Sustainable Creative Tourism for Fulfilling the Gap between Tourists' Expectation and Perception towards Tourism Routes in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion

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Abstract: The purposes of this research are to study tourists' satisfaction level towards sustainable creative tourism, which is calculated by comparing the difference between expectation and perception, to understand the effect of tourists' perception toward sustainable creative tourism on intention to revisit, and to compare tourists' sustainable creative tourism perceptions among different visited countries along Upper Greater Mekong Subregion routes. The results showed that tourists has high satisfaction towards sustainable creative tourism, which can be explained by the greater score of perception in comparison with expectation score. Tourists' perception toward sustainable creative tourism can predict intention to revisit. Tourists travelling in different countries had different overall perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism with statistical significance.

Keywords: *Sustainable creative tourism, expectation, perception, tourism routes in the upper greater Mekong Subregion*

INTRODUCTION

At present, both Thais and foreigners are interested in travelling to the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion as this region has various potential tourist resources such as natural resources, traditional cultures of different ethnic groups that should be conserved to attract visitors, as well as a variety of travel routes, which are convenient and distinctive, allowing travelers to select their suitable routes whether by car, boat, or plane.

Creative tourism can be associated with unique cultures of each place as well as interactions with tourists in terms of educating them about environmental conversation, aesthetic creation, and interaction with the locals (Alsarayreh, 2018; Fang, 2018; Kunnu, 2016; Richards & Raymond, 2000). The development of sustainable creative tourism in this research originates from searching for expectations and perceptions of tourists in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion. This would assist private entrepreneurs and public-sector executives in applying the information to develop sustainable creative tourism in order to respond to the expectations of tourists in this region. In addition, tourist perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism would allow entrepreneurs in the tourism industry and the public sector to know tourists' satisfaction and dissatisfaction, leading to solutions for what they are dissatisfied with and the maintenance of what they

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are already satisfied with. This would bring about the development of sustainable creative tourism as well as the factors affecting tourists' intention to revisit, leading to sustainable creative tourism without destroying the environment, which is the heart of tourism in this Mekong Subregion.

Research Objectives

1. To study the comparisons between tourists' expectations and perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion.

2. To study perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism influencing the intention to revisit in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion.

3. To study perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism categorized by country.

Research Hypotheses

1. Tourists have different expectations and perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion.

2. Perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism influence the intention to revisit in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion.

3. Tourists travelling in different countries have different perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism.

Theoretical Framework

Sustainable creative tourism: Richards and Raymond (2000) claimed that creative tourism is a kind of cultural tourism which holds the principle of creative cooperation between tourists and the local so that they can participate in developing andcreating good experiences. It is also a kind of tourism that offers opportunities for tourists to develop their creative potential through participative learning, which creates a travel experience. Consistently, Ohridska-Olson (2009) stated that creative tourism is a kind of cultural tourism, and Ohridska-Olson and Ivanov (2010) stated that it is the tourism that aims to create engagement, authentic experience, and participative learning in terms of art, cultural heritage, local identity including craftwork, food, and other activities that connect tourists, the local, and cultural heritage together. Moreover, according to Wurzburger, Aageson, Pattakos, and Pratt (2009), creative tourism aims for engagement and authentic experience from participative learning about art, cultural heritage, or local identity. Butler (1993) also stated that creative tourism brings about development and conservation; in other words, it does not affect the environment but instead develops people's quality of life, activities, and systems.

Tourists' expectations and perceptions: According to Gisolf (2010), tourists' expectations are initial thoughts about travelling to certain places, which depends on image, past experiences, and memories that the tourists have heard or seen from different media. In the same way, Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1990) reported that tourists' expectations are ideas influenced by past experiences, especially for tourists who are travelling to those places for the first time. Friends and relatives are important sources of information which affect their trust.

Solomon (2014) claimed that tourists' perceptions are processes in which individuals select, organize, and interpret stimuli by using the five senses. Perceptions come from sensory stimulation that creates tourists' exposure and interpretation of tourism and tourist attractions in a positive or negative way.

Chen and Chen (2010) stated that tourist satisfaction is a comparison between the expectations before travel and the experience after travel. Furthermore, Kozak and Rimmington (2000) said that tourist satisfaction is important for tourist attraction marketing due to its influence on selection, consumption, service use, and the decision to revisit. According to Oliver and Swan (1989), when tourists compare their experience to their expectation and feel good, they will feel satisfied and tend to revisit the place, while those who feel dissatisfied tend to switch to other destinations. From the aforementioned, tourist satisfaction is directly influenced by their expectation (Song, Song, & Chen, 2011; Wang, Zhang, Gu, & Zhen, 2009) and their perception (Chen & Chen, 2010; F. Huang & Su, 2012; Luangsa-Art, 2016; Rerkklang, 2017; Siregar, 2018; Song et al., 2011; Weng & Yang, 2016), which is consistent with a study by H.-H. Huang, Chiu, and Kuo (2006), Hui, Wan, and Ho (2007) and Su and Fan (2011) which found that satisfied tourists had a tendency to revisit the place and invited other guests as well. Moreover, a study by Song et al. (2011), Lee, Huang, Ando, Chiu, and Wang (2011) and Wang et al. (2009) found that dissatisfied tourists complained about the services, which affected their perception negatively.

From the discussed research framework, expectations and perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism in the

Upper Greater Mekong Subregion in the 4 countries are related to (1) Economic creativity (2) Environmental/Natural creativity (3) Ecological tourism (4) Cultural heritage reservation (5) Authenticity (6) Tourism innovation (7) Human interaction (8) Cultural travel and tourism (9) Creative tourism landscape and (10) Quality of border tourism.

Intention to revisit: Garbarino and Johnson (1999) stated that the intention to revisit is the probability of a customer to use the service again, to use it more, or to support it less, showing the potential to remain a customer or stop being a customer of that business. According to Zillifro (2004), the factors influencing the intention to revisit are satisfaction towards tourist attractions or itinerary programs. Therefore, tour businesses should attempt to use different strategies to initiate the intention to reuse the service. This research measured the overall intention to revisit in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion routes.

Upper Greater Mekong Subregion: Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) is the economic region of 6 countries surrounding Mekong River which are Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, and China. This area is considered by Conservation International and World WideFund for Nature as an area containing biodiversity and abundant with natural resources as well as being the center of connections between South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. This research focused on the boundaries of 4 countries which were Thailand, Myanmar, China, and Laos, starting with the northern part of Thailand in Chiang Rai province, consisting of Chiang Khong, Mae Sai, and Chiang Saen districts and connecting to Chiang Tung in Myanmar, Chiang Rung in China, and Chiang Thong in Laos. From surveying the travel routes in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion of the 4 countries, it was found that there were5 travel routesas follows,

   Route 1:car and ferry routefrom Chiang Khong border(Thailand) - Huay Sai (Laos) - Chiang Rung (China)
   Route 2: car and ferry route from Chiang Khong (Thailand) - Huay Sai (Laos)
   Route 3: boat route from Chiang Khong (Thailand) - Huay Sai - Pak Beng - Chiang Thong (Laos)
   Route 4: car route from Mae Sai (Thailand) - Chiang Tung (Myanmar)
   Route 5: boat route from Chiang Saen (Thailand) - Chiang Rung (China)

Figure 1 *Upper Greater Mekong Subregion*

METHODOLOGY

The population used in this research were Thai and foreign tourists travelling to the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion. The population size was unknown, hence the use of sample size calculation formula for an unknown population size (Vanichbuncha, 2002) with 95% confidence interval and 5% error acceptable. This yielded the sample of 385 people, and in order to be a good representative of the population, 215 more samples were added, resulting in the total of 600 samples.

Random sampling was divided into 3 steps: (1) Purposive sampling targeted tourists in Chiang Rai in Thailand, Chiang Tung in Myanmar, Chiang Rung in China, and Chiang Thong in Laos, which connect the travel routes in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion, starting with Chiang Rai, Thailand (2) Quota sampling was used in each country in step 1with 200 tourists each in Thailand and Laos and 100 tourists each inMyanmar and China (3) Convenience sampling was used with 600 tourists who were willing to complete the questionnaire in step 2. Research instruments

were questionnaires divided into 3 parts. Part 1: expectation and perception towards sustainable creative tourism. Part 2: the intention to revisit. and Part 3: personal data. The first two parts used interval scales for the questions while the third part used nominal and ordinal scales. The result of reliability test using Cronbach's alpha coefficient demonstrated that the reliability value of expectation and perception towards sustainable creative tourism were 0.9311, 0.9587 respectively, and the intention to revisit was 0.8742.

Data Analysis

For descriptive statistics, percentage was used to analyze personal data, and mean was used to analyze expectations/perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism and the intention to revisit by determining the average scores and interpretations as follows,

Table 1 *Average Scores*

Average scores	Levels of expectation/perception/ intention to travel in the future
1.00 - 1.80	Lowest
1.81 - 2.60	Low
2.61 - 3.40	Moderate
3.41 - 4.20	High
4.21 - 5.00	Highest

For inferential statistics, Paired-sample *t*-test was used to compare expectations and perceptions of tourists towards sustainable creative tourism. Multiple regression was used to study perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism influencing the intention to revisit, and Independent *t*-test was used to study perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism categorized by country.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Result analysis was divided into 2 parts as follows, Part 1: descriptive statistics analysis

Personal data analysis revealed that most tourists travelling to the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion were female (57.90%), aged over 35 (38.40%), single (65.20%) with an educational level of a Bachelor's degree or higher (66.80%), worked as entrepreneurs (39.80%), had a monthly household income lower than 13,499 baht (37.80%) of a Thai nationality (41.10%).
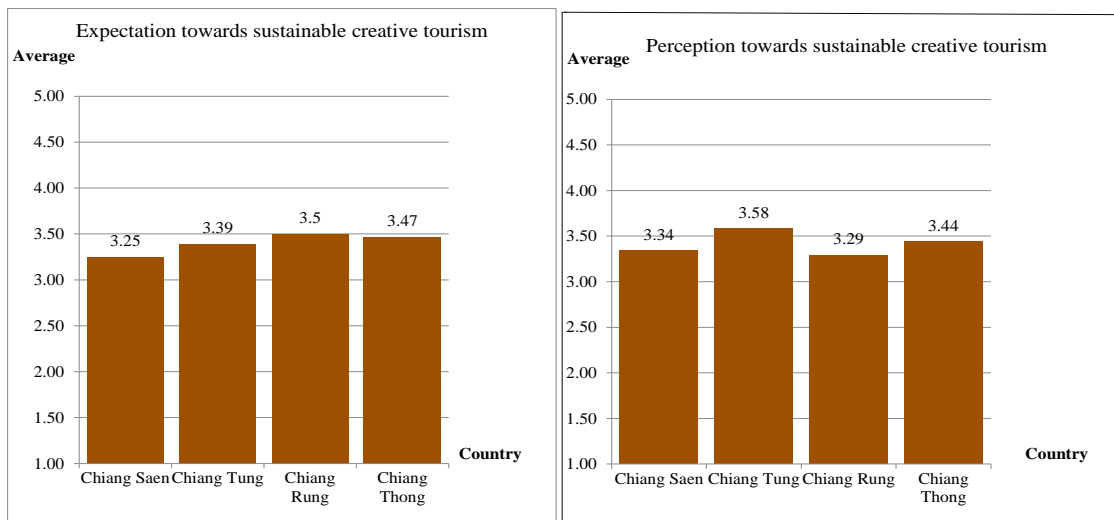

Figure 2 *Average Expectation and Perception Towards Sustainable Creative Tourism*

From the analysis of the overall expectations towards sustainable creative tourism, it was found that tourists had expectations towards creative tourism at a moderate level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.38). The country whose tourists were found to have

the highest expectations towards sustainable creative tourism at a moderate level was China (Chiang Rung) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50) followed by Laos (Chiang Thong) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.47), Myanmar (Chiang Tung) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.39), and Thailand (Chiang Saen) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.25) as shown in the Figure 2.

From the analysis of the overall perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism, it was found that tourists had perceptions towards creative tourism at a high level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.43). When considering each country, the country whose tourists were found to have the highest perception towards sustainable creative tourism at a high level was Laos (Chiang Thong) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.58) followed by Myanmar ($\bar{x}$ = 3.34), and China (Chiang Rung) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29) as shown in the Figure 2.

For the intention to revisit each route, it was found that tourists had the intention to revisit all routes at a high level. The highest level belonged to Route 5: boat route from Chiang Saen (Thailand) - Chiang Rung (China) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.76), followed by Route 3: boat route from Chiang Khong (Thailand) - Huay Sai - Pak Beng - Chiang Thong (Laos) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.73), Route 1: boat and ferry route from Chiang Khong (Thailand) - Huay Sai (Laos) - Chiang Rung (China) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.73), Route 2: car and ferry route from Chiang Khong (Thailand) - Huay Sai (Laos) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.73), and Route 4: car route from Mae Sai (Thailand) - Chiang Tung (Myanmar).

The analysis of tourists' intention to revisit each country revealed that tourists had the overall intention to revisit at a high level (= 3.73). The country whose tourists were found to have the highest intention to revisit was Thailand (Chiang Saen) ($\bar{x}$ = 4.01) followed by Myanmar (Chiang Tung) ($\bar{x}$ = 4.00) and China (Chiang Rung) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.92), while Laos (Chiang Thong) was at a moderate level ($\bar{x}$ = 3.24).

Part 2: hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis 1: Tourists have different expectations and perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism in the routes of the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion.

Table 2 *Comparisons of the Overall Expectations and Perceptions Towards Sustainable Creative Tourism in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion*

Sustainable Creative Tourism		Overview of the 4 Countries								
	n	Expectation		Perception		t	df	Sig.	E-P	Interpretation
		$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D					
Economic creativity	610	3.17	0.687	3.24	0.665	-2.405*	609	0.016	-0.07	Very satisfied
Environmental creativity	609	3.42	0.761	3.39	0.745	0.804	608	0.421		
Ecological tourism	608	3.13	0.870	3.11	0.862	0.709	607	0.479		
Cultural heritage reservation	610	3.38	0.701	3.41	0.690	-1.237	609	0.217		
Authenticity	609	3.40	0.803	3.33	0.788	1.997*	608	0.046	0.07	Dissatisfied
Tourism innovation	610	3.29	0.747	3.35	0.781	-1.941	609	0.053		
Human interaction	610	3.68	0.817	3.85	0.865	-5.504**	609	0.000	-0.17	Very satisfied
Cultural travel and tourism	610	3.56	0.788	3.68	0.740	-4.601**	609	0.000	-0.12	Very satisfied
Creative tourism landscape	609	3.49	0.737	3.56	0.726	-2.684**	608	0.007	-0.07	Very satisfied
Quality of border tourism	605	3.28	0.774	3.28	0.801	0.085	604	0.932		
Total	610	3.38	0.576	3.42	0.543	-1.908	609	0.057		

**Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 2, when comparing expectations and perceptions, it was found that tourists were satisfied with sustainable creative tourism in the aspect of human interaction at the highest level, followed by the aspects of cultural travel and tourism, creative tourism landscape, and economic creativity, while they were dissatisfied with the aspect of authenticity with statistical significance.

Hypothesis 2: Perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism influence the intention to revisit in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion.

Table 3 *Multiple Regression Analysis of Perceptions Towards Sustainable Creative Tourism Influencing the Overall Intention to Revisit in the Greater Mekong Subregion Routes*

Perception Towards Sustainable Creative Tourism	Overall Intention to Travel in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion Routes											
	Route1 (y1)		Route 2 (y2)		Route 3 (y3)		Route 4 (y4)		Route 5 (y5)		Overall (y)	
	β	Sig.	β	Sig	β	Sig	β	Sig	β	Sig	β	Sig
Economic creativity(x1)							-0.023	0.666	-0.028	0.612	-0.173	0.863
Environmental creativity (x2)							-0.154**	0.007	-0.151**	0.009	-2.443*	0.015
Ecological tourism (x3)							0.097	0.067	0.214**	0.000	2.872**	0.004
Cultural heritage reservation (x4)							0.140*	0.022	-0.025	0.682	0.606	0.544
Authenticity (x5)							-0.031	0.560	0.044	0.407	0.04	0.968
Tourism innovation(x6)							0.106*	0.040	0.053	0.305	0.625	0.532
Human interaction (x7)							-0.036	0.478	0.001	0.982	-0.776	0.438
Cultural travel and tourism (x8)							-0.060	0.367	0.015	0.828	1.045	0.297
Creative tourism landscape (x9)							-0.053	0.402	-0.005	0.942	-0.190	0.849
Quality of border tourism (x10)							0.132**	0.007	-0.015	0.763	1.288	0.198
F	1.833		1.816		1.760		3.362**		2.260**		2.118*	
Sig.	0.052		0.055		0.065		0.000		0.014		0.021	
Adj. R^2	0.014		0.014		0.013		0.156		0.138		0.019	

**Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level

Remark: Route 1 car and ferry route from Chiang Khong border (Thailand) - Huay Sai (Laos) - Chiang Rung (China)

Route 2: car and ferry route from Chiang Khong (Thailand) - Huay Sai (Laos)

Route 3: boat route from Chiang Khong (Thailand) - Huay Sai - Pak Beng - Chiang Thong (Laos)

Route 4: car route from Mae Sai (Thailand) - Chiang Tung (Myanmar)

Route 5: boat route from Chiang Saen (Thailand) - Chiang Rung (China)

From Table 3, it was found that perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism influenced the overall intention to revisit in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion and particularly in 2 routes as shown in Table 3, which can be described as follows,

For the perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism, it was found that ecological tourism (x3) had a positive effect, while environmental creativity (x2) had a negative effect. These variables affected the overall intention to travel in the future (y) at 11.9% with statistical significance.

The perception towards sustainable creative tourism that positively affected the intention to travel in the Greater Mekong Subregion (y4) at the highest level was the aspect of cultural heritage reservation (x4), followed by the aspects of quality of border tourism (x10) and tourism innovation (x6), while the aspect of environmental creativity (x2) had a negative effect. These variables had an effect at 15.6% with statistical significance.

The perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism in the aspect of ecological tourism (x3) had a positive effect on the intention to travel in the Greater Mekong Subregion (y5), while the aspect of environmental creativity (x2) had a negative effect, and these variables had an effect at 13.8% with statistical significance.

However, the perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism did not affect the intention to travel in the Greater Mekong Subregion on Route 1 (y1), Route 2 (y2), and Route 3 (y3).

Hypothesis 3: Tourists travelling in different countries have different perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism.

From Table 4, it was found that tourists travelling in different countries, namely, Thailand, Myanmar, China, and Laos, had different overall perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism with statistical significance. Tourists in Myanmar had higher perceptions than those in Thailand, China, and Laos in almost every aspect such as the aspects of environmental creativity, cultural heritage reservation, authenticity, tourism innovation, human interaction, cultural travel and tourism, creative tourism landscape, and quality of border tourism.

Table 4 *Tourists' Perceptions Towards Sustainable Creative Tourism, Categorized by Country*

Perceptions Towards Sustainable Creative Tourism	Average				Levene Statistic	Sig.	F-Ratio	Brown-Forsythe	Sig.
	Chiang Saen Thailand	Chiang Tung Myanmar	Chiang Rung China	Chiang Thong Laos					
1. Economic creativity	3.25	3.30	3.14	3.21	2.12	0.10	1.32	-	0.27
2. Environmental creativity	3.33	3.55	3.21	3.42	1.85	0.14	5.58**	-	0.01
3. Ecological tourism	3.12	3.10	3.03	3.23	8.95**	0.00	-	0.91	0.44
4. Cultural heritage reservation	3.32	3.52	3.35	3.46	1.36	0.26	3.12*	-	0.03
5. Authenticity	3.16	3.52	3.15	3.49	2.09	0.10	10.55**	-	0.00
6. Tourism innovation	3.34	3.43	3.30	3.28	2.07	0.10	1.12	-	0.34
7. Human interaction	3.68	4.20	3.48	3.88	1.14	0.33	21.70**	-	0.00
8. Cultural travel and tourism	3.48	4.01	3.59	3.57	0.84	0.47	21.49**	-	0.00
9. Creative tourism landscape	3.37	3.83	3.53	3.49	1.40	0.24	15.17**	-	0.00
10. Quality of border tourism	3.30	3.33	3.06	3.37	4.17**	0.01	-	2.93*	0.03
Total	3.34	3.58	3.29	3.44	1.02	0.39	9.83**	-	0.00

**Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level

CONCLUSION

The research results revealed that tourists had the highest level of intention to revisit in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion using Route 5, which was the boat route from Chiang Saen (Thailand) to Chiang Rung (China) because the boat trip from Chiang Saen in Thailand to Chiang Rung inXishuangbanna takes approximately 2 days and offers an

overnight stay, which allows tourists to experience the natural environments along the Mekong River and to see the way of life of people, both Thais and Chinese, living along the river. In addition, the tourists who travelled along this route were those who liked adventures.

By comparing expectations and perceptions, it was found that that tourists were most satisfied with sustainable creative tourism in the aspect of human interaction, followed by cultural travel and tourism, creative tourism landscape, and economic creativity, while they were dissatisfied with the aspect of authenticity with statistical significance. This was because most tourists did not have expectations on travelling in the four countries as most of them came because they were invited by friends or heard about the destinations from acquaintances. However, once they had arrived in the four countries, they realized that it was better than they expected, especially in the aspect of human interaction, different cultures and lifestyles in each country, as well as natural scenery, which attracted tourists to visit. This was consistent with the idea by Chen and Chen (2010) who claimed that tourist satisfaction is a comparison between the expectation before travel and the experience after travel. Moreover, the results were also consistent with the idea by Kotler and Keller (2006) about the behavior after a purchase or service. That is, when tourists use a tour service or product, they will evaluate that certain product or service. If they are satisfied, they will come back for the service and positively inform others. It was also consistent with the idea by Oliver and Swan (1989) who said that when tourists compare their experience and their expectations and feel positive, it will lead to satisfaction and the tendency to revisit the place.

The perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism influenced the intention to revisit in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion. It was found that the overall perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism in the aspect of ecological tourism positively affected the overall intention to travel. Also, the perceptions towards tourism in the aspects of cultural heritage reservation, quality of border tourism, and tourism innovation affected the intention to travel on Route 4, which was the car route from Mae Sai (Thailand) to Chiang Tung (Myanmar). In addition, the perceptions towards tourism in the aspect of ecological tourism influenced the intention to revisit on Route 5, which was the boat route from Chiang Saen (Thailand) to Chiang Rung (China) with statistical significance.This was due to the fact that the travel routes to the 4 countries were accompanied by natural environments such as mountains and the Mekong River. Although the natural environments in some destinations have been destroyed, some places could still maintain their natural abundance or practice reforestation. The boat route offers beautiful scenery of Thailand and China along the river, as well as the way of life of Thais and Chinese living along the Mekong River. Moreover, if leaving from the Golden Triangle in Thailand, tourists can be connected to the routes to Myanmar and Laos, while the car route from Mae Sai in Thailand to Chiang Tung offers merchandises at the border for tourists to purchase as well as the cultures and people's ways of life in the two countries for them to experience. Therefore, these factors influenced tourists' intention to revisit on these routes, which was consistent with the idea by Wilson and Beard (2003) who explained that when tourists are stimulated both externally and internally through senses, they will connect the stimuli with various factors which influence their interpretation. If they accept the information, there will be a response in terms of behavior, perception, and feeling. The responses will influence perception and future interpretation. It was also consistent with the idea by Zillifro (2004) who claimed that the factors influencing the intention to revisit in the future are satisfaction towards tourist attractions or itinerary programs. Therefore, tour businesses should attempt to use different strategies to initiate the intention to reuse the service.

Tourists had the highest perceptions towards sustainable creative tourism in Myanmar, followed by Laos, Thailand, and China with statistical significance as Chiang Tung of Myanmar still maintained its culture and traditional ways of life, the locals were friendly to tourists, while the natural environments were still intact and offered unseen scenery. Therefore, tourists saw Myanmar as a country with higher creative tourism than the other countries. Moreover, if Myanmar opened their border connecting China, where authentic cultures are still reserved, it will have more advantages in terms of competition over the other 3 countries.This was consistent with the idea by Strydom, Jooste, and Cant (2000) who reported that perception is a process in organizing and interpreting information or stimuli that affect the 5 senses. Similarly, Solomon (2014) stated that tourist perception is a process that each individual selects, organizes, and interprets the stimuli using the 5 senses, which brings about exposure, intention to revisit, and interpretation of tourism and tourist destinations with satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research results suggested as follows,

The public sector and tourism-related entrepreneurs in the 4 countries, namely, Thailand, Myanmar, China, and Laos

should collaborate in planning promotional strategies for sustainable creative tourism in the Upper Greater Mekong Subregion by combining destinations and emphasizing on sustainable creative tourism in this region in the aspects of (1) cultural heritage reservation by engaging tourists in learning and conserving the cultures (2) environmental tourism by maintaining natural environments (3) authenticity by maintaining the traditional ways of life, residence, and clothing (4) human interaction between tourists and the localsbyencouraging the locals to be hospitable and friendly towards tourists and willing to give suggestions or help the tourists (5) creative tourism landscape by maintainingbeautiful scenery and attractions,and (6) promotingcross-border trade. Moreover, the routes should be promoted as cultural tourism routes along the Greater Mekong Subregion, which allow tourist to travel by car or boat.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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