



CONCEPTUAL FACTOR OF MOTIVATION INFLUENCING THE LOYALTY OF GAY TOURISTS IN THAILAND

Tantikorn Kotchare Jinnapas Pathumporn and Ranee Esichaikul

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the Understanding Motivation of International Gay Travel to visit Thailand. This study is quality research by methods of literature review and interviews with relevant agencies. This results in the study that the Motivation including; 1) Relaxation 2) Novelty 3) Knowledge 4) Escape 5) Socialization 6) Gay Social Life and Sex; Gay culture. That affect the loyalty of tourists, including 1) Intention to Re-visit 2) Word-of-Mouth

Keywords: *Motivation, Loyalty, Gay*

Introduction

Thailand is a country with a large population of LGBT. According to LGBT Capital, the number is 4 million, and the estimated cost of purchasing goods and services is 17 USD billion per year. It is estimated that there is 4.6 USD million revenue share from LGBT foreign tourists, which is the 2nd in Asia after China (LGBT Capital, 2015).

Confidence in investing in tourism among LGBT groups both in the country and abroad is important in terms of financial benefits because it is considered the groups with high-income. Many research studies show that these group of people travel frequently (LGBT Capital, 2015).

Thailand, especially Silom area, has become a global gay landmark. It is the product and response to American culture under the Cold War context which has been transformed into an entertainment business in the same way as it is in Pattaya.

Tourism Authority of Thailand has launched "Go Thai. Be Free" Campaign which is an advertisement inviting LGBT tourists to visit Thailand, as it is a "gay friendly" country. The New York Times criticized the advertisement as a very smart, innovative and challenging strategy for Asia which is still not as open about sexual rights as the west. This campaign is the first campaign to support same-sex rights in Asia organized by government agencies, and most importantly Thailand is a leader among neighboring countries in ASEAN which is fully open about LGBT, unlike Singapore, Myanmar and Malaysia where homosexuals are not accepted in society. The tourist attractions recommended by Tourism Authority of Thailand include: 1. Bangkok 2. Phuket 3. Pattaya 4. Koh Samui 5. Chiang Mai 6. Krabi (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2018).

The LGBT group of male tourists travel 4 times a year and the female tourists travel 3 times a year on average. This group of tourists travel more frequently than general tourists. If marketing is targeted



precisely, it can generate a large amount of money in the tourism industry (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2018).

According to the above reasons, the researcher is therefore interested in studying the conceptual framework of motivation factors that affect the loyalty of foreign gay tourists who travel to Thailand because gay people are one of the larger numbers in the LGBT groups and they have a greater frequency of traveling per year.

Research Objectives

To study the conceptual framework of motivation factors that affect the loyalty of foreign gay tourists who travel to Thailand

Literature Review

Motivation

Motivation means something of an individual that results in an action or movement or behavior in a targeted manner (Walters, 1978). In other words, motivation is the reason for action.

Motivation refers to an internal state of power causing the body to move in the targeted directions which are often targets in the environment (Loudon & Bitta, 1988).

1) Types of Motivation: It can be divided into many types; however, there are 3 major types which are as follows:

1.1 Physiological Motives are the power that causes individuals to behave for survival and balanced condition.

1.2 Social Motives are derived from learning.

1.3 Personal Motives include what individuals aspire to do or be based on their personal needs.

2) Types of Motivation in Tourism

2.1 Swarbrooke and Homer (1999) proposed types of motivation in tourism which are divided in 5 types as follows:

2.1.1 Personal motives including visiting friends, visiting relatives and finding new friends

2.1.2 Emotional motives including needs for excitement, challenges, fun, reminiscence, etc.

2.1.3 Cultural motives including finding experiences from new cultures, learning different cultures, etc.

2.1.4 Motives for self-development including finding knowledge and increasing capabilities, etc.

2.1.5 Status motives including being outstanding, modern, etc.

2.2 Beard and Ragheb (1983) divided motivation in tourism in 4 types based on Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as follows:

2.2.1 Motivation for wanting to know oneself is the motivation to create learning behaviors like learning, searching and using ideas

2.2.2 Motives for social needs motivates individuals to to travel mainly for social reasons.

2.2.3 Motives for desire for success motivates individuals to travel for adventurous activities or activities that make ones feel that they capable of achieving their goals.

2.2.4 Motives for seclusion motivates individuals to travel to escape from society or everyday life for recreational reasons or liberating oneself from social life.

2) Push-Pull Theory

Watcharaporn (2008) stated that motivation or motives in tourism reflect tourists’ needs which can be classified in 2 types as follows:

1. Pull Factor refers to external factors that promote or entice people to travel and include economic factors, geographic factors, social and cultural factors, political factors, technological factors and media factors.

2. Push Factor refers to feelings and needs that occur within a person and motivates people to travel. Most tourists want to de-stress, want means of transportation and expect service providers to greet or give importance. Some tourists travel to see, hear and try new things in different tourist attractions, while some tourists travel and explore different places on their own.

According to relevant literature, tourism motivation can be summarized according to Table 1 as follows:

Table 1 Factor Factor

Factor	Items	Literature Supports
Motivation	1. Relaxation	Yoo In Young et al. (2015); Yoon Yooshik & Uysal (2005); Jang (Shawn) SooCheong et al. (2009); Ritchie et al. (2010); Wu Mao-Ying & Pearce (2014); Zhang Yahua & Peng Yiqian (2014); Xu Jing & Chan Shukman (2016); Hsu Cathy H. C. et al. (2010); Naidoo et al. (2015); Park Duk-Byeong & Yoon Yoo-Shik (2009); Mohammad & Som (2010); Lee Tsung Hung & Hsu Fung Yu (2013); Holcomb & Luongo (1996); Clift & Forrest (1999); Ballegaard & Chor (2009); Weeden et al. (2016).
	2. Novelty	Yoo In Young et al. (2015); Hritz et al. (2014); Pearce & Lee Uk-Il (2005); Jang (Shawn) SooCheong et al. (2009); Wu Mao-Ying & Pearce (2014); Chen Li-Ju & Chen Wei-Peng (2015); Caber & Tahir (2016); Hsu

Factor	Items	Literature Supports
		Cathy H. C. et al. (2010); Naidoo et al. (2015); Park Duk-Byeong & Yoon Yoo-Shik (2009)
	3. Knowledge	Kim Samuel Seongseop et al. (2003); Yoon Yooshik & Uysal (2005); Pearce & Lee Uk-Il (2005); Jang (Shawn) SooCheong et al. (2009); Ritchie et al. (2010); Wu Mao-Ying & Pearce (2014), Zhang Yahua & Peng Yiqian (2014); Xu Jing & Chan Shukman (2016); Hsu Cathy H. C. et al. (2010); Naidoo (2015); Park Duk-Byeong & Yoon Yoo-Shik (2009); Mohammad & Som (2010); Lee Tsung Hung & Hsu Fung Yu (2013)
	4. Escape	Kim Samuel Seongseop et al. (2003); Yoon Yooshik & Uysal (2005); Pearce & Lee Uk-Il (2005); Jang (Shawn) SooCheong et al. (2009); Wu Mao-Ying & Pearce (2014); Xu Jing & Chan Shukman (2016); Mohammad & Som (2010); Holcomb & Luongo (1996); Hughes (1997); Ballegaard & Chor (2009), Köllen & Lazar (2012); Adams et al. (2014); Weeden et al. (2016); Vorobjovas – Pinta & Hardy (2016)
	5. Socialization	Hughes (1997); Clift & Forrest (1999); Köllen & Lazar (2012); Adams et al. (2014).
	6. Gay Social Life and Sex; Gay culture	Hughes (1997); Köllen & Lazar (2012); Adams et al. (2014); Weeden et al. (2016)

Loyalty

Tourist loyalty is divided into 4 levels: cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty and action loyalty. However, in practice it is difficult to measure action loyalty. Therefore, it is preferable to measure such loyalty from revisits or re recommendations for other tourists. In general, tourist loyalty is evaluated using 3 main methods: behavioral study, attitude study and combined methods (Akarapong, 2010).

Loyalty index is calculated using the principles used in 2012 to assess the satisfaction and impression on a country that results in recommendation or revisit. Factors that encourage tourists to revisit a country includes being a tourist destination that is value for money, being a country that is colorful; fun; free; easy to travel and friendly, and being a tourist attraction that is always fresh. Thailand has strengths in almost every area, except being a tourist attraction that is always fresh. Therefore, this area should be improved to create excitement and build loyalty for tourists so that they will return to Thailand (Jira Buathong, 2014)



According to literature review on loyalty on tourist destinations, 2 factors that affect the behavior of tourists after traveling are word-of-mouth and intention to revisit.

Research Methodology

In this research, Literature review is conducted on research of relevant government agencies, information from internet sources, international research bases such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Department of Tourism Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Division of Academic, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Office of Tourism Development of Thailand, Office of Academic Resources, Khonkaen University and international research in the databases from Tourism Management, Annals of Travel research, Journal of Travel research, Journal of Service Management, Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management.

Conclusion and Discussion

According to the literature review (Table 1) and the opinions of the interviewees, it shows tourism motivation factors as shown in Table 2 and loyalty factors as shown in Table 3.

Table 2 Factor and items

Factor	Items
1) Relaxation	RL 1 To relax
	RL 2 To do nothing
	RL 3 To slow down
	RL 4 To experience peace and tranquility
	RL 5 To enjoy a happy time with family
	RL 6 To enjoy a happy time with friends who travel together
	RL 7 To be refreshed
	RL 8 To be physically active
	RL 9 To experience some sunshine
2) Novelty	NV 1 To have new experiences
	NV 2 To have some fun
	NV 3 To experience solitude
	NV 4 To discover a different life style
	NV 5 To discover a different culture
	NV 6 To indulge in luxury
3) Knowledge	KL 1 To try new food

Factor	Items
	KL 2 To develop my knowledge of the area
	KL 3 To meet the locals
	KL 4 To visit new places
	KL 5 To increase my knowledge and experience
4) Escape	EC 1 To escape from the everyday
	EC 2 To get away from the demands of home
	EC 3 To get away from everyday psychological stress/pressure
	EC 4 To be away from my daily routine
	EC 5 To escape the usual demands of life
	EC 6 To escape everyday physical stressors/pressures
5) Socialization	SC 1 To visit the places my family came from
	SC 2 To spend time with family and friends
	SC 3 To have opportunities to socialize with other LGBT people
6) Gay Social Life and Sex; Gay culture	GLS 1 To have opportunities for sex
	GLS 2 To look for sex
	GLS 3 To relate to others and remain anonymous

Table 3 Loyalty Factor

Factor	Items
1. Intention to Re-visit	IR 1 I look forward to visiting Thailand again.
	IR 2 I will actively seek further information about Thailand in order to visit the country again.
	IR 3 Among my possible future destinations, I would consider visiting Thailand once again.
	IR 4 It is very likely that I will visit Thailand.
	IR 5 I will definitely visit Thailand again.
	IR 6 I will strongly recommend people to visit Thailand.
2. Word-of-Mouth	WM 1 I will recommend this destination to others.
	WM 2 I intend to visit this destination again in the future.
	WM 3 I will say positive things this destination to other people.

According to Tables 2-3, factors and variables of the framework showing the relapse between the factors and variables affect other factors. According to empirical data collected from the sample group and compared earlier, this conceptual model and structure are appropriate.

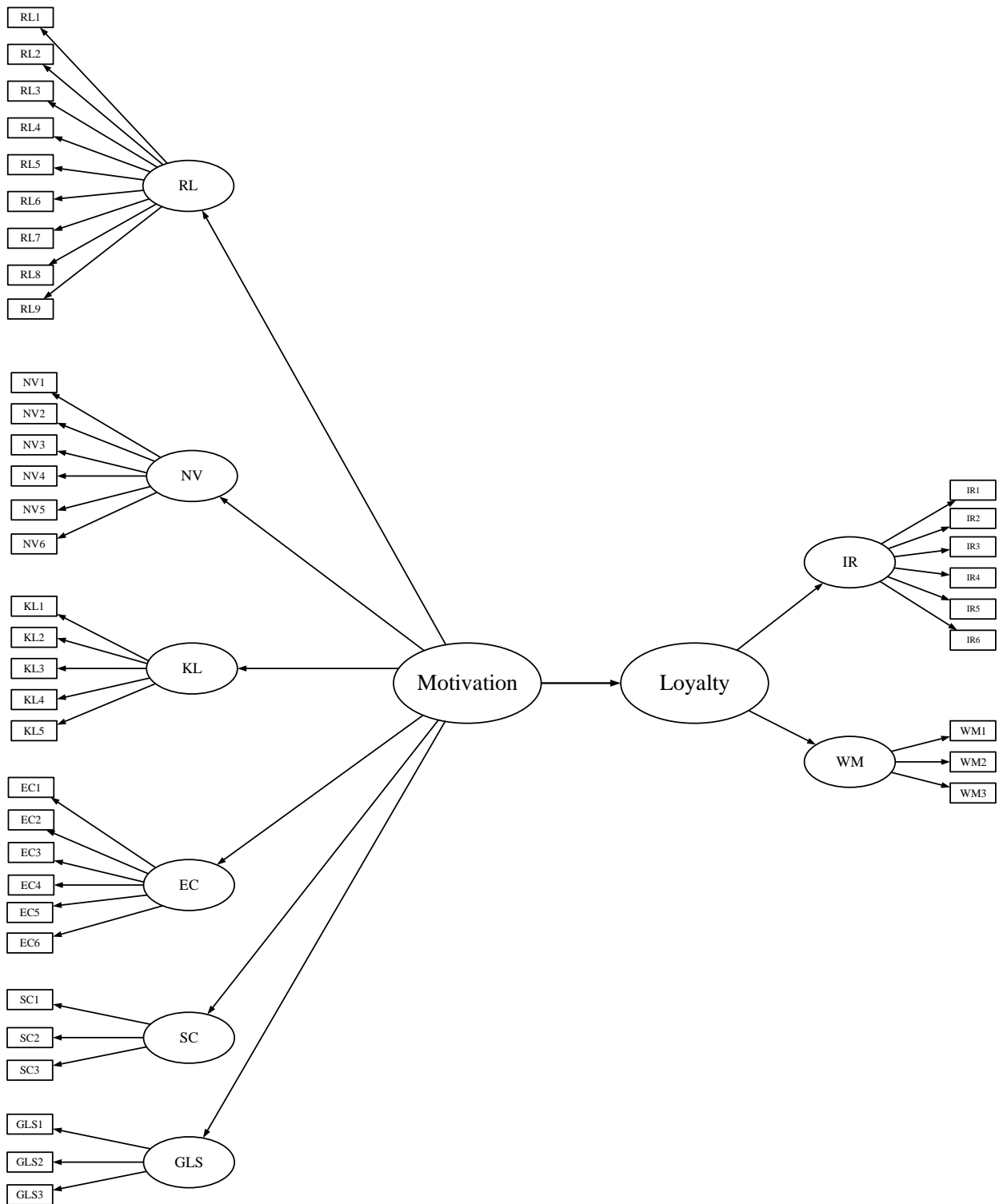


Figure 1: Details about Research Framework



According to the literature review (Table 1) and the opinions of the interviewees, it shows tourism motivation factors as shown in Table 2 and loyalty factors as shown in Table 3. This research presents the conceptual framework of motivation factors affecting the loyalty of foreign gay tourists visiting Thailand.

Motivation factors and variables are as follows: Loyalty factors and variables are as follows:

Suggestions

The conceptual framework of motivation factors affecting the loyalty of foreign gay tourists visiting Thailand is a study based on an in-depth interview with government agencies and private agencies related to tourism. According to the literature reviews, research of relevant government agencies, and information from internet sources from international research bases, the results can be adapted for the study of LGBT tourists and other groups. It can be used to plan tourism development for foreign gay tourists.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude for the research support from 2019 National Research Council. I would like to thank the Graduate School, Khon Kaen University and the Faculty of Business Administration and Accounting, Khon Kaen University for providing educational opportunities in conducting this research.

References

- Adams, D., Kong, Younsuk, Schmalz, D. D., & Backman, S. (2014). *Understanding the Motivations to Attend the Blue Ridge Gay Pride Festival in Asheville, North Carolina*. (Master of Science Parks, Clemson University).
- Ballegaard, N., & Chor, J. (2009). *Gay and lesbian tourism Travel Motivations, Destination Choices and Holiday Experiences of Gays and Lesbians*. (Master of Business, University of Southern Denmark).
- Mohammad, B. A. M. A-H., & Som, A. P. M. (2010). An Analysis of Push and Pull Travel Motivations of Foreign Tourists to Jordan. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 5(12), 41-50.
- Beard, J. G., & Ragheb, M. G. (1983). Measuring Leisure Motivation. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 15(3), 219-228.
- Caber, M., & Albayrak, T. (2016). Push or pull? Identifying rock climbing tourists' motivations. *Tourism Management*, 55(C), 74-84.
- Hsu, Cathy H. C., Cai, Liping A., & Li, Mimi. (2010). Expectation, Motivation, and Attitude: A Tourist Behavioral Model. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(3), 282-296.
- Weeden, C., Lester, J. A., & Jarvis, N. (2016). Lesbians and Gay Men's Vacation Motivations, Perceptions, and Constraints: A Study of Cruise Vacation Choice. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 63(8), 1068-1085.



- Clift, S., & Forrest S. P. (1999). Gay men and tourism: destinations and holiday motivations. *Tourism Management, 20*(5), 615-625.
- Park, Duk-Byeong, & Yoon, Yoo-Shik. (2009). Segmentation by motivation in rural tourism: A Korean case study. *Tourism Management, 30*(1), 99-108.
- Holcomb, B., & Luongo, M. (1996). Gay Tourism in the United States. *Annals of Tourism Research, 23*(3), 711-713.
- Hritz, N. M., Sidman, C. L., & D'Abundo, M. (2014). Segmenting the College Educated Generation Y Health and Wellness Traveler. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 31*, 132-145.
- Hughes, H. (1997). Holidays and homosexual identity. *Tourism Management, 18*(1), 3-7.
- Yoo, In Young, Lee, Timothy Jeonglyeol, & Lee, Choong-Ki. (2015). Effect of Health and Wellness Values on Festival Visit Motivation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 20*(2), 152-170.
- Xu, Jing, & Chan, Shukman. (2016). A new nature-based tourism motivation model: Testing the moderating effects of the push motivation. *Tourism Management Perspectives, 18*, 107-110.
- Köllen, T., & Lazar, S. (2012). Gay Tourism in Budapest: An Exploratory Study on Gay Tourists' Motivational Patterns for Traveling to Budapest. *American Journal of Tourism Management, 1*(3), 64-68.
- LGBT Capital. (2015). *LGBT MARKET STATISTICS*. Retrieved from <http://www.lgbt-capital.com>
- Chen, Li-Ju, & Chen, Wei-Peng. (2015). Push pull factors in international birders' travel. *Tourism Management, 48*, 416-425.
- Loudon, D. L., & Bitta, D. A. J. (1988). *Consumer Behavior: Concept and Applications* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Wu, Mao-Ying, & Pearce, P. L. (2014). Chinese recreational vehicle users in Australia: A netnographic study of tourist motivation. *Tourism Management, 43*, 22-35.
- Mutanga, C. N., Vengesayi, S., Chikuta, O., Muboko, N., & Gandiwa, E. (2017). Travel motivation and tourist satisfaction with wildlife tourism experiences in Gonarezhou and Matusadona National Parks, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, 20*, 1-18.
- Vorobjovas – Pinta, O., & Hardy, A. (2016). The Evolution of Gay Travel Research. *International Journal of Tourism Research, 18*(4), 409-416.
- Naidoo, P., Ramseook-Munhurrun, P., Seebaluck, N. V., & Janvier S. (2015). Investigating the motivation of baby boomers for adventure tourism. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 175*, 244-251.
- Pearce, L. P., & Lee, Uk-Il. (2005). Developing the Travel Career Approach to Tourist Motivation. *Journal of Travel Research, 43*(3), 226-237.
- Ritchie, B. W., Tkaczynski, A., & Faulks, P. (2010). Understanding the Motivation and Travel Behavior of Cycle Tourists Using Involvement Profiles. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 27*(4), 409-425.
- Kim, Samuel Seongseop, Lee, Choong-Ki & Klenosky, D. B. (2003). The influence of push and pull factors at Korean national parks. *Tourism Management, 24*(2), 169-180.



- Jang, (Shawn) SooCheong, Billy, B., Hu, Clark, & Wu, Chi-Mei Emily. (2009). Affect, travel motivation, and travel intention a senior market. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 33(1), 51-73.
- Swarbrooke, J., & Horner, S. (1999). *Consumer behavior in tourism*. Burlington, MA: Butterworth Heinemann.
- Lee, Tsung Hung, & Hsu, Fung Yu. (2013). Examining How Attending Motivation and Satisfaction Affects the Loyalty for Attendees at Aboriginal Festivals. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 15(1), 18-34.
- Walters. (1978). *Adaptive Management of Renewable Resources*. New York: Mc Graw - Hill.
- Zhang, Yahua, & Peng, Yiqian. (2014). Understanding travel motivations of Chinese tourists visiting Cairns, Australia. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 21, 44-53.
- Yoon, Yooshik, & Uysal, M. (2005). An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model. *Tourism Management*, 26, 45-56.
- จิรา บัวทอง. (2557). Destination Thailand ดัชนีชี้วัดของประเทศไทยในฐานะจุดหมายปลายทางของนักท่องเที่ยว. *TAT Tourism Journal*, 4, 16-25.
- วัชรภรณ์ ระยับศรี. (2551). พฤติกรรมการท่องเที่ยวเชิงพุทธของนักท่องเที่ยวชาวไทยและชาวต่างชาติที่มาเที่ยววัดในบริเวณเกาะรัตนโกสินทร์ (ปริญญาานิพนธ์วิทยาศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต, มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ).
- อัครพงศ์ อ้นทอง. (2553). ภาพลักษณ์และพฤติกรรมนักท่องเที่ยวต่างชาติภายใต้สถานการณ์วิกฤตการณ์การเมืองไทย. *วารสารเศรษฐศาสตร์ธรรมศาสตร์*, 28, 55-98.