IMPACT OF DESTINATION IMAGE, COUNTRY PERSONALITY IN THAI TOURIST'S REVISIT INTENTION TO CHINA

Mingming Zhang[1], Panita Surachaikulwattana[2] and Thitikan Satchabut[3]

[1,2]University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce
126/1 Vibhavadi Rangsit Rd., Dindang, Bangkok 10400, Thailand
[3]National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism
812301 No.1, Songhe Rd., Xiaogang Dist., Kaohsiung City, Taiwan (R.O.C.)
[1]axmandy0408@hotmail.com, [2]panita_sur@utcc.ac.th, [3]titikant.sat@gmail.com

Abstract

This study adopted the concept of brand personality in the tourist industry. Constructing the brand personality in the field of tourism measurement scale, and applying it to the service product for empirical research, which complements and perfects the attitude theory. This paper will integrate relevant theories and methods in different fields, and on the basis of the influence of destination image, country personality on revisit intention, study the influence of destination image, country personality on travel intention, promote multi-disciplinary integration, and play an important role in guiding the research trend of tourist future behavior.

The objective of this study was to investigate the effects of destination Image, country personality and tourists' attitude on the Thai tourist revisit intention to China. The population of this research was tourists who have been China once. Data was analyzed by regression analysis. The results reveal that destination image has a significant effect on tourists' attitude, country personality and tourists' attitude have a significant effect on the Thai tourist revisit intention to China. The findings can provide information for the tourism sector about how to develop destination competition, adopt destination image, positive country personality to attracting more Thai tourists to revisit China.

Keywords: impact of destination image, country personality, intention to revisit

Introduction

Problem statement

According to Center of China and Globalization report, China's international tourist deficit is 31,635,500. The international tourist deficit is defined as "the number of foreign tourists who leave the country to other countries (regions) larger than the number of foreign tourists entering the country". According to the 2016 Statistical Bulletin of National Economic and Social Development published in February 2017, the foreign exchange income of China's inbound tourists in 2016 was US$120 billion, an increase of 5.6%. According to UNWTO report data, China's travel service expenditure in 2016 was US$261.1 billion, which is about 2.2 times China's tourism foreign exchange income.

This paper is a follow-up to Hosany's research on brand image and brand personality in the context of the tourism industry. Exploring the relationship between destination image and country personality influences consumers' intent to return to the same destination. Explore how China can capture its destination image to reduce the tourist trade deficit.

Research question

1. Is there an effect of destination image on tourist's attitude toward destination?
2. Is there an effect of country personality on tourist's attitude toward destination?
3. Is there an effect of destination image on revisit intention?
4. Is there an effect of tourist attitude toward destination on revisit intention?

Expect outcome

The results of this research can help China to shape their destination image, and improve China's competitiveness in the international tourism market that increasingly stimulating, attracting more Thai tourists to China, improving China's situation on the international tourist deficit, and reducing the gap between tourism money out and in.

The data collected in this study can be used by government departments or travel companies, To specific market segmentation depend on Thai tourist characteristics, or to make a video to promote China's destination image and improve China's negative country personality. Or perform additional marketing activities to gain more market share in Thailand.

Literature review

Destination image

Hunt introduced the concept of image into tourism destinations, and emphasized the importance of this concept. Crompton (1979) shows that the destination image is all the ideas that tourists generate in the place, including beliefs and opinions. Embacher and Buttle (1989) show that the destination image is the overall impression of the tourist's after completed their travels. Echtner and Ritchie (1991) show the biggest impact on their destination choice is the image of this place. Tapachai and Waryszak (2000) believe destination image is related to the tourist's consumer value and expected benefits. Guan Xinhua et al. (2015) believe that the

individual's own overall impression of the place is the destination image. Endah et al. (2017) propose that the destination image is the individual's own perception of the destination and can be used as a push factor in the decision-making process.

Based on the above literature review, this paper adopts the generally accepted definition of the destination image, that is, all the perception formed by tourists on the destination, including beliefs, opinions and impressions. However, no matter what kind of composition, scholars generally acknowledge that the destination image is composed of at least cognitive and affective parts. Therefore, this research believes that the destination image contains cognitive images and affective images.

Tourist's attitude toward destination

Attitude is the core concept in psychology and social psychology, and it is also the subject of extensive research in other social sciences. Allport (1935) concluded attitude is a learned expectation that most researchers are agree with that, after reviewing the general attitude theory and research. He pointed out that the bipolarity of attitudes (likes and dislikes) is often considered the most special point of this concept (Allport, 1935). However, not all researchers regard attitude as a unidimensional concept. Fishbein (1967) believes that with the development of attitude-related research, attitudes are increasingly highlighted as a complex,

multi-dimensional concept that covers Psychological characteristics of knowledge, emotions and intentions (Hshbein, 1967). In order to present the multidimensional and complex nature of attitudes more clearly, researchers often conceptualize attitudes into three dimensions of cognition, affection, and behavior (McDougall, Munro, 1987). The cognitive part of attitude includes the individual's beliefs and knowledge or perception of specific objects. The affective part is the individual's like or dislike of the specific object. The behavior part reflects the individual's actions or expressions related to the specific target object. There are two main types of attitude research in the tourism field. The attitude research on the residents of the tourist destinations and tourist attitude. The research on the attitudes of the residents has been studied more than 30 years. The attitude research in the early tourism field mainly focuses on The impact of the residents of tourist destination attitudes toward to the tourism industry. (Andereck, Vogt, 2000)

Revisit intention

There are three main reasons why the industry pays attention to the revisit intention: First, compared with first-time visitors, repeat visitors stayed at the destination for a longer period of time and consumed more (Wang, 2004; Alegre, Juaneda, 2006). From a profit perspective, it is more cost-effective for destinations attract repeat visitors than to develop first-time visitors. Second, compared with first-time visitors, repeaters are more likely to spread

positive news about destinations (Petrick, 2004), which is equivalent of free advertising to destinations, which helps to save marketing costs. Third, the cost of attracting repeat visitors is lower than that of developing first-time visitors (Shoemaker, Lewis, 1999). The academic community pays attention to the revisit intention, not only because it has important practical significance, but also because it has important theoretical significance. According to Qu et al. (2011), the revisit intention conveys the signal of tourist loyalty and is an effective predictor of tourist loyalty. The overall image is an important factor leading to tourists' revisit intentions.

Conceptual framework

Framework development

Souiden, N.et al.(2017) developed conceptual model (see Fig. 1) Assume that the destination image affects the destination personality and thus the destination attitude. The latter has an impact on behavioral intentions. However, the literature review shows that there are different concepts of causality between destination image and destination personality. The second alternative model shows a direct and independent path from image and destination personality to attitude, stipulating that the destination personality and image are two separate structures. The third alternative model shows that the destination personality has an indirect effect on attitude through the destination image. The last alternative model considers that the destination personality has a direct and indirect impact on attitude through the destination image.
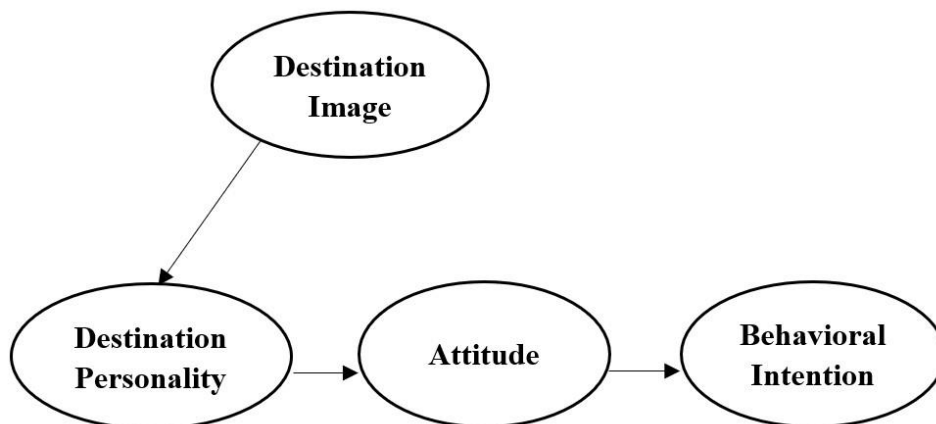

Figure 1 Conceptual framework for examines the impacts of destination personality and image on individuals' attitudes and visiting intentions.

Aktan, M.et al developed the conceptual framework according to previous studies. They believed that country personality can directly influence consumers' product attitudes. In this regard, like a brand, the country's personality traits also affect product awareness. In addition, one aspect of self-consistency (consciousness) mediates the relationship between country personality and attitude.
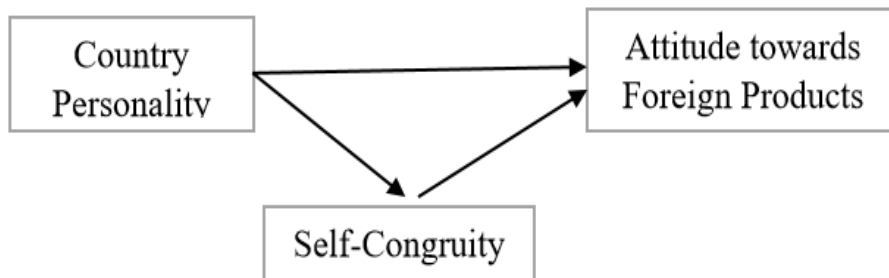

Figure 2 Conceptual framework for examines the direct effect of country personality (CP) on consumer product attitude and indirect effect through consumer self-congruity between CP and his/her own self-concept on product attitude in an emerging country- Turkey.

Chew, E. Y. T., & Jahari, S. A.(2014) found new insights by this research (1) the impact of perceived risk on the destination image, and (2) the mediating role of perceived risk and the desire to revisit the visitor's intention to revisit the destination.
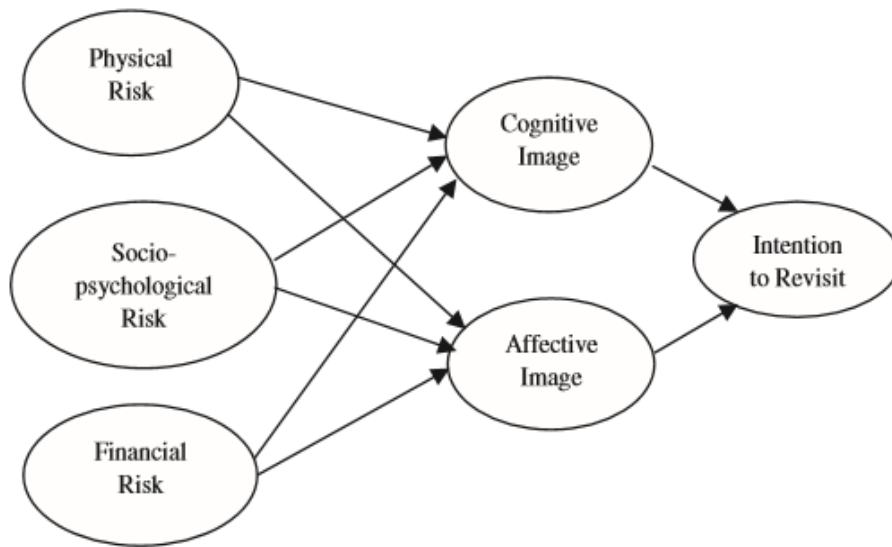
Figure 3 Conceptual framework for Destination image as a mediator between perceived risks and revisit intention

Kim, S. B., & Kwon, K. J. (2018) explored the moderating effects of familiarity through a research model that links tourists' two dimensions of destination image, attitude, and intention to visit. Evaluated that cognitive image of Korea significantly affected their affective image, in turn affecting attitudes toward country, products, and cuisine.
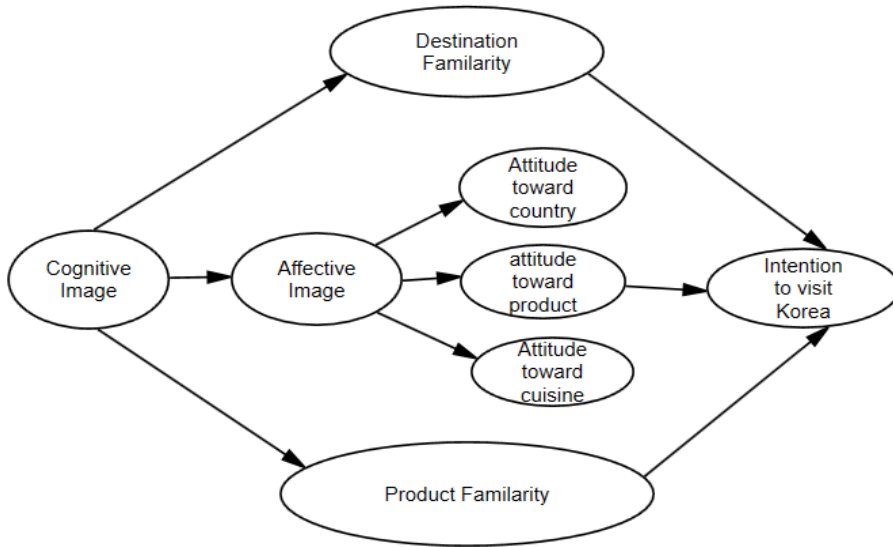
Figure 4 Conceptual framework for country image and attitudes on Tanzanian tourists' intention to visit Korea

The research conceptual framework

Based on the literature review and the hypotheses detailed below, the conceptual model proposed and tested in the current study is presented in
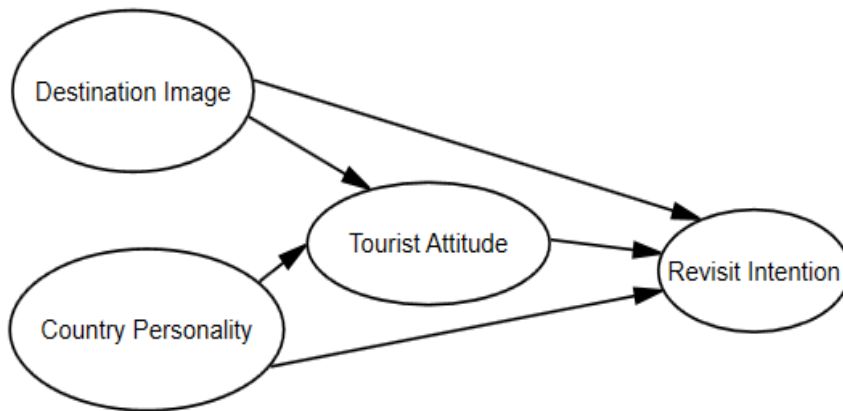

Figure 5 The research conceptual framework

Methodology

Research design

Revisit intention use attitude theory, this study selects residents who have been visiting China as the survey object, Questionnaire is used as the main data source to collect the views of Thai tourists on China's tourism revisit intentions.

Ward, & Pratt (1981), Baloglu & McCleary (1999a), San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque (2008). These items were adopted based on the study of Baloglu and Brinberg (1997), Baloglu and McCleary (1999b), and Walmsley and Jenkins (1993). In the study of emotional destination image, the impression of China is divided into eight categories: disgust, vitality, pleasure, unhappiness, depression, motivation, pain and relaxation. All kinds of foreigners are deeply investigated and analyzed. This part consisted of 23 items to measure country personality. The respondents were asked to think of the country as if it were a person and to ascribe human personality traits to it (Davies, et al., 2001). The stimuli country (China) had to be evaluated using 23 personality traits with the help of a 5-point scale (d' Astous & Boujbel, 2007).

Measures of respondent attitudes toward China were adopted primarily by Passow et al. (2005) This paper studies and analyzes the attitude of tourists to travel to China, and analyzes the attitude of researchers. I love China, I have a good opinion of China, and China is a good place for tourism. From the survey data, it is found that foreign tourists are full of interest and interest in China's tourism. While those measuring respondents' revisit intentions and recommendations were derived and adapted from Baker and Churchill's (1977) and Putrevu and Lord's (1994) studies.

Population and sample

The population use in this paper is Thai tourist that travels in China. The following table shows the information about total and an average number of Thai tourist arrivals in China from The author investigated the number of Thai tourists traveling to China from 2013 to 2017. The data showed that the number of Thai tourists traveling to China increased year by year, from 660000 in 2013 to 770000 in 2017, with an average of more than 700000 tourists traveling to China every year.

The total number of Thai tourists in China is 2,894,700, and the average number of tourists for each year is 578,940 (rounded).

The sample size of this study is calculated by using Yamane (1973) formula with 95% confidential level, the formula is presented as below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n is size of sample

N is population of sample

e is probability of error

The result of the sample size of this study is:

$$n = \frac{2894700}{1 + 2894700 \times 0.05^2}$$

n=399.944734206

n≈400

Data collection and data analysis

This study conducted a questionnaire survey of Thai tourist who have been to China. 450 questionnaires were distributed by Email, Facebook and We chat, let my Thai friends help me pass the link that adopted from google form to their relatives and friends to answer the questionnaires. And also post on my Facebook page to let more Thai people who have been to China to help answer this research. Before the online questionnaire survey begins, the survey is set to "Do not allow the same IP to answer twice" to avoid repeated answers. And will translate to Thai language to make sure Thai tourist can understand.

Multiple regression analysis was applied to test the effects of destination image, country personality, and tourist attitude factors on revisiting intention.

Result analysis

Means and standard deviation of questionnaire statements

The following content were analyzed by Descriptive Statistics which are mean ($\overline{X}$), and standard deviation (S.D.). The result is shown in the table and the following explanation.

Destination image

Table 1 Descriptive statistic results of destination image

Cognitive image	Mean	SD
Natural Attraction	4.22	.450
China has several natural parks	4.15	.683
China offers much in terms of natural scenic beauty	4.29	.595
China has many historic sites and museums	4.26	.651
China has beautiful scenery	4.17	.740
Infrastructure	4.08	.498
China has a good infrastructure	4.12	.760
(roads, communication services, etc.).		
China has good quality accommodations	4.07	.763
China can find information for travel easily and conveniently	4.05	.788
China has a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness	4.09	.777
Atmosphere	4.04	.570
China has a good nightlife	4.00	.786
China is an exotic destination	4.02	.780
China has an adventure atmosphere	4.08	.788
Social Environment	4.05	.583
Local community is friendly and helpful in China	4.09	.755
Chinese people can understand English	4.01	.896
China is a safe place to travel	4.07	.811
China is a clean and organized place	4.02	.846
Value for Money	4.07	.571
China's accommodations are reasonably priced	4.06	.737
China is an inexpensive city	4.09	.788
China offers good value for my travel money	4.08	.809
Affective image	1.974	.66844
Sleepy/Arousing	4.20	.809
Unpleasant /Pleasant	3.89	.830
Gloomy /Exciting	4.06	.815
Distressing /Relaxing	3.96	.837

The Table 4.1 showed that participants are most agree with natural attraction of China (mean= 4.22), followed by the infrastructure of China (mean= 4.08) and the lessee agrees is atmosphere of China (mean= 4.04). When considered a natural attraction each item, it is found that participants are most agree with an item "China offers much in terms of natural scenic beauty"(mean= 4.29), followed by "China has many historic sites and museums" (mean= 4.26), and the last is "China has several natural parks" (mean=

4.15).When considered infrastructure by each item, it is found that participant are most agree with an item "China has good infrastructure (roads, communications, services, etc.)" (mean= 4.12), followed by "China has a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness" (mean= 4.09). And the last one is "China can find information for travel, easily and conveniently" (mean= 4.05). When considered atmosphere by each item, it is found that participants are most agree with an item "China has an adventure atmosphere"

(mean=4.08). Followed by "China is an exotic destination" (mean=4.02).

Attitude to destination

In the survey of China's tourism attitude Most respondents agree with "Visiting China is a good decision" (mean=4.23), followed by "I have a favorable opinion of China" (mean=4.15), "I love China" have a lowest mean value (mean=3.95).

Revisit intention

Table 2 Descriptive statistic results of revisit intention

Intention to revisit China	mean	SD
I like to visit China again	4.14	.811
I may stay longer in China during my next visit	4.18	.771
I strongly recommend people to visit China	4.27	.801

According to Table 4.2, Most respondents are "strongly recommend people to visit China" (mean=4.27), followed by "I may stay longer in China during my next visit"(mean=4.18), "I like to visit China again" have a lower mean value (mean=4.14).

Test of the differences between demographic groups

The t-test was used to identify whether there was a difference in revisiting intention between gender groups. Then one-way ANOVA was used to identify whether there were differences between other demographic groups in this research. The results presented that there were some statistically significant in revisiting intention among other demographic groups. Such as Age group, Frequency to travel China, Purpose of to China, Length of stay. The p value was less than 0.05. Through the analysis of personality differences by t-test, it is found that the frequency of men 232 is slightly higher than that of women 175, and the standard deviation is 65 and 51. When analyzing the travel types of tourists through, it is found that the personal frequency 265 is much less than the female frequency 242. Therefore, it can be found that the number of female tourists accounts for more.

Correlation analysis

From the analysis results showed that Destination Image, Country Personality, Tourist Attitude, Revisit Intention, the four dimensions' P value is not all less than 0.05. Independent variable Destination Image and the Tourist Attitude and the dependent variable Revisit Intention has significant positive correlation (P < 0.05), And have strong correlation; Independent variable Country personality with the Tourist Attitude not has significant positive correlation (P > 0.05), the correlation is weak. and with the dependent variable Revisit Intention has significant positive correlation (P < 0.05).

Table 1 Correlation

		Destination Image	Country Personality	Tourist Attitude	Revisit Intention
Destination Image	Pearson Correlation	1	-.154[**]	.312[**]	.271[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.000	.000
	N	407	407	407	407
Country Personality	Pearson Correlation	-.154[**]	1	-.017	-.101[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		.728	.041
	N	407	407	407	407
Tourist Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.312[**]	-.017	1	.464[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.728		.000
	N	407	407	407	407
Revisit Intention	Pearson Correlation	.271[**]	-.101[*]	.464[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.041	.000	
	N	407	407	407	407

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis testing

Testing hypothesis 1, hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 5 by using multiple regression

Table 4 Results on the effects of destination image, tourist attitude on revisit intention

variables	Unstandardized coefficients B	Standardized coefficients Beta	t	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.422		4.545	.000		
Destination Image	.231	.076	3.041	.003	.903	1.108
Tourist attitude	.0447	.049	9.177	.000	.903	1.108

R=0.483, R²=0.233, Adjusted R²=0.229, F=61.433 P<0.05

According to Table 4.4, the result shows that there is 23.3% (R²=0.233) of the variance in the dependent variable (revisit intention) which can be explained by two independent variables (destination image, tourist attitude).

The result reveals that the destination image (p<0.05), tourist attitude(p<0.01), so destination image and tourist attitude toward destination have a significant effect on tourists' revisit intention because the p value of independent variables were less than 0.05. Thus, hypothesis 1, hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 5 were accepted.

Testing hypothesis 2 by using multiple regression

Table 5 Results on the effects of country personality on tourist attitude

variables	Unstandardized coefficients B	Standardized coefficients Beta	t	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	4.179		20.756	.000		
Country personality	-.023	-.017	-.348	.728	1	1

R=0.17, R²=0.00, Adjusted R²=-0.002, F=.121 P>0.05

According to Table 4.5, the result shows that there are nearly 0% (R²=0.000) of the variance in the dependent variable (tourist attitude) which can be explained by the independent variables (country personality).

The result reveals that country personality (p>0.05), so country personality had no significant effect on tourist attitude because the p value of independent variables were more than 0.05. Thus, hypothesis 2 was rejected.

Conclusion, discussion, limitation and recommendation

Conclusion

The findings revealed that there was a significant effect of the destination image on tourists' attitude, there was a significant effect of country personality on revisiting intention, there was a significant effect of tourists' attitude on revisiting intention. Thus, the hypothesis 1, the hypothesis 3, the hypothesis 4, and the hypothesis 5 of this study were accepted. Hypothesis 2 was rejected.

The findings showed that tourists' gender and travel type didn't make any difference in revisiting intention. Age group, frequency to travel China, the purpose of to China, length of stay that can make a difference in revisit intention. Destination image has an effect on tourist's attitude toward destination and revisit intention. Country personality has an effect on revisiting intention, but there was no effect on tourist's attitude to destination. Tourist's attitude toward destination has an effect on revisiting intention.

Discussion

Supported by previous researches. Many studies in the literature (Beerli and Martin, 2004; Lee et al., 2005; Konecnik and Gartner, 2007) have discussed good destination image positive effects on tourist attitudes towards a destination. Tourists' overall attitudes towards a destination and their behavioural intentions are significantly shaped by the destination image (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Deng and Li, 2014). These findings have also supported the previous study conducted by Kim and Richardson (2003) and Phillips and Jang (2008), who argued destination image influences tourists' tourism products and services related attitudes and behaviour. Thus, based on the above discussion the hypotheses 1 are accepted.

Six dimensions of the national personality were taken into account in this research. From the analyzed result can show that agreeableness and assiduousness had a significant effect on tourist attitude. The other 4 dimension all have no significance on tourist attitude. That's the reason why the hypothesis 2 was rejected. There were some parts of these findings supported by d'Astous & Boujbel (2007). The study showed the wickedness, snobbism, conformity and unobtrusiveness dimensions were not significant.

The results have been demonstrated by previous investigators. Two dimensions of destination image (natural attraction and infrastructure) had positive relationships with revisit intention in the context of the destination images. The findings of this research concurred with a previous study which examined Chinese

tourists in Korea (Lee et al., 2011). The study revealed that Chinese tourists had a higher expectancy of destination quality which involved good and more natural attraction that led to the intention to revisit. Infrastructure were important factors to influence tourists. The attraction was significant to European tourists in Singapore (Hui et al., 2007). Also, Chi and Qu (2008) found that natural attraction and infrastructure had significant and positive effects on the revisit intention to Eureka Springs.

As for natural attraction, it was in line with the findings by Qu et al. (2011). Their study showed that natural attractions were a reason that attracted tourist. The scenery, natural scenic beauty, and an adventure atmosphere were amongst the major factors that led to the intention to revisit. In China, the location of the present study is well-known for its natural attraction such as mountain and historic scenery. This gives it a competitive advantage as a tourist destination. It is the most popular tourist destination amongst local and international tourists. This natural tourism destination in China should be sustained to enhance the destination image.

Implication
According to the data analyzed result, Tourism managers and marketers in China should make every effort to enhance the destination image and attitude of Thai tourists towards China. For the image of the destination, the tourist organization or agency may announce or develop a more natural

attraction for Thai tourists.Due to the mean value of five measurement dimension have the biggest one. And improve the social atmosphere and environment, the tourism organization or agency can organize more local activities for Thai tourists to enable them to access the local culture of China. In order to let the Thai tourist return to China, the government or travel agency must show the positive personality of the country to the Thai tourist.

Limitation and suggestion

The present study has some limitations that need to be taken into account when considering a discussion on the merits of its findings. First, the results are limited to the sample size. Second, the findings of this research are specific to one country (China) and cannot be generalized to others. Third, the present study focused on general customers (who have already visited / and who did not visit) perception about a country and therefore the results may not be generalizable to other useful outcomes such as intentions to purchase. This study also seems to complement the one conducted by d'Astous & Boujbel (2007) in particular with regards to the following details: in addition, a new translation of the scale and its validation was performed, and a Thai version of the original language adjectives (French, and English afterwards by the scale authors) became available.

References

Aktan, M., & Chao, P. W. (2016). Impact of Country Personality on Attitude Toward Foreign Products: Self-congruity as a Mediator. *Atlantic Marketing Journal*, *5*(1), 9.

Beyond summits (2016). China Inbound Tourism Market Research Report. Page19-24

Echtner, C. M., & Prasad, P. (2003). The context of third world tourism marketing. *Annals of Tourism research, 30*(3), 660-682.

Hai, Z. X., & Jiang, W. B. (2011). Chinese dynamic economy image in the German media in economic crisis: Take reports from 2009 to 2010 released by Der Spiegel Magazine and The Times weekly in Germany for example. *Deutschland-studien, 26*(1), 39-48.

Hua, Y. S. (2005). A Study on the Chinese Consumer' Selection of Korean Products (Doctoral dissertation). Tsinghua University, Beijing

Kim, S. B., & Kwon, K. J. (2018). Examining the Relationships of Image and Attitude on Visit Intention to Korea among Tanzanian College Students: The Moderating Effect of Familiarity. *Sustainability*, *10*(2), 360.

Kim, S. B., & Kwon, K. J. (2018). Examining the Relationships of Image and Attitude on Visit Intention to Korea among Tanzanian College Students: The Moderating Effect of Familiarity. *Sustainability*, *10*(2), 36

Mossberg, L., & Kleppe, I. A. (2005). Country and destination image–different or similar image concepts?. *The Service Industries Journal, 25*(4), 493-503.

Souiden, N., Ladhari, R., & Chiadmi, N. E. (2017). Destination personality and destination image. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *32*, 54-70.

Wang, C. L., Li, D., Barnes, B. R., & Ahn, J. (2012). Country image, product image and consumer purchase intention: Evidence from an emerging economy. *International Business Review, 21*(6), 1041-1051.

Yu, Z. (2007). China Image Appeared in Japanese Newspapers: a Case Study of China Reports in Asahi Shimbun and Yomiuri Shimbun (1995-2005)[J]. *Journalism & Communication, 4.*

Zeugner-Roth, K. P., & Žabkar, V. (2015). Bridging the gap between country and destination image: Assessing common facets and their predictive validity. *Journal of business research, 68*(9), 1844-1853.

ZHANG, H., LU, L., CAI, L., & HUANG, Z. (2011). Tourism destination image structural model and visitors' behavioral intentions: based on a confirmatory study of localization of potential consumers [J]. *Tourism Science, 1*, 35-45.

Zhang, H., Xu, F., Leung, H. H., & Cai, L. A. (2016). The influence of destination-country image on prospective tourists' visit intention: Testing three competing models. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 21*(7), 811-835.