An Investigation into the Relationship between Country Image and Destination Image in Tourism Promotion: The Case of Thailand

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Abstract

Country and Destination image are two important deciding factors in the selection of tourism destination and also respond for the growth of tourism industry. However, only few literatures explained about the issue for destination image as a country context to Thailand. This article presents a review and discussion of the concept regarding destination image of tourism industry in Thailand as a country context involved to match destination image and country image. Based on the results from previous studies, a comprehensive situation analysis of destination image of Thailand was developed. Also, the results could be provided important implications for future strategic image management in Thailand and used to design and implement marketing program for example creating tourism destination image, implementing tourism marketing program, and improving tourism destination image.

Keywords: Destination, Country, Image, Tourism, Thailand

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การตรวจสอบความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างภาพลักษณ์ ของประเทศและภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทาง เพื่อสนับสนุนการท่องเที่ยว: กรณีศึกษา ประเทศไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

ภาพลักษณ์ของประเทศและภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทางเป็นปัจจัยสองสิ่งที่สำคัญต่อการตัดสินใจเลือกสถานที่ท่องเที่ยว และส่งผลต่อการเติบโตของอุตสาหกรรมท่องเที่ยวของประเทศ ในปัจจุบันวรรณกรรมที่ได้อธิบายถึงภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทางและภาพลักษณ์ประเทศของประเทศไทยมีจำนวนน้อย ดังนั้น การศึกษาครั้งนี้จึงได้ทบทวนและอภิปรายแนวคิดที่เกี่ยวกับภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทางของอุตสาหกรรมท่องเที่ยวในประเทศไทย รวมไปถึงความสอดคล้องของภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทางและภาพลักษณ์ของประเทศ ผลการศึกษาจากการทบทวนวรรณกรรมในอดีต พบว่า การวิเคราะห์ภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทางของประเทศไทยได้รับการพัฒนาอย่างครอบคลุม ทั้งนี้ผลการศึกษาสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้สำหรับกลยุทธ์การจัดการภาพลักษณ์ในอนาคตของประเทศไทย นอกจากนี้ กลยุทธ์ดังกล่าวยังสามารถนำไปออกแบบและปฏิบัติต่อแผนการตลาด ตัวอย่างเช่น การคิดค้นภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทางเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว การปรับใช้แผนการตลาดเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว และการพัฒนาภาพลักษณ์จุดหมายปลายทางเพื่อการท่องเที่ยว

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Introduction

The tourism industry is very significant to Thailand's economy because it affects positively on revenues, employment, foreign exchange, job creation, and investment and relate to for Thailand's annual gross domestic product (GDP) (Thanvisitthpon, 2016). According to the Department of Tourism in Thailand (2016), international tourism is the fastest growing industry in Thailand and revenues have increased continuously attracting from 15.94 million tourists in 2010 to 249 million tourists in 2015 and receipts from 0.59 billion Thai Baht (US$ 0.02 billion) in 2010 to 1.86 billion Thai Baht (US$ 0.06 billion). Thailand's international receipts rank 9th in the world and the first in ASEAN region (World Tourism Organization, 2016). In order to encourage the tourism industry in Thailand, it is essential for tourism stakeholders to understand tourists' perceptions about Thailand because this is very significant for Thailand in marketing itself successfully as a tourist destination (Henkel, Henkel, Agrusa, Agrusa, & Tanner, 2006; McDowall & Choi, 2010).

Thailand is the second biggest country in South East Asia and geographically divided into four regions. According to Ministry of Tourism and Sport in Thailand (2015), the campaign "Discover Amazing Stories in Amazing Thailand" was launched to promote tourism industry that focus on unique local experience, authenticity, content marketing, and preferred destination. Moreover, Thailand has many attractions such as natural resources, cultural heritage, and green area of the country that separate to eight clusters: 1) Lanna culture area, Chaing-Mai, Chaing-Rai, Lumpun, Lumpang, and Payao, focus on culture attraction and creative Lanna intellect; 2) lower north east culture area, Nakorn Rachasima, Burirum, Surin, Srisaket, and Ubon Rachathani, focus on modern way of life; 3) west coast sea area, Petchaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Chumporn, and Ranong, focus on health tourism in world class; 4) east coast sea area, Chonburi, Rayong, Chantaburi, and Trat, focus on internationalism variety area and active baech; 5) Andaman area, Phuket, Krabi, Phang-nga, Trang, and Satun, focus on world class destination based on culture identity; 6) central area focus on history and culture tourism, Mekong River, and world heritage site; 7) Twelve City … Don't Miss, Lumpang, Nan, Petchabun, Loie, Burirum, Samud Songkram, Ratchaburi, ChanTaburi, Trat, Chumporn, Nakorn Sritummarat, and Tranh, focus on secondary city that has potential to tourist attraction; and 8) Border area, Chaing-Rai, Tak, Mukdaharn, Sakeaw, NongKai, Trat, Songkhla, and Satun, focus on ASEAN connectivity. In line with regional tourism, Economic and Social Development plan in the Thailand

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(Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2016) described a strategy to develop tourism in Thailand that can be separated into four areas: northern part, north eastern part, central part, and southern part. The northern part will develop to the quality and sustainable area including businesses tourism, health provider, and creative product. The north eastern part will improve to festival and culture tourism related Khmer civilization and attraction involved neighbor country. The central part will enhance service and product to identity and quality based on world standard. The southern part will continually increase tourism business and disperse revenue to secondary tourism area.

Country and destination image "refer to the same object and are based in the same theory (beliefs, attitudes)" (Mossberg & Kleppe, 2005, p. 500). However, Mossberg and Kleppe (2005) do not establish the relation underpinnings to evaluate the multidimensional nature of constructs involved in country and destination image research. In developing a destination image for Thailand's tourism industry as a country context, the destination marketing organizations must listen to the tourists who are a key informant in tourism industry what perceptions potential tourists have about Thailand as a tourist destination (McDowall & Choi, 2010). Henkel et al. (2006) make the important point that if tourists perceive the destination image of Thailand in the same way as what the country has to offer in terms of tourism products, then a sustainable tourism model is possible. Tourists have a differing destination image of Thailand, then the related marketing organization need to improve the positive tourism perspectives about the tourists with positive marketing campaigns. The image of destination rarely considers all these roles focusing either on countries as product and service origin or a potential travel destination (Zeugner-Roth & Žabkar, 2015), and sometimes the policy is not matched with tourists' perceived which are significantly different (R. Lee & Lockshin, 2012; Martínez & Alvarez, 2010). McDowall and Choi (2010) support the view that the results of study regarding Thailand's image from the perspectives of its tourists will be important information to the operating sectors (i.e. government, business owners, and local organizations) to help them in better handling the country's tourism.

However, while the literature on destination image is large, there is not much research relating country and destination image (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010; Palau-Saumell, Forgas-Coll, Amaya-Molinar, & Sánchez-García, 2016). Therefore, the extent to which country and destination image are difference concepts needs to be investigated (Martínez

& Alvarez, 2010). Moreover, understanding of destination image is keys to designing effective policies to improve these problems for tourism industry in Thailand. Therefore, this article emphasizes on two themes of image, namely, destination image and country image. The main purpose of this study is to review an understanding of destination image of tourism industry in Thailand as a country context.

This article is divided in to five parts. The first focuses on concept and dimension of destination image regarding the definition of destination image and dimensions of destination image. Then, the second section considers the concept and dimensions of country image. Accordingly, in the third section the relationship between country and destination image is explained. In the fourth section, the existing guidelines for destination image in Thailand as a country context might are described. The concluding section reviews procedure implications of the research reviewed.
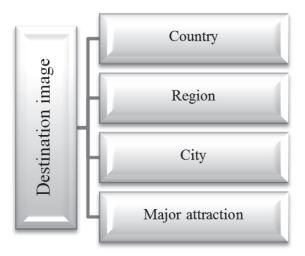
Concept and Dimensions of Destination Image

Destination image has become a widely visited topic throughout the tourism industry (Kislali, Kavaratzis, & Saren, 2016) and is generally agreed as a key factor in successful tourism management that shows significant influences in destination choice, decision making process, and in the selection of on-site activities such as lodging, attractions, activities (Camprubi, Guia, & Comas, 2013; Sun, Chi, & Xu, 2013). For example, destinations with stronger positive images will have a higher possibility of being included and selected in the procedure of tourists' behavior and decision-making (De Nisco, Mainolfi, Marino, & Napolitano, 2015; Frias, Rodriguez, Castaneda, Sabiote, & Buhalis, 2012). Destination image encourages tourists in the process of choosing an attractive destination, their subsequent assessment of the trip and in their future intentions (Jalilvand, Samiei, Dini, & Manzari, 2012).

Consequently, understanding destination image is becoming of importance for tourism professionals and researchers (Kislali et al., 2016). Destination image has been a dominant topic in the scholarly examination of tourism, thereby causing its importance for destination marketing and management (Hosany, Ekinci, & Uysal, 2006; Song, Su, & Liaoning, 2013). Moreover, professional or destination managers need to understand the tourists' perception of destination image in order to be able to communicate the actual product, inclusive of the destination's physical characteristics, to tourists (Chew & Jahari,

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2014). Therefore tourism marketing organizations need to enhance understanding on the dimensions of position of destination image to enrich its attractiveness and extent its market competiveness for tourists (Kasim & Alfandi, 2014).

Much of the scope of research on destination image has operated a place name, a number of studies have investigates tourism at different levels, from a tourist attraction level (Iordanova, 2014; S. Lee & Bai, 2016), a region or city level (Stylos, Vassiliadis, Bellou, & Andronikidis, 2016), a state level (Kim, Holland, & Han, 2012; Tan & Wu, 2016; Wu, 2016), to a country level (Ketter, 2016; Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2016; Pike, 2016). As shown in figure 1 below, Mossberg and Kleppe (2005) conclude the model of destination image. Image is defined as personal perception to destination via communication such as names, logos, and visions, the perception was seeing the attraction, hearing the telling-story, and participating with people (Furman, 2010). Many destinations focused significantly the image to make the good strategy and to build the systematically technique of communication. So, the definition of image was significantly to understand the context of destination image.

Figure 1: A Working Model of Destination Image
Source: Adapted from Mossberg and Kleppe (2005)

Many scholars have attempted to provide a definition, while several endeavors have been assumed to summarize the definitions. Gallarza, Saura, and García (2002) indicated that "there are almost as many definitions of image as scholars devoted to its conceptualization" by illustrating with 12 definitions (p. 60). San Martín and Del Bosque (2008) also attempted to summarize 20 definitions of destination image. According to Crompton (1979) the destination image can be defined as the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has a destination. In a study by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) emphasize that destinations have not only individual attributes, but also holistic imageries. Although there are significant numbers of studies dealing with individual attributes of destinations, holistic aspects of destination image have been passed in the tourism research. It was stated "as the perception of individual destination attributes and the holistic impression made by the destination" (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991). In comparison, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) examined the difference in definition that an attitudinal construct consisting of an individual's mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings, and global impression about an object or destination. In a recent article Pan and Li (2011) on definition of destination image, it was found to consist of all that the destination evokes in the individual; any idea, belief, feeling or attitude that tourists associate with the place is associated to destination image.

There is no single conclusive definition for destination image to determine and its related to components (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). The concept of definition of destination image recognizes not only the multiplicity of definition but also the component of destination image by the interaction between these definitions. Consequently, to better understand definition of destination image, inclusive studies which consider these overlooked aspects of destination image seem to be essential.

Respite the different of definitional construction, the majority of authors agree that destination image was a multidimensional overall impression (Chi & Qu, 2008; Gallarza et al., 2002; Zeugner-Roth & Žabkar, 2015) and there is no consensus as to the dimensions that make up this overall perception (Zhang, Fu, Cai, & Lu, 2014). Destination image is usually construed as a gathering of beliefs and impression based on information processing from various sources over time that results in a mental representation of the attributes and benefits sought of a destination (Zhang et al., 2014). Initially proposed by Boulding (1975), destination image has four-components: perceptual, cognitive, affective, and conative. The perceptual component refers to the touch and observation that

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tourists found directly: location, event, and object, and lead to self-experience. The cognitive component denotes to all beliefs, knowledge, and perceptions that prospective tourists hold of a destination and understands image as a set of relevant attributes. The affective component mentions to tourists' emotional or feelings about a destination and responses toward the various features of a place (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010) and the conative component represents behavioral demonstration from the tourists' side and can be understood as onsite consumptive behaviors (Chen & Phou, 2013). Therefore, destination image can be discussed as each person's perception and destination's mental picture is even more influential than the actual facts when choosing a destination.

Studies by Echtner and Ritchie (1993) focused on the structure of destination image. They suggested that destination image may be represented using a generic structural framework and classify three continua where six components of destination image are presented as bi-polar extremes: attribute-holistic; functional-psychological; and common-unique. The results was assumed to be applicable to a board range of destinations and provided a measurement tool to ease in the research (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Alcaniz, García, and Blas (2009) support the view of using the composition by positing three positions on a continuum: functional, mixed and psychological that influenced on tourists' overall image of the destination. In Baloglu and McCleary (1999) argued that tourists' destination images are formed out of three factors: quality of experience, attractions and value/environment as perceptual/cognitive items.

In a study by Gartner (1994) on destination image component, he proposed a theory of those three components: cognitive, affective, and conative, which make up a hierarchical causal model. The cognitive component referred to the beliefs and knowledge a tourist hold of the destination attributes. The affective component is represented by the feelings or emotional responses toward the various features of a place. The conative component is the behavioral manifestation from the tourists' side and can be understood as onsite consumptive behavior. It was recently observed that provided study in order to confirm the hierarchical nature of the cognitive-affective-conative model (Agapito, Oom do Valle, & da Costa Mendes, 2013). According to Whang, Yong, and Ko (2016), destination image is defined as cognitive, affective, overall image. Supported by Zhang et al. (2014), the view of destination image was cognitive, affective, overall image

and cognitive-affective joint image. However, the component of destination image depended on context such as attraction, city, state, and country, where a complex image was served to modify and affected by autonomous destination image formation (Tasci & Gartner, 2007).

In this section, it has been explained that the concept of destination image. Complexity is one of the major characteristics of the destination image field outlined. Destination image is a broad issue and important in field of marketing tourism. In the previous studies, destination image was defined various definition and there is no conclusion. The researchers need to consider the definitions that fit the context of research because the definition will be relate with the constructs and components to measure the research.

Concept and Dimensions of Country Image

Country image is very significant in the context of international tourism industry and one of the most important factors of consideration when tourists select a destination (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010; Park & Njite, 2010). Many countries launch international tourism campaigns to create an image of the country as a tourist destination (Mossberg & Kleppe, 2005). In term of global competitive destination, tourists have many choices of destination to choose from but it would appear that tourists' decision-making is more influenced by on their perception image rather than facts (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). Country image needs to have positive characteristics because a more general country image can lead to improved tourists' perceptions of the country (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010). This is supported by McDowall and Choi (2010) study in Thailand. They found that if a destination has a negative image, the tourist will possibly select another destination which has a more positive image. Country image and destination image may be thought of as interrelated, due to the influence of the former on the tourists' perception (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010). When the country is a tourist destination, the situation becomes more complicated. In Zhang, Xu, Leung, and Cai 's (2016) study, they found that there are also many destination image studies that do not relate to country image constructs. The literature has not achieved a consensus on how to define destination image.

Martin and Eroglu (1993) stated that country image is a broad concept and is defined as the total of all descriptive, inferential, and informational beliefs about

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a particular country. Additionally, Allred, Chakraborty, and Miller's (2000) study examined the difference in overall image of country of origin including the consumers' perception and evaluation of the people, history, geography, culture, politics, economy and technical development. Country image is advocated as the ''impact that generalizations and perceptions about a country have on a person's evaluations of the country's products and/or brands'' (Nebenzahl, Jaffe, & Lampert, 1997, p. 28). Kotler and Gertner (2002, p. 251) supports the view that country image is defined as "the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about places. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with a place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and pick out essential information from huge amounts of data about a place (Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Nadeau, Heslop, O'Reilly, & Luk, 2008). Researchers in the area define these images related to product and use product-related country images to assist in the origination of country image (Nadeau et al., 2008). In the study of Mossberg and Kleppe (2005) on country image, the conceptual domain used the following two criteria: (1) what is the common denominator that associations related to country for all the definitions of origin constructs (convergence), and (2) what is the discriminating characteristic that the focal image object, which can be classified at three levels, country, product class and specific product in the concept definitions.

Researches on country and destination image have developed autonomously, although both concepts concern how perceived images of a country may impact tourist behavior to visit country (R. Lee & Lockshin, 2012). The concepts of country image was becoming the various definitions that proposed by the literature to classify a common characteristics (Mossberg & Kleppe, 2005; Zhang et al., 2016). Furthermore, country image is relative, based on an individual assessment and is similarly a dynamic idea that changes as the individual interrelates with the object of study (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010). Nevertheless, despite a large amount of country image articles published in previous years, there is no consensus on collective impression of various individuals' evaluation how to conceptualize and operationalize (Zhang et al., 2016).

Country image was used to develop a model in research into the tourism area that explained tourists' attitudes and intentions regarding a country's image (Palau-Saumell et al., 2016). Country image was categorized as a generic construct that is not linked to any specific context. The construct of country image has many facets,

which should be involved in measurement scales (Martin & Eroglu, 1993). Also, some studies focus on the cognitive assessment of tangible products that proposed a series of dimensions for evaluation such as innovativeness, workmanship, design, prestige, and price/value (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010). In a study by Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) found that there are the two dimensions of country image (i.e. country cognition and country affect) and show the scale to measure country image. The country cognition can measure by people facet (such as competence, creativity, vocational training, and labour), economy, politics, work culture, technology, landscape/environment, climate, and country personality. The country affect can measure by positive and negative country affect, scales from the emotions literature (such as pleasure–arousal–dominance scale), eight basic emotions, pleasant–unpleasant scale, positive affect negative affect scale, differential emotions scale, affective response to consumption-related experiences, consumption emotions set, scales from the attitude literature. In the tourism area, De Nisco et al. (2015) supported the existence of a "hierarchical relationship" between the components of the general image of a country, with the prior being a significant antecedent of the latter. The cognitive country image is quality of life, technology level, education level, wealth. Moreover, the affective country image is friendly people, trustworthy people, pleasant place, safe environment (De Nisco et al., 2015; Elliot, Papadopoulos, & Kim, 2010). It was observed that the cognitive and affective country image could be measured by other scale. The cognitive country image could be measured by importance of country, popularity, good reputation, modernity, conservativeness, security, and peacefulness. In addition the affective country image could be measured by like, trust, confidence, respect, admiration, annoyance, and arousal of good feelin (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010).

A study by Nadeau et al. (2008) argues that the country image was measured by four components: country character, country competence, people character, and people competence, as shown figure 2 below. Firstly, the country character refers to the features and traits of the country measured by political stability, role in the world politics, rights/freedoms. Secondly, country competence refers to the direct and indirect capacities to design and produce good products and is associated with the country, including technically advanced, level of economic development and stability of economy. The third, people character explains the traits of a country's people and

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includes measures such as friendliness, trustworthiness, honest and helpful. Lastly, people competence describes product beliefs and evaluations, and is measured by creativity, level of education, and effort hardworking. A recent article Palau-Saumell et al. (2016) used country and people character dimensions to define by the tourist's beliefs regarding the country and destination image based on the relationship established in the research of Nadeau et al. (2008). They study found that people character and country character positively affected destination image. Moreover, the difference between countries shows the dissimilarity of the result. For example, in Spain, people character lead to destination image but country character did not affect destination image. This was different to the Mexico context where people character and country character affected to destination image together.

This section has reviewed the three key aspects of country image that is significantly in scholar in tourism field. Country image is one of the most important factors that tourists will consider to choose a destination. The definition of country image will obtain by an individual assessment and was develop to the various definitions to discuss common characteristics. Moreover, the component of country image was no consensus in the previous study. Therefore, selecting the component of country image needs to understand advantage and disadvantage of the factors.
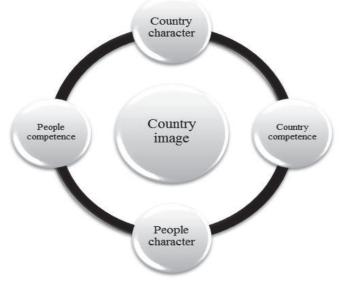

Figure 2: A Working Model of Components of Country Image
Source: Adapted from Nadeau et al. (2008)

Relationship between Country Image and Destination Image

Country image and destination image are both have a significant effect on tourists' decisions that shows the tourist perception influences their attitude, evaluation and purchase intention of country. If country and destination images are good, they can attract international tourists. Destination image can represent various levels including city, region and country. When the destination is a country, such as Nepal, Singapore, Maldives, can destination image be substituted by country image? Destination image has been conceptualized in numerous ways, as soon as destination image in a country context has not been independently defined in the academic area (Zhang et al., 2016). Moreover, country image and destination image are two different paradigms but with many similarities and overlapping particularly when a country is a destination (Nadeau et al., 2008; Zhang et al., 2016).

Recently, some academics try to theoretically discuss and empirically test the relationship between these two constructs, and recognize that country image and destination image at country level are two constructs which are commonly linked but different (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010; Nadeau et al., 2008; Zhang et al., 2016). On the one hand, the two are consistent in the spatial scale of image object (i.e. country) and overlap in measurement. In spite of the accepted importance of destination image, country image has not been well examined and confirmed in different countries and different destination contexts (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010).

In the previous researches very few studies of tourism include the influence of destination image on country context. Mossberg and Kleppe (2005) developed a theoretical model using this relationship, but did not test it empirically. In a study by Nadeau et al. (2008), they make the important model that locates the importance on the relationship between country image and destination image within the broader country image context. The country and people character dimensions were defined as the tourist's beliefs regarding the country and its inhabitants, and classify a positive directly relationship of people character and country character with destination image. Elliot et al. (2010) study integrated models of country and destination images. Their results reveal that destination was positively influenced by cognitive country image. Zeugner-Roth and Žabkar (2015) develop a model of country image and destination image

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to tests the relative importance of tourists' behavioral intention. In a recent article by Zhang et al. (2016), they proposed the construct of destination-country image that integrated country image and destination image in tourism and tested destination-country image on potential tourists' visit intention. They found that country and destination image are thought to be related, since the tourism destination as a country may be affected by the image of country and destination image is used to identify the specific area visited (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010).

There are quite a few research studies on positive and negative aspects of destination image in Thailand. However, studies on destination image are rare to find in literature. The study by Rittichainuwat, Qu, and Brown (2001) explored 13 top inbound tourist markets to Thailand regarding the image of Thailand as an international tourist destination that identified the strengths and weaknesses of Thailand. The image in Thailand is influenced by 7 factors: social and environmental problem, safe travel destination, adventure activities and scenic natural beauty, rich culture, good-value cuisine and hotels, easy access, and good shopping. Moreover, the study positioned Thailand as a shopping paradise that being directly in competition with Singapore and Hong Kong. Furthermore, both positive and negative destination images in Thailand affect repeat visitation that the more positive image will be to return to a destination then negative image. So, it is necessary to improve positive images while reducing negative images in the minds of travelers (Rittichainuwat et al., 2001).

Subsequently, Rittichainuwat, Qu, and Leong (2003) investigated tourist behavior on repeat visitation to a travel destination: a country, a city, and/or a tourist attraction, in Thailand that the sample was similar with Rittichainuwat et al. (2001). The destination image were described by social and environmental problems, safe travel destination, adventurous activities and natural beauty, rich culture, good value cuisine and hotels, easy access tourist destination, and good shopping. The tourist will revisit Thailand with only good value cuisine, and hotels but the tourist will not revisit Thailand with social and environmental problems.

Studies on destination image that investigated tourists behavior in Thailand was conducted by Tavitiyaman and Qu (2013). They explored tourists' behavior in Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand. The dimensions of destination image were examined by quality of hotels and restaurants, convenience and transportation, cultural and natural

attractions, local facilities, and shopping facilities but destination image dimensions: quality of hotels and restaurants, and cultural and natural attractions. They found that these only significantly influenced overall satisfaction.

The key stakeholders of tourism need to better understand tourists' perceptions of Thailand as a tourist destination. Also, Henkel et al. (2006) mentions the significant relationship between Thai residents and international tourists that must try to inform both parties about the positive tourism features about the Thailand as a tourist destination. McDowall and Choi (2010) performed experimental investigations on destination image of Thailand from the perspectives of Thai residents. The residents ranked natural beauty as Thailand's most important image included activities and topics such as hiking and sightseeing, variety of food, spas and massages, night life, entertainment, night clubs and bars, relaxing and calm setting, a good place for a family to visit, and signs in other languages. The study by Henkel et al. (2006) offers probably the most comprehensive empirical analysis of relationship between Thai residents and international tourist perceptions and images affecting Thailand as a tourist destination. The finding of the Henkel et al. (2006) study suggest that Thai residents and international visitors perceived cultural sightseeing, friendly people and food were significantly influenced when thinking of Thailand as a tourist destination. Moreover, the second major finding was that international visitors perceived nightlife and entertainment as significantly more important than Thai residents.

This has gone some way towards enhancing scholarly understanding of destination image in Thailand that can motivate from the residents and international tourists both. From a Thai residents' perspective, it was natural beauty, such as mountains, waterfalls, beautiful beaches; Thai cuisine; and culture and heritage sightseeing (Henkel et al., 2006; McDowall & Choi, 2010). For as international tourist perspective positively was nightlife and entertainment, good value Thai cuisine, quality of hotels, and cultural and natural attractions but negatively were social and environmental problems (Henkel et al., 2006; Rittichainuwat et al., 2003; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013). Therefore, destination images are a combination of both positive and negative images; if Thailand is compared with destinations, are looked equally attractive to the tourist, the one that has negative images will possibly be the one kept away from. Beyond the image represents the destination to attractive to a tourist, Thailand should consider the various area in Thailand

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that affect to the destination image. The levels of area in Thailand: attraction, city, region, link to the destination image as a country context. This view is supported by McDowall and Choi (2010) who compared two group residents groups about Thailand's image. There is only not similarity at seven factors: 1) hiking and sightseeing, 2) variety of food, 3) spas and massages, 4) night life, entertainment, night clubs and bars, 5) relaxing and calm setting, 6) a good place for a family to visit, and 7) signs in other languages.

The Existing Guideline for Destination Image as a Country Context in Thailand

The two concepts, country image and destination image, are two difference constructs (Martínez & Alvarez, 2010; Palau-Saumell et al., 2016). Moreover, they are broad factors of overlapping interests. On the other hand, both concepts attempt to perceive images of destination that influenced tourist behaviour to visit the country. Many researches endeavored to link country image to destination image, as a suggested previously by Nadeau et al. (2008) and Palau-Saumell et al. (2016) but some study used the two concepts that refer to the same object and should be cross-references between the two fields (Zhang et al., 2016). By drawing on the concept, Zhang et al. (2016) was able to explain that the macro and micro structures that support destination-country image. The results of Zhang et al. (2016) study show that the macro destination-country image includes four dimensions: country character, country competence, people character and people competence. Analysis of the destination image involved in a country context was first carried out by Nadeau et al. (2008). The country and people dimensions are significantly demonstrated as key contributions of the model and related to destination evaluation. The people character (trustworthy, courteous, and honest) and country character (world politics, envirocontrol, and rights/free) directly affect destination evaluation, while country competence (technology, worker skill, and economy) and people competence (education, industriousness, and work ethic) indirectly affect destination evaluation. To better understand the mechanisms of country and destination image, Palau-Saumell et al. (2016) identified a positive and direct relationship of people character and country character with destination image. The analysis shows that destination image is directly and positively affected by people character and country character.
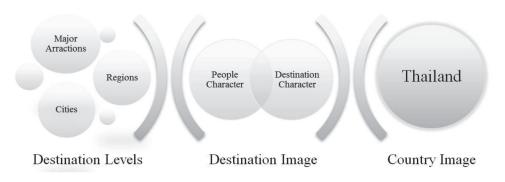
Figure 4: Conceptual Model of a Destination Image in Country Context in Thailand

Figure 4 above shows conceptual model of a destination image in country context in Thailand that discussed relationship between destination image concept and country image concept. Conceptually, both areas: destination image and country image, consider place in broad terms including various levels: major attraction, cities, and region. Thailand has many tourist attractions and each part of Thailand differs outstanding to promote. Therefore, destination image in Thailand context needs to consider significantly level of destination. For example, Lanna culture is in the north part; world heritage site is in central part; and sea, sun, and sand are in the southern part of Thailand. Outstanding attractions can refer to both destination and country image. Moreover, examining destination image as a country context focused on people character and destination character. The past destination image might be focused on only destination character but in the hospitality and tourism industry, there are have the people service involved in system. As a result, the study of destination image as a country context should consider both people character and destination character in a content that can deliver service to quality. In the previous study of destination image as a country context in Thailand, as summarized in table 1 below, it was found that many researches emphasize the point of destination character more than people character. For this reason the future research should focus on people character as much as destination character.

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Table 1: Constructs of Destination Image as a Country Context in Thailand

Author's	People Character	Destination Character
Rittichainumat et al. (2001) and Rittichainumat et al. (2003)		• Social and environmental problem • Safe travel destination • Adventure activities and scenic natural beauty • Rich culture • Good-value cuisine and hotels • Easy access • Good shopping
Henkel et al. (2006)	Friendly people	• Cultural sightseeing • Shopping • Beaches • Nightlife and entertainment • Nature, wildlife and parks • Sports activities • Exotic destination • Budget vacation • Food • Historic architecture • Sex tourism • Erotic tourism • Hiking • Health tourism
McDowall and Choi (2010)	• Friendliness of Thai residents	• Natural beauty • Thai cuisine • Architectural and historical sites • Cultural and heritage • Safety and security • A good place for family • Relaxing and calm • Access to other countries • Cheap cost • Hiking and sightseeing • Variety of food • Spas and massages • Night life, entertainment, night clubs, and bars

Table 1: Constructs of Destination Image as a Country Context in Thailand (cont.)

Author's	People Character	Destination Character
Tavitiyaman and Qu (2013)		• Quality of hotels and restaurants • Convenience and transportation • Cultural and natural attractions • Local facilities • Shopping facilities

Conclusion

Theoretical Contributions

The present study makes several noteworthy contributions to present much needed scope and review to examine the concepts of country image and destination image in order to compared constructs, measurement and findings across the two fields. Reviewing different types of literature helps achieves a synthesis of knowledge. By linking the ideas of country and destination image, this study argues on a few subjects, for example relationship between country and destination image, constructs of destination image in Thailand, and guideline to develop the concept of destination image as a country context. This article establishes the theoretical foundation for the destination image in country context construct that develops the conceptualization based on the fragmented literature. While this article involved with the factors of destination image as a country context in Thailand, it is very much clear regarding theoretical and empirical identifying of this practice. The author classifies an important direction for future research and identifies research gap to challenge with the scoping review finding. This article provides a theoretical contribution to future research. Despite construct of destination image as a country context having suggestion in extant literature as reviewed previously, the constructs have be explored in the tourism and marketing literature.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study have a number of important implications for future practice. There is, therefore, a definite need for destination marketers and tourism authorities to classify image attributes which is a country and destination image. That is

the most valuable in making and increasing customer orientation experiences. The knowledge of that is critical to allotted image of country and destination resources in an efficient way. This study can potentially offer destination marketers and tourism authorities with insights into the impact of destination marketing on desirable outcomes, thereby supporting in directing revenues and investments into the most profitable marketing activities.

Limitations and Future Research

The generalizability of these results is subject to certain limitations. For instance, this article does not empirically test the constructs. Author believes that time has come for investigation to go beyond enduring considerations and develop theoretical model and test them empirically to explain destination as a country context. Through this article, author identifies an important research direction for future.

The issue of destination as a country context is an intriguing one which could be usefully explored in further research. The author hopes that a synthesis of knowledge will assist in future research. The present article claims on few subjects, for example, definition of country and destination image, component of country and destination image, and linkage of country and destination image. Although this article is engaged with the concepts of country and destination through published literature, it is pretty much clear that there is serious shortage of theoretical and empirical to understand of this practice that can support us to understand the tourist's behavior and experience. Lack of empirical evidences forced author to trust exploratory evidences to support their claims. The author develops a guideline to describe relationship between country and destination image. Through this article, author identifies an important research direction for future. Finally, the author considers the identification of research gaps that are possibly useful for researchers to make significant contribution about the destination image as a country context.

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