

# A Comparative Study of International Tourists' Safety Needs and Thai Tourist Polices' Perception towards International Tourists' Safety Needs

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**Abstract**—While service quality is acceptably most valued in the tourism industry, the issue of safety and security plays a key role in sustaining the industry success. Such an issue has been part of Thailand's tourism development and promotion for several years. Evidently, the Tourist Police Department was set up for this purpose. Its main responsibility is to deal with international tourists' safety and confidence in travelling within Thai territory. However, to strengthen the tourism safety of the country, it is important to better understand international tourists' safety concerns about Thailand. This article seeks to compare international tourists' safety needs and Thai tourist polices' perception towards the tourists' safety concern to determine what measure should be taken to assure the tourist of Thailand's secure environment. Through the employment of quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches, the tourism safety need of international tourists from Europe, North America and Asia was excavated, how Thai tourist polices and local polices perceived the international tourist's safety concern was investigated, and opinion and experiences about how the police deal with international tourists' problems in eight touristic areas were also explored. A comparative result reveals a certain degrees of differences in international tourists' safety needs and Thai polices' perception towards their needs. The tourism safety prevention and protection measure and practice are also suggested.

**Keywords**—Tourism risk, Tourism safety, Travel safety need, Travelling in Thailand

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE increasing role tourism industry having played in the growth of global economy has been apparent and recognizable worldwide. In particular, in the nation that embraced tourism industry as a major drive for its economic development. Thailand is clearly one of these nations where tourism has become not only an essential part of Thai economy, but also Thai way of life. Noticeably, tourism industry promotion and development plan has been included in the national economic and social development plan since 2002 [1]. As more and more areas of the country are being developed for tourism so as to expand the availability of destination choices for tourists, the Thai government also laid down the policies and measures to facilitate tourism industry with the emphasis on the attempt to turn service industry to the country's major revenue and to promote Thailand as a regional hub of natural and cultural tourism.

Part of the government attempt was the issue of tourism safety and security policy followed by the establishment of

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Tourist Police Department in 1991 in order to enhance international tourists' confidence to visit Thailand. This is because the perceived safety and security is significant for the tourists' decision making of their destination choices [1]. This is not surprising since it can be argued that the issue of safety and security is an important dimension underlining the development of tourism industry worldwide as suggested by several studies (such as Mawby, Pizam and Smith, Cartwright cited in Steene (2000) [2]. As Hunter-Jones argues "Although there are many reasons for a successful tourism product, such as the quality of service, a 'good time', beautiful scenery, and/or interesting encounters, all these factors require a safe and secure destination."

Thailand's concrete measure on the safety of international tourists was explicitly related to an increasing number of international tourists and hence, growing revenue on the national economy. Evidently according to the income rate, income from tourism was leaping from 196 million baht in 1960 to 1,770 million baht in 1969 and to 510,000 million baht in 2009 [3][4]. However, when comparing the average growth rate of international tourists visiting Thailand between the past decade and recent years, the rate has shrunk to less than 10 per cent [3]. This was affected mainly by internal political conflicts, which led to a series of protests, airport closings and riots in some touristic areas. These hazardous incidents have lowered the tourists' safety confidence since several countries announced a formal warning for their citizens who considered to travelling to Thailand at that time. Even though such warnings were lifted and Thai political stability has been restored, the country is still facing with the challenge of boosting international tourists' safety confidence.

In so doing, it is therefore, vital to clearly understand safety requirements and concerns of the tourist travelling to Thailand so that all stakeholders, particularly the Tourism Authority or Thailand and the tourist police department, can create strategies to meet their safety need. This research identified the international tourists' safety needs in relation to their different background (i.e. zone of origin). Furthermore, the Thai polices' perceptions towards international tourists' safety needs were explored. Then, the actual international tourists' safety need was compared to the Thai police's perception of their safety need. More precisely, this study aims to firstly, investigate international tourists' safety problems in the major touristic areas in Thailand. Secondly, it also analyses and prioritizes safety needs of international tourists who are of different zones of origin. Thirdly, it examines and prioritizes Thai tourist polices and local polices' perception towards international tourists' safety needs. Fourthly, it then compares international tourists' safety needs to Thai tourist polices and local polices' perception towards their safety needs. Finally, it synthesizes the result to offer guidelines for tackling international tourists' safety needs.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Tourism can bring various kinds of benefits to the country, especially the economic benefits coming from the tourists' expenditure in both direct and indirect tourism products. However, the rapid growth of tourism can cause many negative impacts such as social changes and problems of crime. As Warakulwit (2003) pointed a number of factors causing tourism crime. The first factor was the over numbers of tourists in one particular area made it difficult for the police to perform their task. Moreover, the nearer the tourism area to the borderline, the more complicated the police work would be. This was because such a geographic location would provide an easy escape route for criminals. Lastly, a wide economic gap between tourists and local people would to a certain extent contribute to an increase of certain types of criminal acts. [5] Apart from criminal risks, there are also several tourism risks. Jacoby and Kaplan (1972) categorized five kinds of risk which were psychological, financial, performance, physical and social risk [6] while Nyskiel (2005) divided risk into only two types; external and internal risk. External risks can be referred to natural disaster, political unrest, terrorism, etc. while the internal risks consist of illness, drug taking, abduction, etc. [7]

Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) pointed out that there were seven travel risks; equipment risk, financial risk, physical risk, psychological risk, satisfaction risk, social risk and time risk [8]. With the adaptation of literature of Sonmez and Graefe (1998); Basala and Klenosky (2001) Dimanche and Leptic (1999) [9][10][11], Reisinger and Mavondo (2006) divided risk into thirteen types, which are; crime, cultural risk, equipment risk, financial risk, health risk, physical risk, result risk, political risk, psychological risk, satisfaction risk, social risk, time risk and terrorism risk [12]. While different scholars categorised risks differently, the concept of safety needs in this research was applied from the framework of Raichel et.al (2007), who have divided tourist risk into eight types; site related physical risk, socio-psychological risk, physical harm risk, expectation risk, political difficulties, financial risk, mass risk and self-behavior risk. [13] However, the socio-psychological risk, expectation risk and mass risk were not studied. There are various factors which can affect the tourist's risk perception. From some empirical studies, it was found that those factors can be demographic factors, travel companions, destination image, travel experience and past risky behavior [9][14][15][16][17][13]. Barker, et.al. (2003) studied about safety perception of visitors of international sport competition in New Zealand and found that the visitors' safety perception depended mainly on nationality, age, accommodation choice, communication skill and numbers of travel companion. It was also found that some visitors tried to do informational search before the trip.

However, it did not help them lessen their risky behavior [18]. They seemed to rely on local polices to provide their safety and security. Tarlor and Santana (2002) compared the tourist safety of three touristic cities in Brazil with three in the U.S.A.

The result indicated that the cooperation of all stakeholders is needed in order to provide the highest safety level to the tourists[19].

In terms of tourism risk and safety management, APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) International Center for Sustainable Tourism (AICST) (2006) offered tourism risk management and announced that with the purpose of preventing the tourism risk, two main activities, The communication and consulting activities should be performed internally and externally by all decision makers and stakeholders. Moreover, the need analysis survey should be conducted among all stakeholders in order to discover different opinions and understand the overall risks so that a proper guideline for tourism risk prevention can be created. Importantly, these activities will create the stakeholder's sense of belonging and, in effect, a willingness to coordinate. After this step, the examination and revision should be carried out in order to improve risk management procedures. Notably, this process should be done continuously and frequently because of the fact that all risks are unstable and diverse [20]

## III. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The researchers employed a mixed method research approach using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach was conducted for the purpose of gathering data about international tourists' safety needs as well as investigating Thai tourist polices and local polices' perception towards international tourists' safety needs. In terms of the data collection techniques, two set of questionnaires were constructed. The first one was distributed to 434 international tourists (who were of different zones of origin) at the Suvarnabhumi airport. The questionnaire is composed of 4 parts; demographic data, travel behavior, travel information search and safety needs (which are divided into 5 parts, site-related physical safety need, physical safety need, political safety need, financial safety need and self-behavior safety need). The second set of questionnaire was self-administered which was disseminated to 389 Thai tourist polices and local polices who have been working in eight major touristic cities (Bangkok, Phuket, Patthya, Nakorn Ratchsrima, Chiangmai, Kanchanaburi, Suratthanee, and Had Yai). The questionnaire is composed of 4 parts which are; demographic data, perception towards international tourists' safety needs in 5 areas (site-related physical safety need, physical safety need, political safety need, financial safety need, and self-behavior safety need). The quantitative data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentage, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t-test, f-test and Least Significant Difference (LSD)). Then, the findings from these two sets of questionnaire were descriptively compared.

The qualitative approach using an in-depth interviewing technique was conducted to gather information about safety-related problems that international tourists encountered. It was also used to gain suggestions and guiding principles from stakeholders. In so doing, 13 key informants (consisting of 8 high ranking tourist polices, 4 local polices and the director of the bureau of tourism business and guide registration) were interviewed. Then, the data was thematically analyzed, interpreted and synthesized.

#### IV. FINDINGS

##### Part I: Analysis of International Tourists' Safety Needs

###### A. Demographic Data

A total number of international tourist respondents who participated in this research was 434 people. The respondents consisted of 59.90% male and 40.10% female. Most of them (41.90%) were in the age range of 20 to 30 years old and only 8.30% of respondents were 51 years old and above. Majority of the respondents were single (55.50%) and most held a bachelor degree or equivalent (33.20%). In terms of their zone of origin, there were from Europe (41.24%), Asia (33.41%) and North America (25.34%).

###### B. Travel Behavior and Information Search

The respondents' travel motivations ranked as the top three were happiness (27.65%), freedom and self-determination (25.12%) and self-reward (12.44%) respectively. Their first three most frequent types of travel were ranked from adventure (25.12%), nature (22.12%) and culture (19.82%) respectively. Most of them (69.80%) travelled in group with between 1-3 companions. They usually searched for travel-related information prior travelling from the internet websites, and family members and friends at a high level (mean 3.96, S.D. 1.14 and mean 3.59, S.D. 1.15 out of 5.00 respectively) whereas travel brochure received a lowest interest with mean of 2.82, S.D. 1.34. However, when asking about factors that influenced them to choose Thailand as their travel destination, the most three important factors were scenery/attraction tourism activity and the country reputation for tourism (mean 3.86, S.D.1.04, mean 3.59, S.D. 1.09 and mean 3.55, S.D. 1.19) respectively.

###### C. International Tourists' Safety Needs

In terms of the respondents' ranking of safety need, the research result indicated that the top three safety aspects they were most concerned consisted of; travel site-related physical safety (22.35%), physical harm safety (21.66%) and financial safety (17.51%) respectively. However, when analyzing according to the respondents' zone of origin, it was found that European tourists required safety of self behavior (32.96%), financial (26.26%) and physical harm security (25.14). The American tourists were most concerned with travel site-related physical safety (27.27%), financial (25.45%) and physical harm security (20.00%). The Asian tourists needed physical harm safety (22.07%), political (20.00%) and financial security (19.31%) (see also Table 1).

TABLE I  
NUMBER AND PERCENT OF INTERNATIONAL TOURIST RESPONDENTS  
CLASSIFIED BY THEIR SAFETY NEED

Safety Needs	European Tourist		American Tourist		Asian Tourist		Total	
	Number /percent	Rank	Number /percent	Rank	Number/per cent	Rank	Number/per cent	Rank
Site-related physical safety	30 (16.76)	5	30 (27.27)	1	26 (17.93)	4	97 (22.35)	1
Physical harm	45 (25.14)	3	28 (25.45)	2	32 (22.07)	1	94 (21.66)	2

safety

Political safety	39 (21.79)	4	18 (16.36)	4	29 (20.00)	2	74 (17.05)	4
Financial safety	47 (26.26)	2	22 (20.00)	3	28 (19.31)	3	76 (17.51)	3
Self behavior safety	59 (32.96)	1	18 (16.36)	4	24 (16.55)	5	64 (14.75)	5

To elaborate, the international tourists from each zone of origin concerned about safety differently as follows:

- Site-related physical safety was highly needed, ranked as the first priority (22.35%). The safety aspects most required, were illness, food hygiene, and crime (41.24%, 38.71% and 37.79%) respectively. When analyzing according to the respondents' zone of origin, it was found that, European tourists were concerned mostly about being safe from crime (40.22%) while the majority of American tourists concerned more of illness (42.27%) and the Asian tourist emphasized in food hygiene and illness (equally 41.38%)
- Physical harm safety was highly concerned, ranked second in order (21.66%). The safety aspects most required, were accident from transportation (27.88%), terrorism (27.19%) and fire (22.81%) respectively. When analyzing according to the respondents' zone of original, the result indicated that European tourists were concerned mostly about being safe from fire, accident from transportation and terrorism (26.82%, 25.14 % and 23.86 %) respectively. On the other hand, the American was in need of safety from transportation accident, injury from equipment or travel activities and terrorism (33.64%, 25.45% and 23.64%) respectively. The Asian tourist wanted to be safe from terrorism, transportation accident and epidemic (34.48%, 26.90% and 23.45%) respectively.
- Financial safety was moderately required, placed in the third rank (17.51%). The safety aspects most required, were the safety from theft, cheating and unexpected extra expenses (28.80%, 23.04% and 21.89%) respectively. With regard to the respondents' zone of origin, it was found that the European tourist required the financial safety in the same order as the overall financial safety need with the percentage of 36.87, 25.70 and 26.26 respectively. Differently, the American tourist wanted to be secured from cheating, theft and unexpected extra expenses (23.18%, 25.45% and 22.73%) respectively. The Asian tourist required the safety from cheating, unexpected extra expenses and theft (26.21%, 22.07% and 21.38%) orderly.
- Political safety need was moderately required, placed in the fourth rank (17.05%). The safety aspects mostly required were the safety from terminal and street closing, political unrest and strike (34.79%, 28.80% and 23.96%) respectively. With regard to the analysis according to the respondent's zone of origin, it was pointed out that the European tourist wanted to be safe from terminal or street closing, civil war and strike (34.08%, 25.70% and 25.14%) sequentially. The Asian tourist was in need of the security from political unrest, civil war and the revolution (31.03%, 22.76% and 20.69%) orderly.

- Self-behavior safety need was moderately required, placed in the fifth rank (14.75%). The aspects most required were the absence from cultural controversy and forbidden behavior, drug consumption and fighting (36.41%, 35.94% and 31.57%) respectively. The American tourist's safety concern was in the same order with as the overall self-behavior safety need with the percentage of 41.82, 36.36 and 31.82. The European and Asian tourist shared the same ranking of safety requirement, which were the absence from drug use, cultural controversy and forbidden behavior and fighting. The percentage from the European tourist was 36.31, 35.75 and 34.08 while the Asian tourist was 35.17, 27.59 and 24.14.

## Part II: Analysis of Police's Perception towards International Tourist's Safety Needs

### A. Demographic Data

A total number of Thai tourist police and local police respondents who participated in this research was 398 police officers. A majority of the respondents were male (82.70%) and a small number of female (17.30%). Most of them (49.20%) were in the age range of 41 to 50 years old and only 4.10% aged between 20 and 30 years. Most also had more than 20 years of working experience in the force (43.00%) whereas only 2.80% had less than 5 years experience. In terms of rank, they were 94.50% non-commissioned officers and most stationed in Bangkok (49.20%).

### B. Police's Perception towards International Tourists' Safety Needs

Regarding the respondents' perception towards international tourists' safety needs, the result indicated that they generally perceived the tourist's safety need at a moderate level with mean of 3.20, S.D.1.25 (out of 5.00). This was consistent with the in-depth interview result where most of the informant argued that if the tourist was too concerned about their safety in Thailand, they would not have decided to come to Thailand in the first place. However when investigating at each safety need, it was evident that the respondents put more emphasis on financial and physical harm safety needs (mean 3.51, S.D.1.07 and mean 3.49, S.D.1.80) (see also Table II).

TABLE II  
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THAI POLICES' PERCEPTION TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS' SAFETY NEED

International Tourists' Safety Needs	Level of Perception			
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Perception level	Rank
Site-related physical safety	3.49	1.80	high	2
Physical harm safety	2.96	1.13	moderate	4
Political safety	2.93	1.27	moderate	5
Financial safety	3.51	1.07	high	1
Self behavior safety	3.13	1.01	moderate	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>moderate</b>	

To elaborate, the police respondents perceived international tourists' need in each safety dimension as follows:

- Financial safety need was highly perceived, ranked as the first priority (mean 3.51, S.D.1.07). The safety aspects most required, were theft, cheating, and paying higher price than others (mean 3.64, S.D.1.21, mean 3.55, S.D.1.19 and mean 3.45, S.D.1.14) respectively.
- Physical harm safety was highly perceived, ranked second in order (mean 3.49, S.D.1.08). The safety aspects most required, were robbery, physical assault, and sexual assault and unhygienic food (mean 3.79, S.D.1.20, mean 3.74, S.D. 1.21, and mean 3.47, S.D.1.32/ S.D. 1.31) respectively.
- Self behavior safety need was moderately perceived, placed in the third rank (mean 3.13, S.D.1.01). The safety aspects most required, were drug taking, lost in tourist areas, and law and regulation violation (mean 3.21, S.D.1.14, mean 3.14, S.D.1.17 and mean 3.12, S.D.1.08) respectively.
- Site-related physical safety need was moderately perceived, placed in the fourth rank (mean 2.96, S.D.1.13). The safety aspects most required, were travel accident or tourism activities, injury from equipment or travel activities, and natural disaster (mean 3.28, S.D. 1.15, mean 3.05, S.D.1.20 and mean 2.90, S.D.1.21) respectively.
- Political safety need was moderately perceived, placed in the fifth rank (mean 2.93, S.D.1.27). The aspects most perceived were protests, airport closing and road block violation (mean 3.03, S.D.1.31, mean 3.01, S.D.1.42 and mean 2.95, S.D.1.35) respectively.

When comparing the respondents' demographic factors with their perception towards international tourists' safety needs, it showed that the respondents who are of different gender did not have different perceptions towards the tourist's safety need at a statistical significance of 0.05. On the contrary, the respondents who were differences in age range, working experience, rank, position and area of operation had different perception towards the international tourists' safety need at a statistical significant of 0.05.

## Part III: Comparison of International Tourist's Safety Needs and Thai Police's Perception towards International Tourist's Safety Needs

In general, a comparison between international tourists' safety needs and Thai polices' perception towards international tourists' safety needs revealed a certain degree of differences. It showed that the tourist's need was geared towards travel site-related physical safety, physical and financial safety respectively whereas the police believed that the tourist was more concerned with financial, physical and self behavior safety respectively. Even though the types of need that the police perceived and the tourist required was distinctive only the priority given, it can be argued that there were differences in their perception of each type of safety (see Table III below)

TABLE III  
COMPARING THE INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS' AND THAI POLICES'  
PERCEPTION OF SAFETY NEED

International tourist's perception	Thai police's perception
<b>Site-related physical safety need</b>	
Illness	
Crime	Food hygiene
Food hygiene	
<b>Physical safety need</b>	
Travel accident	Travel accident
Terrorism	Injury from travel equipment or activities
Fire	Disaster
<b>Political safety need</b>	
Terminal or street closing	Political strike
Political unrest	Terminal or street closing
Strike	
<b>Financial safety need</b>	
Theft	
Cheating	Theft
Unexpected extra expenses	
<b>Self-behavior safety need</b>	
Cultural controversial	
Drug take	Drug take
Fight	

Interestingly, although the result illustrates the international tourist's safety need and Thai police's perception of the tourist's need were overlapping in each area of need, the fact that the tourist was more concerned about other threats should not be overlooked. The police should be made aware of it so that they could create a preventive measure to lessen the tourist's anxiety as well as enhancing the image of Thai destinations.

#### Part IV: Qualitative Data Analysis

The in-depth interviews were conducted to gather information from 13 key informants from 8 touristic areas. The information consisted of 8 high ranking tourist polices, 4 local polices and the director of the bureau of tourism business and guide registration. This was for the purpose of getting insight information about actual tourism-related problems in their areas, risk management and safety policy. The interview result shows that the most frequent tourist's safety problem was criminal-related problems. These were criminal acts against tourists' personal assets, various kinds of tourism fraud, violence and fighting caused by drunkenness, drug abuse, foreigner's solicitation, communication problems, expense shortage, overstay and accidents.

*There were many forms of frauds and cheating For example, the tour company did not perform as promise such as downgrading accommodation from 5 stars hotel to 3 stars, not providing meals*

*as proposed, lower than standard package tour, unprofessional tour guide who could not communicate fluently.'*

*'The incidents I found in Pattaya (seaside province famous for nightlife entertainment) was the overcharge from the bar. When the tourists seemed to be drunk, the bar overcharged the drink. They charged 10 glasses or 20 glasses more from the actual drink.'*

*'There was the trick called 'The Boat Trick'. They lured the tourists to go for a boat ride along the river with a certain amount of payment. Then, they brought the tourists to the middle of the river and did not bring them back until they paid more.'*

There was also a problem of domestic violence in the family that lived with foreign partners. This case mainly found in the northeast of Thailand because a lot of such families have settled there.

The informants also explained that tourist's problems varied according to their nationality. For instance, the Australian tourist usually had alcohol consumption-related problems while the American and European tourists faced with loss of belongings and illegal drug problems. The Asian tourist was lured to pay overprice for low quality products.

In terms of the police's perceptions towards international tourists' safety concern, they did not think that the tourist would have had a high level of safety anxiety about travelling in Thailand. They argued that in such cases, the tourist would not have come to Thailand in the first place. However, when travelling in Thailand, they seemed to be concerned about the issue of communication with the local.

*'From the conversation with the tourists, I found that their major problem was the communication with the local because they thought all Thais could speak English, especially in the major tourist areas but it turned out opposite so they felt anxious.'*

Moreover, the organizations involved have correspondingly set up a policy to monitor, prevent and restrain any unsafe incidents that could happen to international tourists. In particular, the tourist police department usually conferred to assess tourism risks so as to find a more-up-to-date preventive and restrain measure. Its preventive policy claimed to be a proactive practice was a regular presence of uniformed police. Its receptive policy was the use of law enforcement procedure when incident occurred.

*'I sent the uniformed police to present and monitor in every street to check if there was any illegal activity such as illegal tour companies which opened in front of the small scale hotel and sell the low quality package tour to the tourist'*

However, this was not without operational difficulties. The insufficient human capital and financial resource were the main obstacles but their work was claimed effective and successful due to two important factors; service mind of practitioners and the enthusiastic assistance from the police volunteers.

*'The factor which drove us to be successful was the love towards our profession and service mind. If we do not have service mind, we wouldn't be bother to talk with the tourists and tried to help them'*

In the respect of risk management, the participant illustrated a three step-risk and safety prevention process. It started with information (about problems or incidents) gathering, problem analysis and a participative forum set up to find practical guidelines and solutions. The underlined concept was a proactive and receptive measure. The proactive notion was referred to the attempt to prevent incidents from happening to international tourists. In doing so, the Thai police mostly employed a physical appearance tactic at popular tourist spots. Furthermore, they also tried to enhance a sense of security among international tourists through the provision of self risk prevention information and principles.

*'We gave the bookmark of Tourist Police with the slogan '1155 Your First Friend' at the Immigration Bureau so that the tourists would know where they could seek for help. We also gave the booklet of Do and Don't when travelling in Thailand. Apart from that, we brought the van to the tourist spot and play the program about the touristic spot, how to travel safety and we introduced our tourist police volunteer to the tourists.'*

In terms of the receptive measure, the police interviewed argued that it was the core of police work and how well this measure worked was dependent upon how best they performed their duty.

## V. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

Although there are some common aspects of safety need that the international tourists visiting Thailand and the police's perception of their safety need, the differences was that the police's perception seems to be rooted from their experience in the field whereas the tourist's safety concern tended to stem from their own experience coupled with the information about

Thailand gained from different sources. Interesting, the result reflects that most of tourist's safety problems could be seen in a more crowded tourist spots. This is particularly crime-related problems such as theft, overpriced products, overcharged services and various kinds of theft and fraud. This is probably not unusual as Warakulwit's study (2003) also discovered that one of the factors causing tourism crimes was the overcrowded tourists in one spot. It was argued that such a situation would limit the police's ability to watch over them [5]. Another interesting aspect is that this research shows that tourists who had different nationalities and backgrounds seem to have priorities their tourism safety concern differently. More precisely, it was found that European tourists priorities safety of self behavior, financial and physical harm security respectively. The American tourists were most concerned with travel site-related physical safety, financial and physical harm security whereas the Asian tourists required physical harm safety, political and financial security respectively. This is perhaps similar to the finding of Barker, et.al. (2003). They found that the tourist's crime and safety perception were related to nationality, age, accommodation choices, communication skills and travel companions [18] .

A comparison between Thai polices' perception of international tourists' safety need and the actual safety need of the tourists indicated a certain degree of different prioritization each party gave to the safety aspect. The tourist prioritized site-related physical safety, physical safety and financial safety respectively whereas the police gave the emphasis on financial safety need as the first priority, then the physical safety and lastly the self-behavior safety need. When looking at it closely, the differences in their perception of each type of safety could be discerned. It seems that the police's perception was influenced by their experience of the tourist's problem repeatedly reported to them. Most of the problem tends to be relevant to financial aspects such as being cheated, being overcharged for products or services. This can be argued that because the international tourist did not pay as much concern about the financial safety as the physical safety. Thus it is possible that they were not that careful about this matter. In effect, it opened up a chance for finance-related crimes to be committed. On the contrary, they were more concerned about site-related physical safety and physical safety, hence, putting more effort to protect themselves in these areas. Put simply, criminal acts most reported to the police by the tourist were relevant to financial safety. Thus, it framed the police's perception towards the tourist's safety need. In term of the three steps practiced in risk management found our research, it seems to be in line with the process of tourism risk management presented by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and International Center for Sustainable Tourism (AICST) [20]. The organizations stated that the two main activities in tourism risk management are the communication and consulting; and the examination and revision. However, there seems a lack of the tourism risk revision process from stakeholders. The practical implication gleaned from this study is suggestive guidelines for risk and safety prevention for four sectors, which are, the public sector, private sector, local community and international tourists. For the public sector, the 'Do and Don't' guideline for Thailand travelling should be widely publicized for international tourists.

Adequate information about tourism safety should also be given to international tourists prior or at least upon arrival. The public relations of tourism safety should be tailor-made to suit international tourists from different zones of origin with the focus on lessening their worry. Yet this has to be done with the sensitivity of Thailand tourism image. The most recommended channel for publicity is internet since the research found that the majority of international tourists used internet for their travel information source. The public sector, particularly the tourist police department, should also work in coordination with all involved stakeholders and frequently revise the tourism safety prevention and suppression plan for the benefits of the tourist in particular, and Thai tourism industry in general.

The private sector, with the advantage of being the closest sector to the tourist, should coordinate with the public sector to create the highest safety environment for tourists. In terms of the local community, they can assist the police work in preventing tourism risks through their observation or even becoming a trained tourist police or police volunteer. The result shows that the international tourists' motive to visit Thailand was for their own happiness and freedom. In addition, most chose the adventure tourism. This suggests that self-behavior risks are more than possible in this circumstance. Thus, while enjoying themselves, the tourist should be consciously aware of possible harms or dangers in all tourism activities. They should also do some background research about the spot they plan to visit in the aspect of cultural practices, law and social rules as well as risks. Importantly, they should anticipate the way to handle their own safety when difficulties arise.

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