of the model and data is satisfactory. The second step is to test the validity and reliability of the measurements within the constructs in order to assess the adequacy of the local fit. Criteria to measure both overall fit and local fit indices are presented as follows.

The overall fit is often assessed by using Chi-square value, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). In general, the chi-square value should be used as a guide rather than an absolute index of fit due to its sensitivity to sample size (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982), this value therefore is optional (Byrne, 2001). With this regard, the model fit assessment is mainly based on the remaining fit indices (i.e. CFI, NFI, and RMSEA). CFI value close to 0.95 indicates an excellent fit to the data (Hu & Bentler, 1999) while CFI value of 0.90 or greater indicates a reasonable fit. Meanwhile, NFI value exceeding 0.90 demonstrates a good fit (Byrne, 2001). And, RMSEA value less than 0.06 denotes a good model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999) while the value between 0.08 - 0.10 represents an adequate fit (Byrne, 2001).

While local fit indices indicate the validity and reliability of the measurement model. In order to determine if the local fit of the measurement model is adequate, the following two indices should be considered: 1) individual item reliability and 2) convergent validity. The individual item reliability is assessed by examining the loadings. An item scoring less than 0.4 should be dropped out from the model (Hulland, 1999). Meanwhile, the convergent validity is linked with an individual construct by assuming that the items in the specific construct should share a high proportion of the variance in common (Hair et. al, 2006). To measure convergent validity, the three testing instruments are used: (a) Cronbach's Alpha, (b) construct reliability (composite reliability), and (c) average

variance extracted (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Cronbach's Alpha with a value of 0.70 or higher is suggested as a benchmark of high quality (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), while construct reliability (indicator reliability) with a value of 0.60 or greater indicates a very good fit (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) while the value of 0.50 – 0.59 indicates a good fit. The average variance extracted (AVE) with a value of 0.50 or greater indicates evidence of an internal consistency (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

4.3.1 Measurement model

Before developing the structural equation model, the measurement model is tested as a pre-requisite to the evaluation of the structural equation model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982 cited in Chi & Qu, 2008). It explains the relationship between **latent constructs** (destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty) and **indicators** (observed variables). In the measurement model, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to examine the reliability and validity of the measurement model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1998 cited in Toyama & Yamada, 2012).

Table 4.5 presents the fit indices and their acceptable thresholds for measurement model. They were calculated to assess the quality of the measurement model. With the fit indices in Table 4.5, all of them passed the threshold level. This indicated that the proposed CFA (Table 4.6) fit with the empirical collected data.

Table 4.5: Fit indices and their acceptable thresholds for measurement model

Criteria	Acceptable threshold level	Computed statistics	Fit result
Chi-square (χ^2)	> 0.05	445.41	Acceptable
χ^2/df (or CMIN)	< 3.00*	2.13	Acceptable
Comparative fit index (CFI)	> 0.90	0.91	Acceptable
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.90	0.93	Acceptable
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.10**	0.07	Acceptable

Remarks: df=209

* χ^2/df < 3.00 is acceptable (Kline, 1998; Paswan, 2009)

** RMSEA in the range of 0.05 to 0.10 is considered an indication of fair fit (MacCallum et. al, 1996), and is acceptable (Garson, 2011; Steiger, 2007)

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is shown in Table 4.6 presenting the results of the measurement model with 3 latent constructs. Following Table 4.6, it presents the internal fit indices which composed of factor loading and individual item reliability of all items used in each construct including Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) in the measurement model. All factor loadings were greater than a criterion value of 0.4; indicating a good correlation between the items (Kaiser, 1974), meanwhile Cronbach's alpha exceeded 0.6, and indicator reliabilities were higher than 0.4; indicating acceptable threshold reliability (Hullland, 1999). At the same time, composite reliabilities of the three constructs were higher than the recommended level of 0.60, indicating high internal consistency (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Finally, the average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs were greater than the threshold value of 0.50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Therefore, in overall, all of the constructs and indicators (observed variables) in this study were acceptable; suggesting the measurement model fit the empirical data.

Table 4.6: Results of CFA for measurement model

Construct & indicators	Standardized loading	Indicator reliability	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
(1)Destination quality: Beach attraction			0.76	0.81	0.59
Cleanliness of beaches	0.73	0.68			
Beach environment/scenery	0.82	0.78			
(1) Destination quality: People			0.77	0.78	0.54
Friendliness of local people	0.79	0.63			
Honesty/reliability of vendors	0.69	0.51			
Helpfulness of serviced staff	0.65	0.52			
Hotel services	0.75	0.66			
Restaurant services	0.71	0.58			
(1) Destination quality: Tourist facilities			0.69	0.70	0.64
Shopping facilities	0.77	0.59			
Tour services	0.78	0.61			
Tourist information	0.61	0.67			
Prices of goods and services	0.78	0.61			
Food hygiene	0.79	0.63			
Cultural attractions	0.78	0.61			
Nightlife & entertainment	0.79	0.63			
(1) Destination quality: Tourist safety			0.71	0.73	0.58
Tourist safety	0.85	0.73			
Police availability	0.76	0.58			
(1) Destination quality: Infrastructure facilities			0.80	0.82	0.54
Quality of road	0.69	0.57			
Safety of transportation	0.84	0.71			
Price of transportation	0.78	0.61			
Transportation services	0.62	0.55			
Convenience of traveling	0.61	0.56			
Cleanliness of Phuket	0.78	0.61			
(2) Tourist satisfaction			0.92	0.93	0.73
Positive feeling	0.81	0.66			
Better than expectation	0.83	0.69			
Enjoy a visit	0.90	0.81			
Satisfied decision	0.92	0.85			
Worth for money & time	0.79	0.62			
(3) Destination loyalty			0.83	0.80	0.71
Likelihood to revisit	0.76	0.89			
Recommendation to others	0.64	0.58			

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(1) = first construct (destination quality)

(2) = second construct (tourist satisfaction)

(3) = third construct (destination loyalty)

4.3.2 Structural equation model

After the measurement model based on assumptions and theories was tested, it was found that the measurement model was adequate and acceptable fit. The final measurement model composed of all items and constructs from Table 4.6 was later built into the structural model as shown in Figure 4.1. It should be noted that an equivalent structural model is not presented because it is not a final structural where the conclusion is drawn. However, the structural model was revised and modified until the model fit the observed data and was presented as the final model as shown in Figure 4.1. The overall fit indices were assessed to check the model fit. The calculated indices were chi-square = 448.44, df = 209, chi-square/df = 2.14, CFI = 0.92, NFI = 0.91, and RMSEA = 0.07 as shown in Figure 4.1. The value of chi-square/df (or CMIN) less than a threshold value of 3.0 indicates an acceptable fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Moreover, CFI values that compared the hypothesized model against an independent baseline model (Arbuckle, 2005) were higher than the required values of 0.90, demonstrating good fit model (Byrne, 2001). NFI value was greater than 0.90; demonstrating a good fit. RMSEA value is 0.07, indicating a moderate fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). Based on all fit measurement values, the proposed structural model had adequate fit between the model and data. Therefore, all path coefficients from this structural model can be interpreted with the hypotheses 1 - 4.

In relation to **hypotheses testing**, we tested the standardized parameter estimate that links the three variables in terms of its sign and statistical significance (see Figure 4.1). Standardized path coefficients can be used for examining one latent construct in relation to another. Please see Figure 4.1 for the hypotheses testing.

According to Hypothesis 1 (chapter 2), the results indicated that destination quality dimensions related to beach attraction, people, and tourist safety had positive direct effects on destination loyalty (path coefficient = 0.23, 0.19, and 0.17). The findings suggest that these three dimensions have the important impacts on tourists' decision to return to Phuket. However, the dimensions related to tourism facilities and infrastructure facilities did not have significant relationships with destination loyalty. This result, therefore, partially supports the first hypothesis (H1).

In relation to hypothesis 2, it was found that all destination quality dimensions had positive direct effects on tourist satisfaction (path coefficient = 0.29, 0.19, 0.15, 0.20, 0.15, respectively). These results fully support the second hypothesis (H2); suggesting that destination quality had a close relationship with tourist satisfaction. In other words, what tourists perceived on destination quality

attributes during their trips in Phuket would ultimately affect their satisfaction. Among them, destination quality dimension related to beach attraction had the highest value (effect size) on tourist satisfaction.

For hypothesis 3, the finding showed that tourist satisfaction had a positive direct effect on destination loyalty (path coefficient = 0.61); supporting the fourth hypothesis (H3). This suggests that tourists who were satisfied with their trips in Phuket were more likely to return to Phuket.

Finally, hypothesis 4, it was found that all five destination quality dimensions had positive indirect effects on destination loyalty through tourist satisfaction (see Table 4.7) (path coefficient = 0.15, 0.17, 0.19, 0.12, 0.15, respectively). These findings fully support the fourth hypothesis (H4).
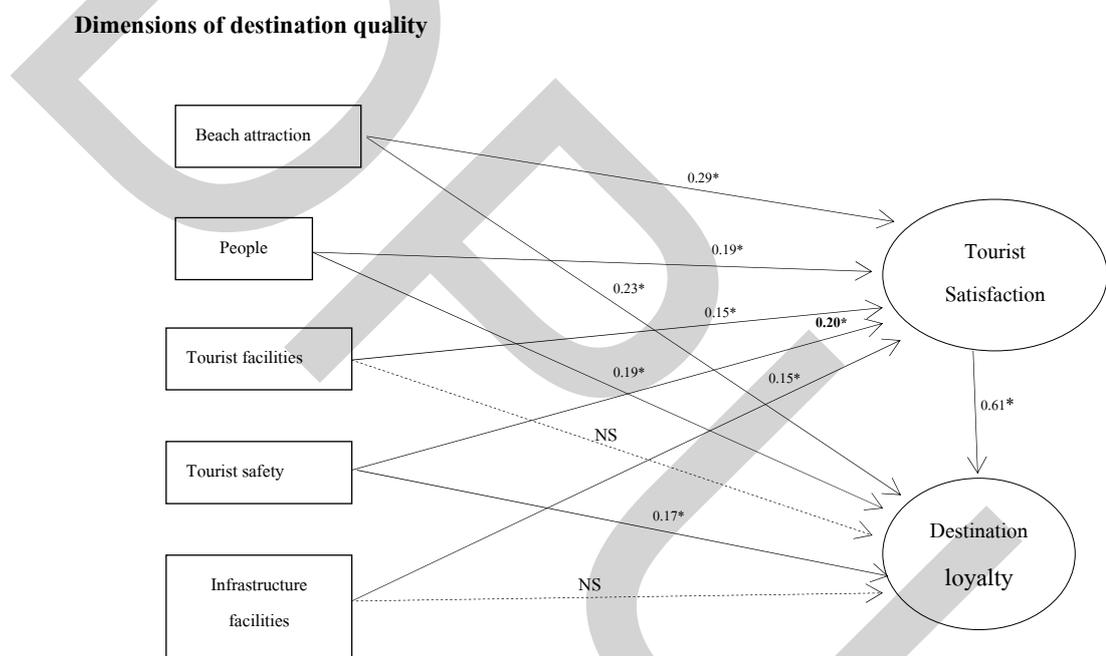
Figure 4.1: Structural model (final model)

Fit indices: Chi-square = 448.44, df = 209, Chi-square/df = 2.14, CFI = 0.92, NFI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.07

Remarks:

NS = no significant relationship

* p-value is significant at .05

Table 4.7: The effects of structural model

Destination quality dimensions (independent variables)	Destination loyalty (dependent variable)		
	Direct	**Indirect**	**Total**
1. Beach attraction	0.23	0.15	0.38
2. People	0.19	0.17	0.36
3. Tourism facilities	-	0.19	0.19
4. Tourist safety	0.17	0.12	0.29
5. Infrastructure facilities	-	0.15	0.15

Table 4.7 presents the direct, indirect, and total effects of the structural model. There are three dimensions of destination quality that had both direct and indirect effects on destination loyalty, namely, beach attraction, people, and tourist safety while tourism facilities and infrastructure facilities had only indirect effect on destination loyalty. In terms of the total effects, the path coefficient of beach attraction (0.38) had the greatest total effects on destination loyalty, followed by the path coefficient of people (0.36), and tourist safety (0.29), respectively. These findings may provide implications for Phuket's tourism industry.

4.4 Research Discussions

The part aims to discuss the findings of the effects of destination loyalty on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Firstly, according to the results, destination quality dimension related to beach attraction was found to have the significant influence on destination loyalty in a positive direction. The result is similar to Kim & Brown (2012) indicating that the natural components of a nature-based destination will play an important role in satisfying tourists in visiting the destination as well as may influence tourists' revisitation. In particular, in the study of Polnyotee and Thadaniti (2014) reported that tourist attraction in Phuket (i.e. beaches, natural scenery) was the most important factor attracting tourists to the destination. This may help justify in that Phuket is a world tourist destination and well known for the beauty of beaches and 3-S tourism (sea, sand, sun). It is not a surprising finding revealing that the quality of beaches in Phuket is the most important factor (highest coefficient value) affecting tourists' loyalty. This finding may provide an important implication for related parties to manage tourism in Phuket.

Secondly, it was found that destination quality associated with people had positive direct effect on destination loyalty. This finding is similar to previous research (Chin & Qu, 2008; Mehmetoglu & Normann, 2013; Thongkundam, 2012) revealing that people is an essential component that may affect tourists' trip satisfaction and their decision to revisit the destination. For example, Thongkundam (2012) indicated that friendliness of people was the top strength of Phuket. Likewise, Chin and Qu (2008) found that tourists' travel experience with tourism services (including local people) in the destination could result in repeat visit. Furthermore, Mehmetoglu & Normann (2013) disclosed that people (service/business employees) had a significant influence on tourists' overall holiday experience. Based on these past studies, this suggests that people component plays an important role contributing to destination loyalty.

Thirdly, another interesting finding indicated that tourist safety was another important factor affecting tourists' loyalty to Phuket. This finding has reconfirmed Phuket's tourism as well as Thai tourism industry that tourist safety has become the essential component for international tourists in visiting Thailand. The current finding corresponds to several prior studies both in Thai and international contexts. For example, prior research (Batra, 2008; Rittichainuwat, 2013) indicated that tourist safety is the top concern among international tourists when visiting overseas destinations, particularly Thailand. This may be because, in recent years, the image of Thailand has been negatively affected by several unrests such as bombs in Bangkok, terrorism in the southern Thailand,

and several tourist crimes in Thailand. Based on these situations, it may be possible that international tourists may place tourist safety as a priority concern if they wish to return to Phuket (as well as Thailand).

However, the SEM finding also revealed that the other two destination quality dimensions (i.e. tourist facilities and infrastructure facilities) did not have the direct effects on destination loyalty but all of the five destination quality dimensions had direct impacts on tourist satisfaction. This could be justified that destination loyalty may not only occur due to tourists' perception on destination quality but it may occur through a combination of positive perception on destination quality and tourist satisfaction together (suggesting that several factors may contribute to loyalty). In order words, when tourists have positive perception on destination quality attributes at the destination, this may lead to their overall satisfaction. With high satisfaction, they are more likely to revisit the destination. This finding may imply that destination quality alone may not be adequate to the formation of destination loyalty but it would be involved with overall tourist satisfaction with the destination. Since the value of path coefficient of tourist satisfaction (0.61) was higher than those of destination quality, this suggests that tourist satisfaction plays an essential role in building tourists' destination loyalty to Phuket. And it may be considered as an important moderating variable between destination quality and destination loyalty.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

This is the final chapter of the research report. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize research findings, provide recommendations, and address research limitations and future research opportunities.

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the research objectives, this study has summarized the research findings as follows:

According to the **general findings**, the top four quality items (very good level) were 1) beauty/scenery of beaches (mean=4.29), 2) friendliness of local people (mean=4.27), 3) helpfulness of serviced staff (mean=4.24), and 4) hotel services (mean=4.22). While the less quality items (mean score below 3.40) were 1) service of transportation (mean=3.39) and 2) price of transportation (mean=3.37). With regards to tourists' opinion on trip satisfaction to Phuket, the highest agreement item was a satisfactory decision to visit Phuket (mean=4.18), followed by an enjoyable visit to Phuket (mean=4.15), and a valued visit for money and time (mean=4.11). Finally, regarding the destination loyalty, the likelihood to recommend Phuket to others (mean=4.23) was rated higher than the likelihood to return to Phuket (mean=4.12).

In relation to the **major findings**, based on the path analysis through SEM method, the study (in the case of island destination) found that destination quality dimensions associated with beach attraction, people, and tourist safety had the positive direct effects (direct paths) on destination loyalty. Among the three dimensions, beach attraction had the highest path coefficient (0.23) on destination loyalty while the dimensions regarding tourist facilities and infrastructure facilities did not have a significant relationship with destination loyalty. These findings confirmed partial relationship between destination quality and destination loyalty (hypothesis 1). However, all destination quality dimensions (five dimensions) had the positive direct effects (direct paths) on tourist satisfaction. This result fully confirmed the relationship between destination quality and tourist satisfaction (hypothesis 2). Tourist satisfaction was also found to have the positive direct effect (direct path) on destination loyalty. The result fully confirmed the relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty (hypothesis 3). Furthermore, all destination quality dimensions were found to have positive indirect effects (indirect paths) on destination loyalty through tourist satisfaction (a moderating variable). These findings fully confirmed the indirect relationship between destination quality and destination loyalty (hypothesis 4). Finally, the structural equation model proposed in this study (Figure 4.1) supported the statistically significant relationships between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and

destination loyalty. Given the final structural model, destination quality partially influenced destination loyalty, at the same time, it also indirectly influenced destination loyalty through tourist satisfaction as a moderating variable. **In overall**, this study has reconfirmed the assumption that there is an existence of the relationship between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty by showing the direct and indirect effects among the three variables.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

Little effort has investigated the effects of destination quality dimensions on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in the case of island destination. Generally, in the setting of island destination, destination quality dimension associated with beach attraction was argued to influence tourists' revisitation. However, this study has found that, in addition to beach attraction, destination quality dimensions related to ***people*** and ***tourist safety*** also had the significant impact on tourists' revisitation in the case of Phuket island. In other words, the quality of beach attraction was not the only factor affecting tourists' decision to return to Phuket but having good experience with local people and high confidence of tourist safety also contributed to their likelihood to revisit Phuket. This study, therefore, has disclosed the three important determinants of destination loyalty in the case of island destination (Phuket) which were 1) beaches, 2) people, and 3) tourist safety. This indicated that there were three direct significant paths between destination quality and destination loyalty. The finding helps expand the existing literature and provides a better understanding of the relationship between destination quality and destination loyalty in the case of island destination. In relation to path coefficients and size of effect, this study found that the path coefficient of tourist satisfaction (0.61) was higher (greater) than those of destination quality dimensions. This suggests that tourist satisfaction is still the essential variable contributing to tourists' loyalty in case of Phuket island. However, it should be noted that the effect (path coefficient) of tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty was the result (outcome) of destination quality dimensions. This suggests that the high value of path coefficient of tourist satisfaction occurs due to the overall results of tourists' experience or perception on Phuket's destination quality dimensions, not the tourist satisfaction only. Furthermore, the study has revealed that what tourists experienced at the destination (all destination quality dimensions) also directly contributed to tourist satisfaction, meanwhile, all of them also indirectly influenced tourists' loyalty. Based on these finding, it highlights the essence and existence of tourist satisfaction as the important mediating variable (full mediation role) between destination quality and destination loyalty in the island destination (Phuket). Therefore, the current findings help expand the existing tourism literature and provide a deeper understanding of the causal

relationships between the two important variables (destination quality and tourist satisfaction) and the destination loyalty in the case of island destination.

5.3 Managerial Contributions

The part aims to provide important recommendations for local authorities and destination managers in order to use the benefits of the current research findings to improve and develop Phuket's tourism.

Firstly, Phuket as the island tourism destination, destination managers should understand and closely consider the relationship between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty as established from this study. According to SEM findings revealing the relationships between the three variables, it is suggested that tourists with positive perception on Phuket's destination quality attributes and higher trip satisfaction were more likely to return to Phuket. Destination managers and local authorities should, therefore, attempt to maintain the level of quality desired by tourists (the quality the meets tourist expectation) this is because the destination with high quality attributes may subsequently contribute to a positive image, and may attract more repeat visitors to the destination (Rajaratnam et al., 2015). This includes the case of island tourism destination like Phuket.

Secondly, destination quality dimension related to beach attraction was found to have the highest path coefficient on destination loyalty. Based on this finding, beach attraction may be regard as the most important element contributing to tourists' loyalty to Phuket. Therefore, the government and local authorities seem to be the key players in managing this important attribute in order to enhance international tourists' revisitation to Phuket. They may work together to develop/improve beach attribute through appropriate strategies or plans. In relation to beach management (i.e. scenery, cleanliness), protection policy, conservation plan, and legal action should be seriously taken into consideration. In particular, the sustainable management approach (concept), particularly a concept of island destination management, should be emphasized and undertaken by the government and business sectors (e.g. policies, planning, management, and evaluation). There should be also a regular monitor from city administrators/tourism officials to visit the beach areas in Phuket throughout the year to control the development and quality of the beach sites. Local authorities should pay more attention to the cleanliness of beach areas by preparing sufficient staff and garbage bins throughout the areas. Also, the city administrators/tourism officials may launch the campaign such as "Keep Phuket Clean" like other countries. This campaign has been undertaken in several tourism destinations such as Bali, Indonesia (Nurhayati, 2011) and Penang, Malaysia (Lee, 2015).

Thirdly, besides beach attraction, destination quality dimension related to people was also found to have the direct effect on destination loyalty. This suggests that people (i.e. local residents, vendors, and

service staff) play a crucial role in building loyal tourists to Phuket. In other words, the favorable perception on local people in the island (destination) may contribute to the tourists' revisitation to Phuket. This finding should provide an important implication for local authorities and tourism organization to concern about the "people" as an essential component contributing to Phuket's tourism. For instance, they may work together to create a public awareness for local people (including residents, venders, service staff) for being a kind and friendly host to welcome and assist tourists. Related work-shops, seminars and campaigns may help to achieve this task through the collaboration between government, business, and educational institutes. In particular, the educational institutes (schools and colleges) are an essential part to enhance and foster this important value within their institutes. The government and private sectors may also create awareness and train their employees on this issue as well. In addition, regular campaigns or related activities may be established to build a good experience and relationship between hosts and visitors such as beach cleaning, friendship sports, food festival, local events or other social events.

Fourthly, tourist safety was another factor to have the direct impact on destination loyalty. Today, tourist safety in Thailand seems to be one of the major reasons for tourists' decision to visit Thailand due to the recent negative images of Thailand (e.g. southern terrorism, bombs, crime). With this attribute, there are three important issues to be addressed to improve the quality of tourist safety in Phuket. The first issue should be about the provision of the sufficient budget for managing tourist safety in Phuket. Since tourism has generated huge revenues for Phuket's tourism, the central government should allocate appropriate budgets for local police department and related safety/security administration. The second issue should be related to the human resources for local police and safety/security staff. In case of a sufficient budget, there should be more numbers of local police, safety/security staff or volunteers recruited to be in charge of tourist safety in Phuket. The local authorities and tourism polices should closely work together by providing more channels/information for emergency contacts (at airport, hotels, restaurants, and other public areas) and having officials regularly visit the tourism sites throughout the city. Police volunteers or safety guards may be recruited from locals and foreign residents. The final issue will be about the cooperative work between government and business sectors to build the awareness and campaigns among local people (vendors, merchants, serviced staff) to be the good hosts in welcoming and assisting foreign tourists in Phuket. The campaigns should be focused on different approaches to make tourists feel safe while visiting Phuket. These may be undertaken through various approaches, for example, media, travel documents, Internet, and social events (including beach lifeguards and CCTV).

Fifthly, the SEM findings indicated that all destination quality dimensions (five dimensions) had the positive direct effects on tourist satisfaction. Moreover, it should be noted that tourist satisfaction had the

strongest direct effect on destination loyalty (with high path coefficient = 0.61). This effect may result from the outcome of destination quality dimensions; implying that any destination attributes tourists perceive during their trips in Phuket would directly affect their satisfaction. This finding, therefore, provides an important implication for local authorities and tourism sector to keep in mind about building tourist satisfaction through the delivery of high quality of destination attributes (e.g. beaches, services, food, tours, transportation). When tourists have high satisfaction with the destination attributes, they are more likely to revisit Phuket. Therefore, the government and tourism sector should be the key players in managing and planning destination attributes in order to promote higher level of tourist satisfaction and revisitation (Chi & Qu, 2008). Meanwhile, both sectors may work together to manage destination attributes through appropriate strategy, plan or project. This may involve 1) infrastructure development (accessibility, price and services), 2) the standard of business services (accommodation, restaurants, tour operators, entertainment), and 3) the conservation of tourism resources (natural and cultural attractions).

Finally, the major findings of this study indicated that destination quality dimensions associated with beach attraction, people and tourist safety had the positive direct paths (impacts) to tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty for the case of island destination. These findings may assist destination managers and local authorities to develop Phuket's tourism marketing strategies by highlighting the three factors in relation to the beauty of beach tourism or island tourism in Phuket, welcoming guests with Thai hospitality (friendliness of local people), and tourist safety confidence through various marketing media.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

There are some limitations associated with this study that need to be addressed for future research opportunities. This study examined the effects of destination quality dimensions on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in a specific island setting – Phuket, in the southern part of Thailand. Future research may be conducted in other island-based setting in order to enhance the generalizability and compare what this study has found. This study examined only one construct (i.e. destination quality) affecting tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. It may not provide a comprehensive understanding on the determinants of destination loyalty. Future research may incorporate important variables into destination loyalty studies such as perceived value and destination image.

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Research Project: A Study of Destination Quality, Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty to Phuket

This research project is granted by Dhurakij Pundit University, Bangkok. The objective of the research is to examine the perception of tourists on destination quality, tourist satisfaction and their loyalty to Phuket. The finding of the research will be used for academic purpose and all information will be treated confidently. The questionnaire consists of 4 parts. Please answer all questions. Your kind cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Thank you

Aswin Sangpikul

Dhurakij Pundit University, Bangkok

1. General Information

Instruction: Please choose the answer that match your general information.

1.1 Which region do you come from? 1) Europe, country…………………………..................2) Asia, country………………………….............

1.2 Gender:	1) male	2) female	
1.3 Age:	1) 20 - 30	2) 31 – 45	3) 46 - 59 4) 60 or more
1.4 Marital status:	1) single	2) married	3) widowed/divorced/separated
1.5 Educational:	1) High school or lower	2) Bachelor/college degree	3) Master degree or higher
1.6 Occupation:	1) students	2) company employee	3) government officer 4) business owner
	5) independent/self-employed	6) unemployment	7) housewife 8) retired 9) Others,…….........................

1.7 Monthly income: 1) less than US$ 1,000   2) US$ 1,001 – 2,500

3) US$ 2,501 – 4,000   4) US$ 4,001 or higher

1.8 Number of visit to Phuket: 1) first time   2) 2-3 times   3) 4-5 times   4) 6 times or more

2. Quality of service/facilities in Phuket

Please evaluate the level of your opinion on **Quality of services and facilities** in Phuket in each question below**.**

How do you perceive the Quality of services and facilities in Phuket?	Very good	Good	Fair/ok	Bad	Very bad
2.1 Cleanliness of beaches in Phuket	5	4	3	2	1
2.2 Scenery (view) of beaches	5	4	3	2	1
2.3 Friendliness of local people	5	4	3	2	1
2.4 Honesty/reliability of vendors/merchants	5	4	3	2	1
2.5 Helpfulness of service staff/employees (hotel, restaurants, tour)	5	4	3	2	1
2.6 Hotel service (room and staff)	5	4	3	2	1
2.7 Restaurant service (food and staff)	5	4	3	2	1
2.8 Food quality	5	4	3	2	1
2.9 Shopping facilities	5	4	3	2	1
2.10 Tour activities	5	4	3	2	1
2.11 Tourist information	5	4	3	2	1
2.12 Price of product & service (hotel, food, tour, shopping)	5	4	3	2	1
2.13 Nightlife entertainment service (pub & bar)	5	4	3	2	1
2.14 Cultural attractions	5	4	3	2	1

	5	4	3	2	1
2.15 Cleanliness of Phuket city	5	4	3	2	1
2.16 Quality of road	5	4	3	2	1
2.17 Safety of transportation	5	4	3	2	1
2.18 Service of public transportation	5	4	3	2	1
2.19 Price of transportation in Phuket	5	4	3	2	1
2.20 Convenience of traveling to beaches and towns	5	4	3	2	1
2.21 Tourist safety	5	4	3	2	1
2.22 Police availability	5	4	3	2	1

3. Tourist Satisfaction in Phuket

Pleas indicate the level of your satisfaction toward Phuket in each question below.

Tourist Satisfaction in Phuket	Strongly Agree	Agree	Fair/ ok	Not agree	Strongly not agree
3.1 I have positive feeling with Phuket.	5	4	3	2	1
3.2 My visit to Phuket is better than my expectation.	5	4	3	2	1
3.3 I really enjoy my visit to Phuket.	5	4	3	2	1
3.4 I am satisfied (happy) with my decision to visit Phuket.	5	4	3	2	1
3.5 My visit to Phuket is worth for my money and time.	5	4	3	2	1

4. Re-visit to Phuket

Please indicate the level of your opinion for your revisit to Phuket in each question below.

	5	4	3	2	1
4.1 In the next 1-3 years, how likely will you return (revisit) to Phuket again?	5 (very likely)	4 (likely)	3 (not sure)	2 (less likely)	1 (not likely)
4.2 How likely will you recommend or suggest Phuket to your friends and family?	5 (very likely)	4 (likely)	3 (not sure)	2 (less likely)	1 (not likely)

*****Thank you very much*****