

Cosmopolitan Tourist Motivations and Cross-Cultural Understandings: A Case Study of Nordic Tourists to Mae Kampong Community-Based Tourism

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Abstract

The understanding of motivational factors enables tourism practitioners to attract visitors more effectively. However, cross-cultural motivational studies on Community- Based Tourism (CBT) have received relatively little research attention. This study therefore aimed to study motivations of Nordic tourists as representative of cosmopolitan characteristics in terms of cross-cultural sensitivity towards their participating in Mae Kampong community- based tourism. Participants were 100 Nordic tourists who visited Mae Kampong CBT. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the data. Percentage, frequency and narrative analysis were used to analyze the data. The questionnaire findings regarding Nordic tourist motivations engaging in Mae Kampong CBT suggested that 79% of the Nordic tourist purpose was to gain more knowledge about local and traditional Northern Thai livelihood; 67% of them was to experience diverse cultures and the last 48% wanted to take a break from their daily life in Western settings at home and meet people from different cultural backgrounds. Apart from the questionnaires, the interview with 14 Nordic tourists were specific questions regarding their local CBT encounter and its connection to esteem needs. The pre-dominant tourism motivation of the Nordic cosmopolitan tourists to Mae Kampong CBT revealed that the majority of the Nordic tourists to Mae Kampong CBT focused mainly on local culture exchange, sharing and host hospitality. Besides that, their inner psychological force on self - worth, self-esteem and individual uniqueness also influenced their motivation for cross-cultural sensitivity in a local tourism setting.

Keywords: Tourist motivation, Esteem needs, Cosmopolitan, Cross-cultural understanding, Nordic tourist, Mae Kampong Community-Based Tourism

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Introduction

Importantly, the study of the Nordic cosmopolitan tourist motivations to Mae Kampong CBT is very crucial for tourism entrepreneurs particularly in terms of local culture promoting and conservation. Therefore, a research question of the study sheds light on whether engaging in Mae Kampong CBT allows the Nordic cosmopolitan tourists fulfill their esteem needs and self-uniqueness. The travel motivations in this study focus on relations of self-esteem which derives from the cross-cultural interactions during the Mae Kampong CBT visit. The study intertwined the concept of esteem needs by Abraham Maslow (1954) entails confidence, achievement as well as respect of others and the self-determination theory by Carl Roger's Self Theory (1959) highlights self-worth and individual uniqueness as a theoretical framework of study. Towards the practices of cultural activity enable tourism people attract more visitors who are interested in learning exotic culture as well as fulfill self-worth, challenge Eurocentric bias and social acceptance. One of the most outstanding tourist categories in this study is cosmopolitan tourists. Due to the fact that the cosmopolitan equipped with open-minded character as well as away from cultural bias for instance away from Eurocentrism views or stereotypical points of view resulting in misunderstanding, hates and conflicts of others. Referring to Tourism Statistics of Thailand in the year 2024 reveals that numbers of European tourists to Thailand is likely to be 1,943,785 as a result from the tourism promotion policy of the Thai government after the COVID19 crisis (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2023). Additionally, the Thai government has also promoted "Soft Power" towards local cultural tourism and taken this into action to attract more international visitors to Thailand and increase foreign incomes (Ministry of Culture of Thailand, 2024). According with "The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs) or "The Global Goals" in 2015 which aims to eradication poverty, protect the planet, and encourage peace and prosperity among nations by 2030. A cornerstone of the development intertwines a balance of social, economic, and environmental sustainability, which integrated in 17SDGs where the area of economic growth and sustainable cities and communities are much associated with cultural tourism.

Understanding the Nordic tourist's pre-knowledge and attitudes regarding Thailand and Thailand tourism can help local CBT providers, private tourism entrepreneurs as well as the local government to be aware of what tourists think about CBT, what they require from CBT and their understanding of local CBT. If there are any issues, solutions can accordingly be offered to improve any negative perceptions as well as support and enhance a positive image of Thailand tourism. On the other hand, the Nordic CBT tourists can also reflect their self – need and self-understanding in relations with the cross-cultural understanding and then being able to realize their esteem needs of care, empathy and listen to others together with being recognized by others. Local community tourism providers can then also benefit from being aware of the motivations of travelers involved in CBT; it can help them make constructive plans to meet tourists' esteem needs as well as to satisfy them. Significantly, there have been various dimensions of the previous study concerning cross-cultural encounter which relates to tourist esteem needs and cross-cultural understanding in the past years. Typically, people travel due to their psychological drive as a push factor and the attraction of the destination itself as the pull factor (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977). One of these studies examined the quality of intercultural service encounters for doing business which differ by culture. The finding claimed that based on the service providers behaviors both verbal and non-verbal language, the diverse customers perceived poor service satisfaction (Barker & Charmine, 2004). Murphy and Khan (2014) studied the culture clash in a restaurant setting pointed out that Western dining experiences are different from Eastern dining experiences resulting in misunderstanding and undesirable tourism experiences. Inevitably, the push and pull factors of tourism also play a crucial role for tourists. Chaiyarat et.al. (2020) stated that local culture and self - development are predominant motivation of foreign tourists to community tourism. Similarly to Yoon and Uysal (2005) indicated the importance of destination manager role to establish a higher tourist satisfaction for sustaining business competitiveness. Appearing at local community tourism sites enables tourists to reflect unique self by learning and adapting one- self to stay with others as well as realize self-worth

among others. Likewise, Griffin (2021) argued that international tourists visited the nature-based “Satoyama” demonstrated higher motivation and satisfaction compared to Japanese tourists themselves which showed that national culture, values and belief affected tourism satisfaction and motivation.

However, there has been limited study of the tourist perception and motivation of diverse cultural encounters which enables international tourists in a community-based tourism setting to gain more cultural tourism experiences to fulfil esteem needs. However, a research gap in the study of the tourist motivation and cross-cultural awareness of Nordic tourists to Mae Kampong community-based tourism suggested that the Eurocentric views and cultural discrimination play a predominant factor of cross-cultural understanding. Likewise, Carl Jung in Cross -Cultural Psychology (Shiraev & Levy, 2014) who confronted against the type of European thinking and behavior was much superior to Asian types of actions and experiences but actually the European needed to catch up with other culture civilization. Moreover, the cross-cultural exchange between local host and guest also leads to self-esteem and self-worth of local community who contribute their local resources and guest reception supporting. The rise of self-esteem of local residents can also increase local community tourism competitiveness (Amin et.al, 2023).

In this study, the author argued that the overall purpose of most Nordic tourists traveling to Mae Kampong is not solely guided by hedonistic desires of pleasant weather and sunny mountains but instead, the seemingly latent desire is to escape from the “modern” and “civilized world” to discover “traditional”, “diverse”, “authentic” and “exotic” worlds. As Yanping et.al. (2023) claimed that there are numbers of Chinese tourists from Guangxi major desires to visit Thailand are Thai culture and customs. The theoretical consideration of the study is framed by a discussion of tourists’ esteem needs and uniqueness of self towards CBT engagement as viewed from the Nordic cosmopolitan tourists.

A central argument of this study focuses on the characteristics of Nordic cosmopolitan tourists, Eurocentric views as bias of others and the general insensitivity towards cultural diversity are major dimensions circumscribing the Nordic tourists interests in visiting CBT. Therefore, the investigation of Eurocentrism and the Eurocentric views of Nordic tourists to Thailand revolve around the identification and influence of cosmopolitanism, esteem needs, and cross-cultural attitudes. Paving the ways of European superiority above everyone else, the norms of modernity, rationality resulting in what appears to be an absence of listening beyond oneself, to tend to generosity, and failure to respect different cultures and ignorance of social norms. On the contrary, the cross-cultural sensitivity of the Nordic tourists to Mae Kampong CBT demonstrated their willingness to social and culture adaptation, respect of others to fulfill their inner self. Similarly to Pearce and Parker (2013) suggested that a study of human behavior towards cross-cultural tourism engagement entails that social processes and interactions are seen as strongly influencing core human functioning.

Objective

This study aimed to investigate esteem needs and self- uniqueness as motivation of Nordic tourists as representative of cosmopolitan characteristics in terms of cross-cultural understanding towards their participating in Mae Kampong Community- Based Tourism (CBT).

Research Methodology

This current study intended to investigate the motivations of Nordic tourists participating in Mae Kampong Community- Based Tourism (CBT) highlighting the esteem needs fulfillment by engaging in CBT using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The benefit of using the questionnaire was that it provided an opportunity to pre-organize and develop questions in order to ensure that an answer was provided to the research questions. In particular, the questionnaires are convenient and cost-effective for researchers who are trying to gather large number of responses and the interviews also allow more in-depth exchange of attitudes and views (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008).

Mae Kampong community tourism was served as a study site due to the tourism popularity and the local tourism achievement of the village among international tourists around the world. Mae Kampong therefore enjoyed greater recognition when it was given the prestigious award by the Thai government entitled “One Village One Product for the Agricultural and Eco-Tourism Community”. As Jitpakdee (2016) suggested that due to a successful operation and management of Mae Kampong CBT, there are numbers of local CBT villages that want to become well-known and accomplished as Mae Kampong. Moreover, the outstanding characteristic of the transformation of Mae Kampong from agricultural-based community into eco-tourism and finally community-based tourism challenged local inhabitants as well as attracted more potential visitors where a great combination between local ways of Northern Thai life has amazingly met with Western tourism settings.

Participants

There were two groups of participants. One hundred Nordic tourists conveniently selected to participate in the quantitative study. Fourteen Nordic tourists who used to be the former CBT tourists and were willing to take part in the further interview participated in the qualitative study.

Instruments

1. Open-Ended Questionnaires and Closed -Ended Questionnaires. The are 8 questions were developed to investigate the general knowledge, attitudes and pre-understanding of CBT in Nordic travelers, along with their travel motivations for visiting CBT destinations in Northern Thailand in order to pre-understand the travel patterns along with the travel motivations of the tourists and then elaborated the detailed information from the questionnaires to build on and exclusively focus on the Nordic CBT tourists to further study of their motivations of the CBT visit and to investigate whether the CBT activities allow them to fulfill their esteem needs. The 8 questions in the questionnaire consist of the open-ended questions for question number 1,2,4,5,

and 6 and the closed -ended questions which doesn't allow multiple answers for question number 3,7, and 8. The sample contained 100 Nordic travelers visiting Thailand. The questions were related to what travelers knew about Thailand, the first thing that they think of when talking about Thailand, how the travelers know about Thailand, the top three favorite cities in Thailand, and the travelers' experiences of Thailand, particularly Chiang Mai. The number of travelers who visited CBT destinations in Northern Thailand was also noted. With regards to the motivations for traveling to Northern Thailand, the following questions were posed: Why are you interested in participating in CBT? What do they expect from the visit?

An understanding of travelers' true motivations can lead to further elaborate and focal investigations of how CBT practices can fulfill the esteem needs by tourism experiences of Nordic tourists. Likewise, studying the knowledge and attitudes of travelers before and after the visit can help generate an understanding of how CBT challenges Eurocentric views of cultural diversity and esteem needs of tourists.

2. Interview questions. The in-depth interviews consisted of both individual interviews and focus group interviews with 14 respondents. There were 8 individual interviews and there were 2 focus group interviews with 3 respondents per group. The interview focused on two major points consist of the tourist motivations to CBT and how their participation in the CBT relates to esteem needs. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes and was conducted either face-to-face or over Skype and on the telephone.

Data Collection

Prior to the questionnaire surveys during the summer pause from June, July and August 2014, the respondents were informed of the purposes of the study and the questions were explained and discussed clearly as well as human rights and ethical consideration of the study have been well informed. The data collection took 3 months both in Chiang Mai, Thailand and Aalborg, Denmark. Owing to restricted numbers of Nordic travelers visiting Thailand during my

fieldwork period as a consequence the fieldwork took longer than the original planned timeframe. Conducting the interviews in Chiang Mai turned out to be rather different from doing the interviews in Denmark. It was not easy to find Nordic travelers strolling down the street. Consequently, going to the airport proved to be a somewhat prosperous site for approaching travelers. In addition to working out of the airport, I conducted interviews at the downtown temples, popular tourist destinations such as Tapae Gate and the Sunday flea market and at Mae Kampong Village.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the quantitative data. The narrative method was employed for the qualitative data.

Results

1. Nordic Tourists' Pre-Knowledge and Attitudes about Thailand Tourism

Nordic tourists have vast and varying information about Thailand and Thailand as country with plenty of natural resources for tourism, 79% think of Thailand as an ancient land rich in culture, and 76% think of Thailand as a warm and pleasant tourist destination of Southeast Asia. On the other hand, 40% of the respondents thought of Thailand as a center of crime, sex and drugs, and 22% believed that Thailand had heavy and unorganized traffic. With regards to the travelers' source of information about Thailand, 71% responded that their source was TV commercials in their home country; 66% heard about Thailand by word of mouth, from their family, relatives and friends; 59% had obtained information about Thailand from transnational marriages between Thai people and Westerners. With regards to Thai cuisine, 98% of the respondents stated that they liked Thai food, while 2% had never tried Thai food before. Phuket, Bangkok and Chiang Mai were the top tourist destinations mentioned by 87% of the respondents. With regards to Chiang Mai in particular, 34% of those travelling to Chiang Mai believed that it was an old city with an interesting history and plenty of beautiful ancient

temples, 65% found it to be a peaceful and tourist-friendly city, and 75% thought that Chiang Mai had a variety of tourist activities for foreign visitors particularly activities related to eco-tourism and cultural tourism. With regards to the popular cultural destinations in Chiang Mai, 33% of the respondents had visited Suthep Temple, whereas 67% had never visited Suthep Temple. Further, 12% of the tourists had visited the National Museum of Chiang Mai, while 88% had never visited the museum. Further, 66% of the visitors had been to Inthanon National Park, but 34% had not. Finally, 29% of the respondents were engaged in CBT in Chiang Mai, whereas 71% of the informants had never been involved in CBT in Chiang Mai before.

Table 1: Demographic Data of Nordic Travelers to Chiangmai

Demographics	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	20-30	21	21
	31-40	38	38
	41-50	29	29
	50-above	12	12
Gender	Male	59	59
	Female	41	41
Length of Stay in Thailand	3-5 days	22	22
	1 week	64	64
	longer than 1 week	14	14
Nordic Tourists to Mae Kampong CBT	Yes	29	29
	No	71	71
Length of Stay in Mae Kampong CBT	1-2 days	5	5
	3-5 days	16	16
	1 week	8	8
	Longer than a week	0	0
Total		N=100	100

Table 2: Results from the Open-Ended Questions and the Check in Boxes with Multiple Answers of Nordic Travelers' Knowledge and Attitudes about Thailand Tourism

Nordic Tourists' Knowledge and Attitudes about Thailand Tourism	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. The travelers' first impression of Thailand		
- Thailand as a beautiful country with plenty of natural resources for tourism	84	84
- Thailand as an ancient land rich in culture	79	79
- Thailand as a warm and pleasant tourist destination of Southeast Asia	76	76
- Thailand as a center of crime, sex and drugs	40	40
- Thailand had heavy and unorganized traffic	22	22
2. The travelers' source of information about Thailand		
- TV commercials in their home country	71	71
- by word of mouth, from their family, relatives and friends	66	66
- from transnational marriages between Thai people and Westerners	59	59
3. Thai cuisine		
- liked Thai food	98	98
- never tried Thai food before	29	29
4. The top tourist destinations of Thailand		
- Phuket, Bangkok , Chiang Mai	87	87
5. What do the travelers like travelling to Chiang Mai?		
- a variety of tourist activities for foreign visitors particularly activities related to eco-tourism and cultural tourism	75	75
- a peaceful and tourist-friendly city	65	65
- an old city with an interesting history and plenty of beautiful ancient temples	34	34
6. Popular Cultural Site Visits in Chiang Mai		
- never been to the National Museum of Chiang Mai	88	88
- never been to Suthep Temple	67	67
- been to Suthep Temple	33	33
- been to the National Museum of Chiang Mai	12	12

Nordic Tourists' Knowledge and Attitudes about Thailand Tourism	Frequency	Percentage (%)
7. Popular Natural Site Visit in Chiang Mai		
- been to Inthanon National Park	66	66
- never been to Inthanon National Park	34	34
8. CBT travelling in Chiang Mai		
- never been engaged in CBT in Chiang Mai	71	71
- been engaged in CBT in Chiang Mai	29	29
Total	N=100	100

2. Motivations of Nordic Tourists Participation in CBT

The Non-CBT Nordic Tourists Motivations

Local community tourism providers can benefit from being aware of the motivations of travelers involved in CBT; it can help them make constructive plans to meet travelers' requirements. For Scandinavian travelers visiting Phuket, the major attractive features were the pleasant weather, relaxing ambience, and tourist-friendly attitude of the local Thai people.

The responses indicated that cultural diversity is a major factor that motivates Nordic travelers to visit CBT destinations. The Nordic travelers who did not participate in CBT indicated that witnessing 'Thai culture' was not their major motivation for visiting Thailand. Most travelers to Thailand are motivated by self-gratification and relaxation. The findings suggest that the major purpose of travelers to Thailand was to visit the pleasant beaches and islands in the South (87% of the respondents). Further, the purpose of 73% of the travelers was to eat Thai food and shop, and 52% of the respondents wished to see the ancient temples. For most Nordic travelers visiting Thailand, their main purpose was to enjoy the beauty of the country and have pleasant touristic experiences rather than getting to know local Thai cultural practices and interacting with local people. The majority of the Nordic travelers associated Thailand with positive factors, which are the obvious enablers of Thailand tourism. Thai food in particular found to be one of the most desirable entities. A large numbers of Nordic traveler perceived Thailand as a beautiful tourist-friendly country with a rich history and ancient culture. However, the number of visitors to natural tourist destinations such as Inthanon National Park was higher than the number of Nordic visitors who went to Suthep Temple, the national museum and CBT villages. It seems that Nordic travelers preferred natural tourist destinations rather than rural CBT villages. Further, there are a considerable number of tourists who are not aware of Thai culture and cultural practices, which can be introduced via CBT. The finding reveals that only a small number of Nordic travelers visited CBT villages.

The Nordic CBT Tourists Motivations

With regards to 29 Nordic travelers engaged in CBT, the findings suggest that 76% (22 individuals) wished to learn about community livelihood and exchange information and skills with locals. However, for 24% (7 individuals), visiting CBT villages was only a minor part of their visit; typically, these tourists visit CBT destinations because travel agents include this as an activity in their package tour. Yet, Nordic travelers visit CBT destinations in Northern Thailand with a variety of motivations: for 79% the purpose is to gain more knowledge about local and traditional Northern Thai livelihood; for 67%, the purpose is to experience diverse cultures; for 48%, the purpose is to take a break from their daily life in Western settings at home and meet people from different cultural backgrounds.

Table3: Motivations of Nordic Tourists to CBT

Motivations of Nordic Tourists Participated in CBT	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. to gain more knowledge about local and traditional Northern Thai livelihood	23	79
2. to experience diverse cultures	20	67
3. to take a break from their daily life in Western settings at home and meet people from different cultural backgrounds	14	48
Total	N=29	100

3. Narrative Results from the Interview with the Former Nordic CBT Tourists

The Cross- Cultural Interactions and its Connection to the Cosmopolitan Esteem Needs

The Host Hospitality and The Guests Uniqueness of Self towards the CBT Visit Referring to the 14 CBT respondents for the further interview, shedding light on the objective of the study namely the CBT cultural understanding of visit and its connection to the cosmopolitan esteem needs. The findings of the first question based on the questionnaire survey suggested that the top three most popular answers about the CBT motivations were intertwined with local Northern Thai culture which refers that the cosmopolitan tourists wanted to gain more knowledge about

local and traditional Northern Thai livelihood, to experience diverse culture and to take a break from their daily life in Western settings at home along with meeting people from different cultural backgrounds. Referring to the interview findings claimed that most of the Nordic cosmopolitan CBT tourists were interesting in local culture experiences especially sharing homestay with local allowed them to better learn local ways of life and interact with local host hospitality. The more findings based on the further interview pointed out that after joining the local tourism activities the knowledge of local and traditional culture they exclusively appreciated were the host hospitality towards homestay where they learnt local culinary cooking, listening and sharing with local host family, trying local Northern Thai food and learn local tea plantation (“Miang” in Northern Thai language) respectively. Additionally, they also mentioned their views of “authenticity” of local culture. Hence, here comes the role of “authenticity” in the community tourism context which refers to “primitive” or “original”. By the tourist points of view refers that the use of authenticity in modern tourism is maintained through its opposition of modern processes and the demand or preference for the ‘old’ traditions. Thus, what is considered authentic must coincide with the image of the primitive ‘other’ without the interference of mass production (Fillitz & Saris, 2002). More to the interviews with 14 Nordic tourists to CBT also revealed an interesting point concerning the concept of “authenticity” of local culture due to 5 respondents claiming that they cared about authentic tourism experiences. On the other hand, other 9 respondents did not care whether the culture was commoditized or (re)produced to satisfy with mass tourism, what they did care for was the true value of local culture preservation for the next generation.

Tourist guide is also a kind of job, faked hospitality.

They are nice and friendly to all tourists who pay for them.

They just enjoy making money from CBT payments.

(Niels, 49, a Danish traveller to CBT)

The presence of local tourist guide as a receptionist at a front entrance of a village thus it is necessary that a welcoming hospitality is needed. Hospitality is an integration of art and science showing caring, generosity and intimacy to others in a warm welcoming manner. However, it is also a skill that one can learn and practice. Thai hospitality is prominently inherited from generation to generation and has been absorbed and embedded on a daily basis. As well, a result in religious belief affects the friendliness of Thai people. Buddhism’s doctrines and practices influence Thai hospitality and encourage individuals to be nice, sympathetic, caring and generous with others.

Based on my interview with Niels, he perceived local hospitality as “inauthentic” or “commoditized.” Niels doubted whether the tourist guide really appeared with true sincerity or he showed up the commercial friendliness to his customers. Since he had to pay for the local CBT guide in order to be served and taken good care of. Referring to Niels’ opinion against the local tourist guide points out that payment destroys the authentic true value of local hospitality as such and therefore it fails to fulfil his perception of authentic host hospitality. Niels’s self-appearance at Mae Kampong CBT with the Eurocentric bias as self-concept which claimed the local community tourism is only for commercial purpose without positive regard towards local culture presentation. Based on humanistic views, human behaviours affect by inner mind of thinking (Ahmad & Tekke, 2015). Even though, the hospitality of Thai people lies in their characteristic generosity towards others. Still, tourism is a service business, which gives rise to the inevitable travellers’ perceptions of “fake hospitality.” Tucker (1997) claimed that the hospitality of local hosts in the context of tourism corresponds to commercial purpose. Travellers may doubt whether the host’s hospitality stems from heartfelt caring or whether it is part of the job descriptions. Tucker (1997) also pointed out that the dilemma of travellers’ conflicting viewpoints of hospitality as authentic and a commoditization has two different benefits. Nevertheless, friendliness and commerce coexist (Tucker, 1997). The role of tourism service actors, in particular the tourist guide in a CBT context, still plays a crucial role in driving tourism service. The findings to the questionnaires suggested that numerous numbers of travellers were concerned with the service-mindedness of the tourism service providers. For instance, some Danish travellers who visited Mae Kampong experienced negative service from a private tour guide who did not take attentive care of the foreign guests who did not speak any Thai language at all. They would have liked to change their guide and request one who was more attentive and service-orientation.

The generosity of Thai people is reflected in their thoughtfulness and hospitality. The happiness and well-being of guests during their stay is the most crucial concern for attentive hosts. Hospitality is a selling point in the CBT context. Tourists can easily experience local Thai hospitality and being accepted in CBT activities such as homestays with local hosts where they received warm welcome and being treated as privileged. Similarly, the exchange of conversation regarding culture and its practices also plays a crucial role of cross culture knowledge sharing activity which results in guests’ social acceptance and self-esteem enhancement. All hospitality staff therefore bear in mind the notion that service-mindedness is a key success factor in the service industry. They also realize that the heart of service is to put your mind in your voice and to be sincere to all customers. This intimacy generates positive feedback for the hotel and encourages guests to return and invite others through word of mouth. This is in contrast to the

four- and five-star hotels, whose service management and operation rely primarily on technology, which obviously prevents a close relationship and interaction between hosts and guests. For example, if the guests have experienced some problem before, during or after the service period, they would need to consult the contact person for help. If the first communication channel is an automatic response machine, this takes up some time before the guest can get through to talk to a person. Lashley et al. (2007) depicted the host-guest transaction in the context of social and cultural dimensions and noted that the interaction involves a process of communication. Hosts accommodate and establish services that can be accepted or denied by guests (Lashley et al., 2007).

Yet, the findings from the qualitative interviews precisely shown more details concerning the tourist's "Self" determination by affirming that the majority of the Nordic travellers think that commodification of CBT does not prevent them from experiencing authentic local culture in comparison with their private visit to their Thai family in Thailand. However, two of the respondents stated that they found commercial CBT fake and that it could not live up to their imaginary world of authenticity. This study emphasizes on transnational relationships in order to compare the experience of living in a private house with a Thai wife and family with the experience of a CBT homestay.

The following statement reflects the view of Nordic men who experienced authenticity not only in the tourism context but also in the context of a transnational relationship:

Whenever I travel to Thailand, I always tell my friends that
"I am travelling back home". I used the words 'back home'
in order to emphasize and differentiate that this is the way.
I specially feel about Thailand as it is my authentic home,
not just a simple kind of travel to any foreign country.

(Morten, 49, a partner in a Danish–Thai relationship)

A conversation about Morten's perception of the authenticity of a CBT homestay and the authenticity of a local Thai wife's home reveals that there is no significant difference. Both a CBT homestay and private home can provide the authentic experience that the traveller seeks. Morten also found himself being accepted and honored whenever he returned from Denmark and stayed at his wife's family in Thailand. His statement obviously showed a feeling of attachment and his perception of bound with the place. Likewise, Gingting et.al. (2019) revealed

that attachment to a place and sense of belonging to a place play outstanding role concerning self-esteem principles of local tourism.

A Danish traveller, Tina, visited Mae Kampong and explained:

The most valuable thing I gained from my visit to Mae Kampong is that of the homestay experiences where I was able to closely try making traditional Northern Thai food, watched the family host fermenting tea and especially spent overnight without a heater.

(Tina, 23, a Danish Mae Kampong CBT tourist in Chiang Mai)

Tina and her friend were dating and travelled to Chiang Mai for the first time with a group tour of six French and two Germans. The tour was organized by a Thai travel agency in Bangkok. The two-day, one-night homestay at Mae Kampong CBT was included in the travel itinerary. Tina said that she got to know Thailand from a travel documentary and TV commercial in Denmark. She found Thailand to be an interesting country with a long history and plenty of marvellous tourist attractions particularly in the north and south of Thailand. After decided to visit Thailand, she bought a travel guidebook for learning some helpful Thai words and expressions. She believed that this would be helpful when they stayed overnight with locals who could not speak English at all. She realized that CBT is a business-oriented tourism. She found that the local cultural practices and local dances are what local residents perform to entertain the tourists who want to see and experience distinct culture expressions such as religious practices.

Discussions

Nordic Cosmopolitan CBT Tourists and Cross -Cultural Understandings Characteristics of Nordic Cosmopolitan CBT Tourists

Based on the questionnaire surveys and the qualitative interview, there are two obvious characteristics of the Nordic tourists to Thailand which can be seen from the cosmopolitan views namely the economic cosmopolitan and the cultural oriented cosmopolitan. To study of what extent are the cosmopolitan tourists the proper target group for CBT, I therefore consider by investigating Nordic tourists and their ideas on learning and gaining proficiency on cultural consumption towards CBT engagement as a major point of discussion. A fundamental

characteristic of cosmopolitan is travelling. Tourism stimulates people mobilization from their local shelter to experience different places and to meet people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Hannerz 1990, 2004). Cosmopolitanism refers to a global circuit of mobility, ability of openness, adaptation and consumption of plural cultural diversity (Hannerz, 2004, Swain, 2009). claimed that based on a primary debate in cosmopolitan theory, cosmopolitan encompass universalism (human rights, social justice, oppose of differences).

From tourism perspective cosmopolitan locates on cross-cultural competency namely an ability to understand, negotiate and handle with people from different cultural background. Johnson (2014) points out that cultural literacy functions as a fundamental an analytical tool to study cosmopolitanism in tourism. Cultural literacy shapes cosmopolitan capitals, refers to an ability to accept of and a competency to adapt to. Cosmopolitanism and tourism are a socio-cultural condition of globalization, binding people with places between tourists and destinations and focusing on worldviews (Johnson, 2014). A defining practice for cosmopolitanism requires social and transcultural capitals (Salazar, 2010). Likewise, De-Jung Chen (2013) who studies the “Couchsurfing” which is an online hospitality exchange platform for cosmopolitan travelers to share their travel experiences with other tourists and local residents. Chen showed that online sites create direct communication and support cross-cultural interaction. Thus, “being cosmopolitan” means an ability to interact and deal with people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Thus, the common interest of tourists who participate in CBT can be thus conceptualized as embracing cosmopolitan identities due to their particular interest in intercultural experiences of tourism. The cosmopolitan are independent travelers whose preference in organizing the travelling schedule and planning of various places in order to prepare the program for participants who are willing to engage themselves in learning across cultural differences. In this way, Gunesch (2004) described the outstanding competence of the cosmopolitan as endowed with the willingness to be open and the ability to adjust themselves to new and widely different cultural circumstances. The intersection between cosmopolitan and traveler is a trait of moving to other divergent sites to capture practical experiences. Cosmopolitanism is closely interconnected with traditionalism and modernity; the interest of cosmopolitanism is in cultural diversity and the values within it. Likewise, Hannerz (2006) stated that the predominant characteristics of the cosmopolitan are a concern with adaptation and the ability to integrate and acquaint oneself with others, thereby encouraging competent intercultural interactions. Therefore, the characteristics of the cosmopolitan are concerned with global society meeting the prospective requirements of the potential tourist category engaging in community cultural tourism. CBT facilitates the cosmopolitans to intimately establish themselves with a local group

relationship as well as to actively partake in the learning process by observing and practicing the primitive community culture and local livelihood. Such identities can be integrated into intercultural interactions and enacted through CBT.

“Popular discourse on ‘cosmopolitanism’ refers to elites, travel, world peace, multicultural education and humanitarianism, in opposition or complementary to nationalism. Cosmopolitan theory in the West often refers back to the enlightenment era philosophy of Immanuel Kant, who promoted political ideas about global governance and citizenship, as well as cultural of relationships, habits or kinds of hospitality practice that depend on ‘the kindness of strangers.’.

(Swain 2009)

According to Ulrich Beck (2006), cosmopolitanism coincides with the ability to intermingle and adapt to coexisting in cross-culture circumstances. Cosmopolitanism embraces cultural diversity as the centre of consideration, rejecting hierarchy for universal equality (Beck,2006,2007). Cosmopolitanism affirms what is excluded both by hierarchical difference and by “universal equality, namely, perceiving others as different and at the same time as equal” (Beck, 2007). Additionally, Beck (2007) claimed that cosmopolitan interest in cultural differences is important in a sense that cosmopolitan individuals can learn more about others as well as about themselves. The openness of cosmopolitans thus enables social integration. However, works primarily on the normative side of cosmopolitanism. He made a distinction between the cosmopolitan condition and the cosmopolitan moment, i.e. normative-philosophical and empirical-analytical. He has argued that, until now, the moral and political standpoint, or attitude, is prevailing. However, Marinus Ossewaarde (2007) contended that globalization has resulted in the appearance of cosmopolitan attributes, where one is a stranger everywhere and belongs nowhere. Being a stranger in all places, the biography of the cosmopolitan’s career does not need to adjust to any group or place: the cosmopolitan is now able to flexibly adjust his or her knowledge to the global order, without local influences and without local attachment (Ossewaarde, 2007). Similarly, Ulf Hannerz (2006) also pointed out that the cosmopolitan inclination to experience cultural divergence and to immerse themselves in the mastery of cultural Otherness does not indicate a real commitment to any particular culture.

The Economic Cosmopolitan Tourists

The non-CBT tourist or the economic cosmopolitan or those who has no interest in cultural tourism as of 71% of respondents. Their motivations of visit were mainly to enjoy their tourism gratification and relaxation during holiday break. Some of them were young travellers who wanted to experience new world regardless of culture interest or so called ‘the economic cosmopolitan’ who claimed that their engagement with local community tourism due to economic and superficially culture interest. Let me draw your attention to the former characteristic of the cosmopolitan. The economic cosmopolitan can be seen mostly at any popular tourist spots in Thailand such as Tapae Gate in Chiang Mai, local guesthouses at Kaosan Road in Bangkok and economic bed and breakfast hostels in downtown of the big cities everywhere.

The Cultural Oriented Cosmopolitan Tourists

On the other hand, there were 29% out of 100% of the Nordic tourists to Thailand who participated in the CBT. There were variety of motivations of visit which mainly concerned with getting to know Thai culture consist of firstly to gain more knowledge about local and traditional Northern Thai livelihood secondly, to experience diverse cultures and thirdly, to take a break from their daily life in Western settings at home and meet people from different cultural backgrounds. This is called the cultural oriented cosmopolitan who is interested in the experiences of the transculturation process, deriving pleasure from travelling to diverse places, to non-touristic sites, to unfamiliar places and to sites where they can encounter cultural differences by joining the local homestay. Their preference is to acquaint themselves with native residents and learn different local cultural practices. Moreover, the cosmopolitan perspectives with the backpack travelling fashion were in search of non-touristic places combined with the idea of being pioneers exploring new sites for future tourism. According to a Danish local newspaper, the trend of Danish backpack travel has spread to Burma. Travel agencies have arranged for many backpackers to travel to Burma, which they see as an emerging backpacker destination without any footsteps of tourists. These backpackers travel via Thailand to Burma and then to tribal villages and Golden triangles before mass tourist invasion begins (MX Metro Express 2013). According to U.S. DHHS (1999) as cited in Snyder & Lopez ,2007 argued that “culture” is vastly defined as a common heritage or set of beliefs, norms and values and refers to the shared attributes in one group. Cosmopolitanism can be created in tourism by engaging in cross-cultural reciprocation, open mindedness, and a worldview orientation (Hannerz ,1992). In line with Patricia Claudette Johnson (2014) there are several perspectives to study the premise of cosmopolitanism as human condition which takes into account local considerations

and involvement in a global citizenship. Being cosmopolitan, a combination of various cultures can be embedded in one person. A cosmopolitan's cultural literacy competence is influenced by situation and gender and thus informed through socialization, education and experience (Johnson, 2014). Cultural literacy forms cosmopolitanism and is employed to characterize the cosmopolitan stance as well as to influence cross-cultural comprehension. For example, a bilingual language skill benefits tourism staff to access in the tourism business. Therefore, tourism plays a role as a highly mediated action where peoples, places and pasts are involved in the making of processes and then cultural literacy is applied to explore these processes (Johnson, 2014). Cosmopolitan individuals tend to engage in CBT as if to explore the boundless world beyond frontiers. They are in favour of travelling to various diverse places and spending money in favour of intercultural affiliation and engagement. The outstanding cosmopolitan characteristics involved with CBT are those of openness and a belief in racial equality. Subsequently, the term cosmopolitan corresponds to a type of tourists who can learn diverse local ways of life and cross-cultural practices. In addition to this, there have been numbers of modern tourists who enjoy being Internet idols by presenting their personal online travel channels recommending interesting tourism destinations worldwide. As a result, social media allows people to create self-esteem by welcoming views and giving positive feedback and suggestions to them. Based on the interviews, local culture experiencing and sharing allowed the guests to better learn local culture and interact with local host hospitality. Similarly to Giagkou et.al. (2018) claimed that using social media such as Facebook as a tool which allows users to enhance their self-esteem and self-improvement.

Dynamics of Cross-Cultural Interactions and its Relations to the Esteem Needs and Self-Uniqueness of the Nordic Cosmopolitan CBT Tourists towards the CBT Engagement

The Push and Pull Factors of Tourism

Travelling away from home to experience a transformation from daily routine life into new surroundings allows tourists to explore individual self together with encourage them to positively perceive themselves. Escape from the boredom of everyday life and relief from tension related to routine work are considered as the factors that push people to travel to places away from home. The different activities offered by different destinations influence the decision of travelers with regards to which places they wish to visit (Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979). Rittichainuwat (2007) asserts that the cultural background of origin influences the purpose and motivation for travelling.

The Esteem Needs Theory

Taking a closer consideration of the motivation theory, drive and arousal are the two mechanisms of motivation. Drive is an internal factor that commands organism to meet physiological need and need is a motivated stance results from physiological or psychological dismissal as shown in Figure1. Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



Figure 1: Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow categorized the human needs into five categories namely physiological needs, safety needs, belonging and love needs (social needs), esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Maslow pointed out that the major characteristics of self-esteem composed of confidence, achievement, respect of others and the need to be a unique individual which relates to the context of the Nordic cosmopolitan tourists visiting the Mae Kam Pong CBT. According to Tina's interview, Tina is an ordinary modern traveller who wants to travel away from her daily life practices. Thailand appears as a favourable destination for Tina. Her motivations for visiting Thailand for the first time were quite similar to those of other tourists, including the long history of Thailand, the rich ancient culture and traditions, the beautiful scenery and the abundance of tourist attractions. She thus spent time searching for more travel information from advertisements, travel guidebooks and exchanges with friends. Tina's views on her short visit in CBT through the homestay suggest that she found CBT to be a tourism

commodity. She paid for the CBT package tour, entered the village and after that engaged in the various set-up tourist activities along with the local ritual practices. Even though Tina realized that her CBT visit was commoditized and the commoditization bothered her, she was however happy for the short engagement and felt a warm welcome by local host family where she was proud of herself that she could gain new cultural knowledge and some practical traditional skills such as tips for selecting raw vegetables and meat to make local dishes or how to do make handmade miang pillows. The value of the hands-on cultural practices played a more important role for Tina than the notion of authenticity and traditionality. Therefore, the term authenticity had a minor effect on her travel, but the transformative nature of her cross-cultural experiences was appreciated. Based on Tina's CBT experiences, even though she represented the cosmopolitan views but also often hold Eurocentric bias when engaging in cross-cultural interactions as saliently expressed. The CBT activities provide visitors local cultural practices which enhancing the social perception where it is a process the people use to understand themselves and others. This refers that the level of the esteem need plays an outstanding role which means the esteem need of persons demonstrate some similar traits, including a resistance to enculturation and an acceptance of self, others and culture. Nevertheless, the CBT also highlights culturally embedded perspectives on tourist motivation to CBT where Western and Eastern culture meets and supports inner esteem needs individually as Shiraew (2014) pointed out that a study of cross-cultural analysis regarding social perception and cognition by examining attitudes and values.

Unlike the case of Niels who claimed that CBT offered fake hospitality and thus unauthentic cultural practices failed to fulfil his self-worth of the visit. He rejected the host hospitality and impatient to join the CBT practices. Niels perception of authenticity of culture with payment represents an obvious Eurocentric bias and his bias by ignorance of others and then reveals his uniqueness of self. Unlike, Roger (1959) suggested that person with high self-worth cope with challenges in life, tolerance with other, open-minded and handle failures. Mapping and conceptualizing European superiority with its modernity, rational, anti-authoritarian, and paternalistic features is a constraint for listening to—and giving in to— respect for other cultures and norms. As Edward Said contended that Western dominance of Others can be seen, for instance, in the colonization of India as well as in functions to reinforce and project the Western self badly disguised as the male exercise of power toward an obsession with female Indian culture and identity (Said, 1995). In Western sexual ideology oriental women are approached as erotic and sensual objects, and sexual availability is offered by the sex tourism industry in Thailand, where sex-oriented travelers' demands can be fulfilled by money. As a result, the non-cosmopolitan tourist can create negative stereotypical attitudes of Nordic tourists

visiting CBT. The predominant Eurocentric perspectives mainly consist of cultural superiority, advanced in technology and intellect, rationality and perceptions of non- Western ethnic groups as inferior. Unlike Morten's experience of the visit. Based on Morten's views of the CBT visit illustrated that he was happy to return to Thailand as his second home and always felt a heart-felt relations with his wife family. He also appeared with a sense of belonging and go native even he could speak a little Thai language but enjoyed eating Thai food. Morten's views showed respect of other culture and bound to adaptation.

Conclusion

The study of the Nordic cosmopolitan tourists' motivations and cross -cultural understanding a case study of Nordic tourists to Mae Kampong community-based tourism suggested that engaging in the Mae Kampong CBT allows the Nordic cosmopolitan tourists to fulfil their esteem needs. The major esteem needs principles of this study encompass self-uniqueness and self-worth towards CBT social acceptance. The Nordic cosmopolitan who engaged in the local CBT care more for learning and experiencing local and traditional Northern Thai ways of life along with getting to know people from different cultural background where they can share, exchange and learn from each other. The local livelihood at Mae Kampong also revealed different degrees of cosmopolitan encounters in the travellers' views of modernity and traditionality which can finally lead to interchangeable of self-esteem and self-worth while both host and guest interaction can fulfil their social needs, social respect and honour each other. The cosmopolitan identities of travellers with regards to cross-cultural competencies can meet the need for cultural exchange and interaction, regardless of whether the interest is superficial or whether the travellers are only looking for an economic means of travelling. The adaptability of the cosmopolitan travellers to CBT is quite a certainty, given that they want to experience and learn different cultural practices. The experience of being with some 'natives' is qualitatively different from the experience of being with other backpackers in terms of gaining direct experiences and skills from the hands-on practices. Good experiences need to be based on emotions and good relations with specific groups or categories of people-with new skills in order to motivate people to return for similar experiences or to accumulate more experiences. The motivation to adapt themselves to local settings and become acquainted with culture diversity also entails social and cultural benefits for the local community, which requires specialized knowledge and skills to develop their living environment. The successful idea of CBT is to create or introduce CBT activities with a distinct non-Eurocentric dimension that may challenge the Eurocentric bias with low self-esteem by the notion of respecting others,

expressing generosity, and listening to body language and spoken words to read emotions and act accordingly. The interactions will involve Thai and Nordic people, who then will be approached less as tourists and more as individuals via mutually beneficial dialogues or exchanges.

For further study of the cosmopolitanism and their understanding of cultural differences would be conducting research with different category of tourist as well as in various tourism sites where local culture and practices would be represented and exchanged as cross-cultural encounter tool.

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