THE POTENTIAL OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AFFECTS SATISFACTION OF VISITORS IN NAN PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

Bearing in mind the status of growing tourism in Nan province of Thailand, this study is directed to validate the relationships between tourist experiences, tourist attraction and tourist satisfaction to forecast behavioral intentions of tourist to cultural attractions in NAN province. The aim behind this study is to examine how tourist attraction mediates tourist experience and satisfaction of tourist. The research model was verified with 8 hypotheses on the subject of the relationships between variables in Thailand tourism context. The current study a is survey-based research conducted in Nan province which is considered attractive tourism spot in Thailand for its culture and national parks. Through purposive sampling data was collected from visitors to 5 tourist attractions in Thailand's Nan province (N = 306). Structural equation modelling (SEM), employing the SPSS software completed the data analysis. The findings bring forward that relationships between, experiences and satisfaction is shaped by level of attractions. It has been shown that the appearance of experiences is influenced by participation in their creation. The study account for theoretical and practical contributions by mounting new insights in literature and directing tourism industry management to pull of effective plans to give tourists best expression to boost tourist's satisfaction.

Introduction

Tourism in the modern age has become a source of entertainment, knowledge, and also to spend quality time (Richards, 2018). The areas representing tourism are keen to focus on the satisfaction of the tourists and there are countries and regions famous for their natural beauty historically unique artistic approach attracts the tourists of the world around the year (L. LIU & RAO, 2018). NAN, a Thai province in the northern areas, is very famous as it has a long history with beautiful, amazing palaces, museums, valleys, and also a unique culture (Xiuying, Chao, & Nan, 2018). Nan is a remote area with all the facilities of the modern age and Nan is also a great source of entertainment as ancient old temples and statues are representing the old culture and also modern facilities and amazing places to be visited (LIAO & YAN, 2018). Nan has its own culture and language and art (Zeng, Gower, & Wood, 2018).

The below table enlists significant tourists activities that are important for tourist satisfaction;

Entertainment	Educational	Esthetics	Escapist
Visitors are engaged by performance such as cellular concerts and music. Museum and heritage site visits.	Visitors improve their knowledge and skills through seminars and food tastings. Cooking and craft-making lectures and activities.	Visitors are enriched by sensual conditions and enjoying the unique sights. Deriving rural roads and art and craft fairs.	Visitors become engrossed mainly by participating in a different place and time. Hiking and cycling tours.

The overall mechanism of tourism and tourist satisfaction has been substantially gaining attraction from various academic researchers since the last few years (Denis & Maria, 2018).

However, in the past few years, it can be noticed that even now a satisfaction gap exists in the sector of tourism as the huge number of tourist attractions play a favorable role in affecting the overall satisfaction level of visitors, Agarwal, Kariyapol, and Pienchob (2019), suggested that to address this satisfaction limitation, some contextual variables influencing the intentions of visitors according to tourist places need to be examined in detail, since the researches on tourist attractions in Nan province are sparse as well as limited, therefore the study needs to conducted on the tourist places and visitor-level of satisfaction in Nan province (Anansiriprapha & Wu, 2016). However, no. of tourists during the last few years in Nan-province has increased as shown in the graph below,
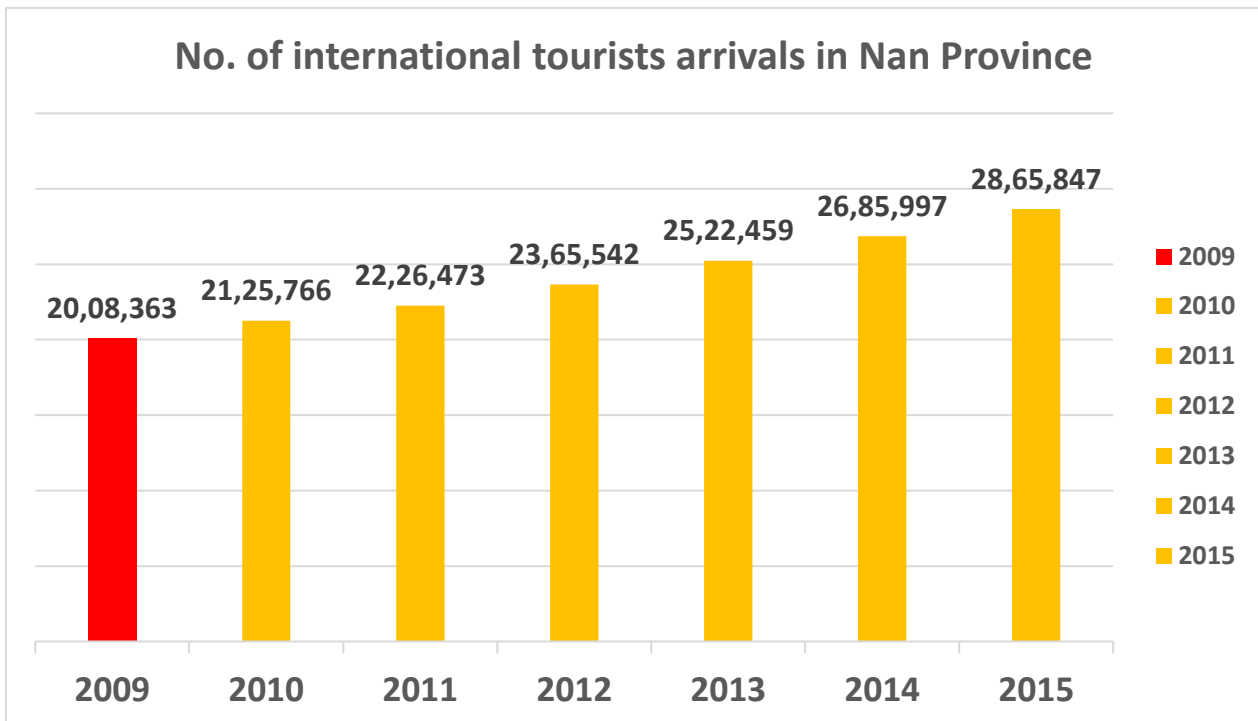

Figure 1: Nan Province

Following the above justification, the given study has the following objectives; the initial objective is to evaluate the impact of education on tourist satisfaction (TS) in Nan province. The second aim is to identify the overall influence of esthetics on the visitor satisfaction degree. The third aim is to analyze the impact of entertainment on the tourist satisfaction degree in Nan province. The fourth purpose is to determine the exclusive impact of escape on the level of visitor satisfaction. The fifth objective is to evaluate the mediating impact of tourist attraction in the nexus between education and TS in Nan province. The sixth goal is to identify the mediating influence of tourism attractions on the interrelation between esthetics and TS in Nan province. Another aim is to evaluate the mediating part of tourism attractions in the interdependence between entertainment and TS in Nan province. The final target is to identify the mediating act of tourism attractions in the relationship between escape and TS in Nan province.

It is well known that the role of tourism is highly efficient and important for the development of an economy (K. X. Li, Jin, & Shi, 2018). The givens study is designed to evaluate the effects of tourism attraction on the satisfaction of tourists in Nan province of Thailand. Therefore, the given study is the significance of the tourism sector of Thailand. The tourism attractions and different places of destination can positively affect the satisfaction level of the visitors also. Secondly, the current study has a wide range of scope in different sectors of Thailand such as hospitality

sectors, the financial sector, pharmaceutical, and other sectors to enhance the satisfaction level of consumers.

Theoretical Framework

1.1 Theory of tourist experience

Experiences in the context of feelings and knowledge mainly generated through direct thoughts such as learning, subjectivism, emotions, and involvement (Wearing & Foley, 2017). According to Larsen, Doran, and Wolff (2017), this theory state that the satisfaction level of any particular tourist is generally derived by a significant level of entertainment and education about tourism which further affects the significance of tourist attractions. Academic scholars also exhibit interest in the phenomenon of memorable TE which (C.-H. Lin & Kuo, 2016), demonstrated as a significant event saved in the memory which directly affects the level of satisfaction.

1.2 The relationship between tourist education and tourist satisfaction

Educational travel, according to Qiu and Qi (2020), is an improvingly new trend in the worldwide tourism sector. According to Alananzeh, Jawabreh, Al Mahmoud, and Hamada (2018), educational tourism is those tourist, those includes education as well as learning in their main objective of the trip to carry out tourism practices, and this positively affects the satisfaction level of visitors. In other words, the major objective of travel is to get information and knowledge and experience on particular concepts rather than travel itself (Kumar, Hossain, & Islam, 2020; C.-Y. Lin & Huang, 2020; X. Liu, Huang, & Li, 2018). The theory of TS supports the nexus between education and satisfaction because significant experience motivates individuals to get information about places and this affects satisfaction level (Akinci, Yurcu, & Kasalak, 2018). Therefore, the study proposes the following hypothesis based on the above discussion,

H1: Educational tourism significantly relates to the satisfaction level of tourists.

1.3 The correspondence between esthetics and visitor satisfaction

According to (Tan & Lu, 2019), esthetics is the concept of tourism philosophy that mainly deals with the nature of the beauty of tourism places and taste of the places, as well as the concept of tourism art. Esthetics evaluates subjective as well as sensor-emotional norms and sometimes refers to taste and judgments of feelings and sentiments about the place and art. According to X. Liu et al. (2018), esthetics coves both artificial and natural sources of tourist experience and judgment and it also considers what occur in minds of visitors when visitors engage with esthetics objects or tourism views and environments and this all directly affects the satisfaction level of individuals (Breiby & Slåtten, 2018). Researchers in the previous literature has characterized esthetics as the critical reflection on the culture and nature of tourism places which certainly affect the satisfaction rate. Thus, the study suggests the below hypothesis regarding the above arguments;

H2: There is a significant relationship between esthetics and satisfaction degree of tourists.

1.4 The association between entertainment and tourist satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is a measurement of how a tourism product or the service claimed by the tourism company or region meets the expectations of the tourist. A company or government provides services regarding tourism, the tourist spends money and time to enjoy the holidays with great passion (Tan, 2017). So, the entertainment presented to them should highly according to their demands and expectations. Previous literature has examined that there is a great relation between entertainment and tourist satisfaction (Alananzeh et al., 2018). The tourist is the ambassadors of the product or the services provided to them as they promote their experience and a lot more attractive to visit or use that product or service and the tourist companies or the organization must keep their claims ever (Amoah, Amoah, & Campus, 2019). Thus, the given study hypothesizes that;

H3: Entertainment has a significant impact on the level of tourist satisfaction.

1.5 The linkage between tourist escape and tourist satisfaction level

Tourist escape is meant of missing or kidnapping of tourists during their visits or tours of a particular region or area. This tourist escape creates a kind of restlessness and disturbance and the tourist not feel easy to visit such places. Tourist satisfaction needs a complete package of visiting places and the security and safety of their lives also. Those regions which become a part of news regarding tourist escape, loss their value and importance for the tourists, and this situation creates an only loss in income and the economy of that country grows less. The tourist escape and tourist satisfaction are closely related and very important because the life safety and value to their survival promotes tourism (Suhartanto, Brien, Primiana, Wibisono, & Triyuni, 2020). Tourism is only promoted when the tourist visiting that place is safe and protected. Therefore, this given research effort posits that;

H4: There is a positive relationship between tourist escape and the level of satisfaction of visitors.

1.6 The mediating role of tourist attractions in the connection between tourist education and tourist satisfaction extent

Tourism is highly significant to a satisfaction level of visitors as well as the growth of the economy of the country, according to Albaity and Melhem (2017), tourist attractions are not only manmade structures and arts but also anything that grabs the attention of tourists but also needs some form of investment by the local government or private sector of the region to allow several tourists to visit the attraction and to gain knowledge. This includes natural features and destinations that are interested in visitors such as mountains, beaches, and wildlife areas that increase the education of visitors and positively affect the satisfaction rate of visitors. The above theory of TE upholds the mediating impact of tourist attractions because according to this theory attractions play a

favorable role in improving the experience of tourists. Hence, the present study proposes the following hypothesis;

H5: There is a positive mediating impact of a tourist attraction on the nexus between tourist education and TS level.

1.7 The mediating part of tourist attraction in the interrelation between esthetics and tourist satisfaction

A tourist attraction is a destination of an individual interest where visitors visit, typically to explore the beauty of nature and other manmade attractions which generally derive the significant equivalent of esthetics (Lu et al., 2020). According to X. Li, Su, Hu, and Yao (2019), a well structured and maintained tourist place has exhibited natural as well as a cultural value that directly influences the exclusive process of tourist satisfaction. Some tourist destinations provide tourists a memorable experience mainly for a reasonable charge or even for a fee that favorably affect the amusement and satisfaction level of visitors. This is mainly because without tourist attractions and destinations there would be no tourist satisfaction and it also affects the degree of esthetics. Hence, the above findings led to the development of the given hypothesis;

H6: Tourist attractions have a favorable mediating impact on the interrelation between esthetics and TS level.

1.8 The mediating impact of a tourist attraction on the linkage between entertainment and tourist satisfaction degree

Tourist satisfaction is the basic element in promoting tourism as the tourist are satisfied with the services or the product of the service they become a source of attraction for other tourists to visit that particular place along with tourist satisfaction, entertainment provided to the tourists plays a major role in creating tourists attraction (Nilplub, Khang, & Krairit, 2016). Thus TS using products or services and experiencing entertainment play a key factor in a tourist attraction. Now it's the age of social media and

the tourist share their experience within seconds and this experience becomes a highlight in no time. Thus, both elements of TS and entertainment both are very closely related to tourist attraction and also for the development of the economy of that country.

H7: Tourist attraction positively mediates the relationship between entertainment and TS.

1.9 The mediating influence of tourist attraction on the relationship between escape and visitor satisfaction

Visitors' satisfaction is the key point, that a company or the organization or touring management performs their best skills to maintain. Thus according to Su, Hsu, and Swanson (2017)

tourist satisfaction creates sources and also attracting more tourists through their services and the production that is for the tourist attraction so to say tourist attraction increase in a particular area or place when the tourist is satisfied. Tourist escape plays a negative role as it tends to make tourists aware and warn not to visit that place because of insecurity. So, it is very necessary for tourist attractions this negative activity must be taken as the first and foremost duty to solve as the positive impacts attract more and more tourists. So, the above discussion leads to the development of below hypothesis;

H8: Tourist attraction significantly mediates the linkage between escape and TS.

Figure 2: Model
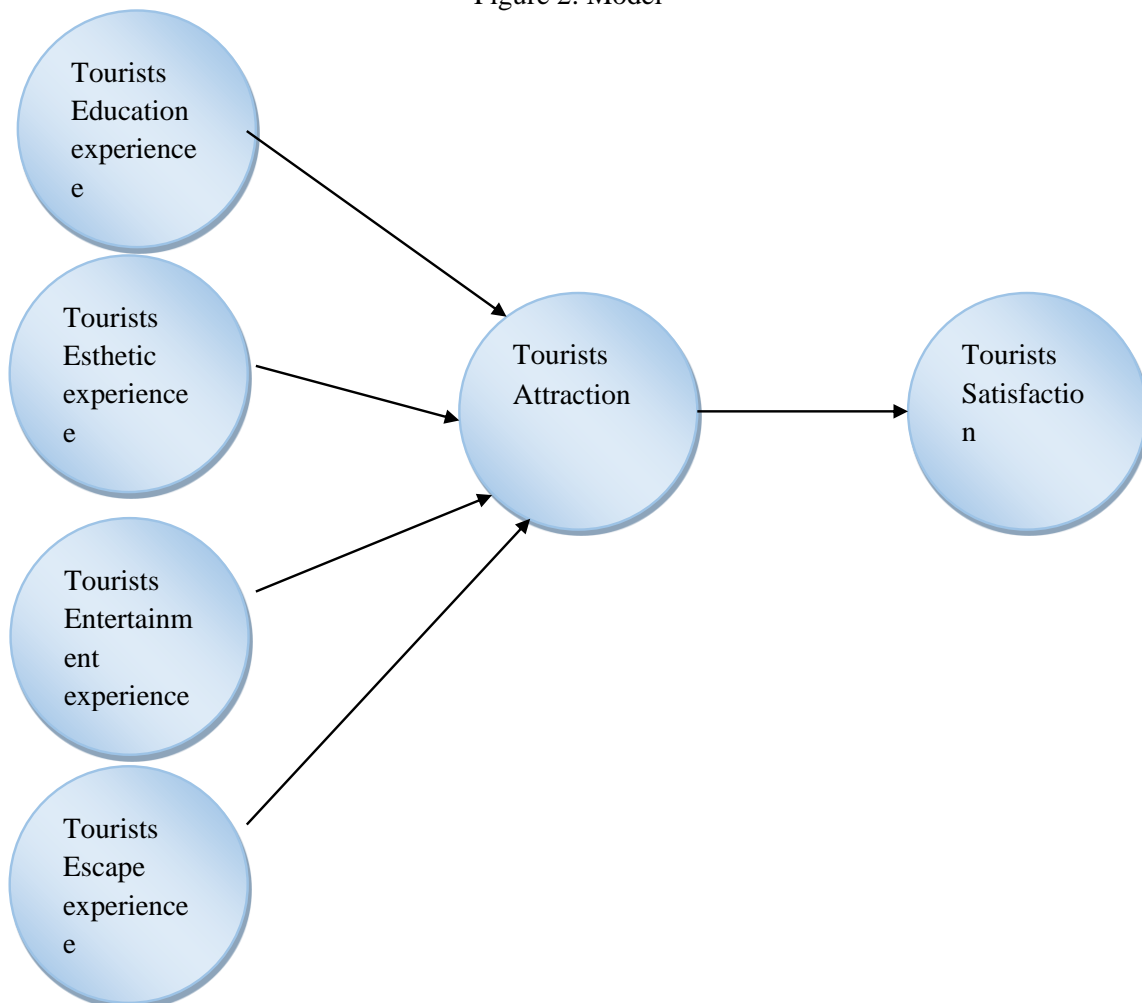
Methodology

1.10 Research approach and design

The study was led by means of the survey on tourist of 5 tour sights in Nan province: the Nan National Museum, Khun Nan national park, Wat

Phumin, Wat Phra temple. The purpose behind choosing these attractions for survey was these spots are frequently visited by visitors and live up to the criteria of attractions in context of researcher perception. The National parks in this

regions are place where experiences are created by visitors as these parks just only have beautiful environment but also offer tourists different activities such as: hiking, tracking, mountain and camping. 454 tourists were enrolled in sample and response from them was obtained through a self-administrate questionnaire the participation was voluntary. The assessment sample included 306 people: 120 from Nan national museum, 110 from 'Khun Nan national park, 46 from Wat Phra temple and 30 from Wat Phumin in Nan province. Group of canvassers were appointed at these spots for distribution of questionnaires, survey was completed in four weeks. Total 650 questionnaires were distrusted 515 questionnaires were re-collected, which were scanned and only 306 questionnaires were found to be reliable rest of questionnaire were incomplete and some have insufficient data.

1.11 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire is constructed on various scales of previous authors, these scales were altered to validate the purposed research model and it concerning variables such as education, escape, esthetics, entrainment, attraction and satisfaction of tourists. The main focus of questionnaire designing team was to make questionnaire as easy and readable as possible for tourists. It was pre-examined on a group of tourists before launching survey in these spots to get idea about the length and content from the visitor's point of view. The final questionnaire contained 20 items for 6 variables. The responses for each item was documented on a Five-point Likert scale which classify responses in 5 scales 1= strongly disagree ,2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

Tourists experience was measured by established 18 items on the concepts of (Antón, Camarero, & Garrido, 2018) on visitors experience value. This scale scrutinized experience in four factors (education, escape, esthetic, entertainment) 4 items for education, 3 for esthetics, 7 for entertainment and 4 for escape were included in questionnaire for quantifying tourist experience. One of the sample item is "While visiting I felt in true harmony with my surroundings".

Tourist attraction is measured by 5 items that were extracted from (Mustelier-Puig, Anjum, & Ming, 2018) to quantify the level of tourist attraction in Nan province. For which five items were altered to fit the current research such as "I felt pleasure and find this place attractive" tourists rated attraction on five-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree.

After reviewing Vriens (2006) SAT scale, this scale was considered appropriate for estimating tourist satisfaction regarding tourism in Nan province. Three items assessed tourist satisfaction for instance "how would you assess your experiences during your visit to park?". Responses were recorded on five-point Likert type scale.

Results and Analysis

To examine the Consequence of tourist experience on tourist satisfaction of tourists coming to Nan province of Thailand purposive sampling nominated 306 tourists as sample, On the Examination of data, demographics such as gender, age and education was come to known. In sample, males are 160 (52.3%), and among them 146 are female (47.3%) means most of the visits are made by males. In addition,72 respondents age is below 21 to 30 years, 88 are up to 31 to 40 years whereas 97 are 41 to 50 years old and only 49 were aged above 50 so most of the tourists are middle aged. In terms of education 43.5% have post-graduation level education, 12.1% were graduated and 34 % have master degree.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
TourAtt	306	1.00	4.90	3.4958	1.10653	-.700	.139

TourSat	306	1.00	5.00	3.5301	1.13517	-.718	.139
Educ	306	1.00	5.00	3.5791	1.09069	-.821	.139
Esth	306	1.00	5.00	3.5778	1.06953	-.856	.139
Ente	306	1.00	5.75	3.3714	1.06520	-.322	.139
Esca	306	1.00	5.00	3.4568	1.06850	-.643	.139
Valid (listwise)	N306						

Descriptive statistics are widely used in data analysis to precise the sample characteristics into quantitative values. Total observations are denoted by N, in this paper 306 total observation exists. Outliers are not detected as all 7 constructs minimum and maximum values are 1 and 5. The means statistics extent the tendency of data, mean value of tourist attraction, tourist satisfaction, education, esthetics, entertainment and escapes are 3.4958, 3.5301, 3.5791, 3.5778, 3.3714 and 3.4568 which are tending towards 4, construct which is endorsing high level of agreeability in responses. Skewness statistic measure normality which must be -1 and +1 which supports the normal distribution of data so descriptive statistics also confirm normal distribution

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.915
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	9103.876
	df	325
	Sig.	.000

Sample size must be adequate for conducting a reliable research and to confirm either the selected sample size has adequacy and satisfy the size requirement of research Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are conducted. The test exposed .915 as measure of sampling consistent with threshold values of 0.8 to 1 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Chi-square estimation 9103.876 and 325 df with .000 significances also authorizes that the sample size endorses level of adequacy.

Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
TA1		.700				
TA2		.773				
TA3		.827				
TA4		.824				
TA5		.796				
TS1					.784	
TS2					.830	
TS3					.808	
ED1			.820			
ED2			.850			
ED3			.879			
ED4			.808			
ES1						.782

ES2		.846
ES3		.807
EN1	.795	
EN2	.824	
EN3	.863	
EN4	.706	
EN5	.778	
EN6	.797	
EN7	.866	
EP1		.773
EP2		.809
EP3		.818
EP4		.803

For assessing the validity of items Confirmatory Factor Analysis was run on these items. This is opted for verifying data accurateness which results are portrayed in table 4 with individual factor loading, CFA computed factor loading for 28 items which are ranging from of 0.700 to 0.879 which is within acceptable limit above 0.7 therefore, results indicated zero cross loading and high validity and correlation.

Table 5: Convergenet and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	EN	TA	TS	ED	ES	EP
EN	0.921	0.633	0.342	**0.795**					
TA	0.931	0.731	0.387	0.441	**0.855**				
TS	0.926	0.806	0.387	0.298	0.622	**0.898**			
ED	0.938	0.791	0.359	0.320	0.546	0.599	**0.889**		
ES	0.896	0.742	0.340	0.344	0.551	0.583	0.513	**0.861**	
EP	0.934	0.779	0.342	0.585	0.518	0.385	0.431	0.466	**0.883**

The research model validity was measured by Convergent and Discriminant Validity performed by confirmatory factor analysis. Convergent validity indicates the supposed dependability and reliability of variables and items which is decided on the basis of composite reliability higher the value higher will be the reliability. The results are showing that the composite reliability of current research model ranges from 0.896 to 0.938 and the average variance extracted varies from 0.633 to 0.806 which surpass0.7 and 0.5 which is acceptable so the current reach model endorses and confirms Convergent validity. Discriminant validity checks the supposed un-relatedness among variables in current results the AVE is higher than the MSV which is consistent to the criteria of discernment validity. So it is confirmed that our research model has appropriate discriminant validity.

Table 6: Model Fit Indices

CFA Indicators	CMIN/DF	GFI	IFI	CFI	RMSEA
Threshold Value	≤ 3	≥ 0.80	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90	≤ 0.08
Observed Value	1.900	0.876	0.972	0.972	0.054

Model Fit Indices verify the fitness of the model with sample and data. This is also completed through confirmatory factor. CMIN/DF, GFI, CFI, IFI and RMSEA are as follow 1.900, 0.876, 0.972,

0.972 and 0.054 so the values being observed are satisfoctory and meeting the rule of thumb stated

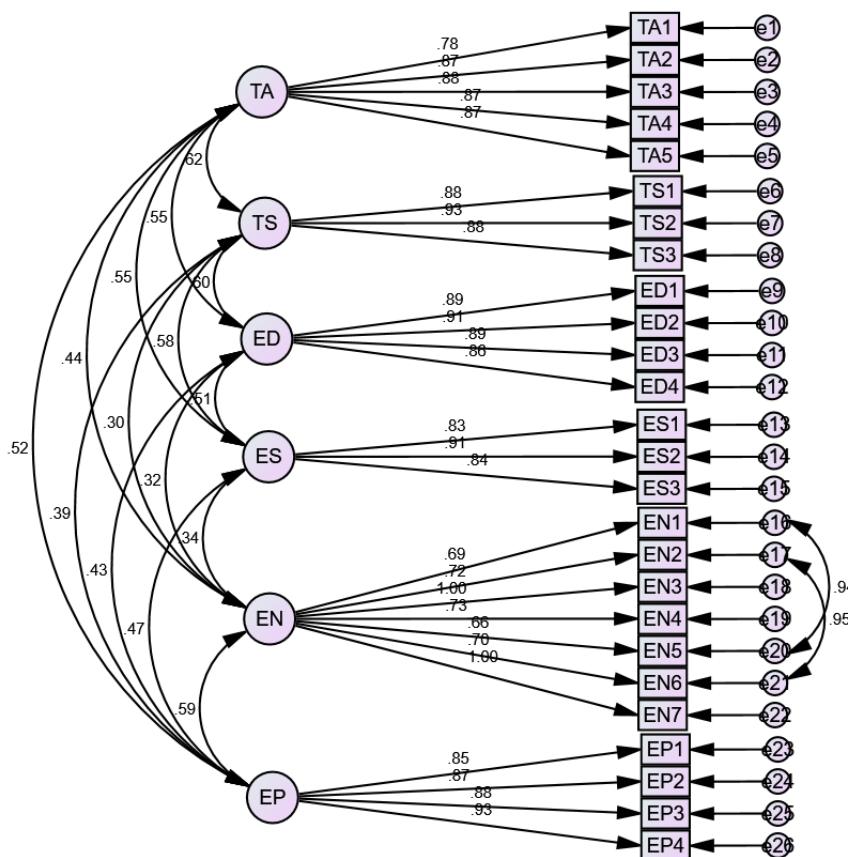in the table Fitness of the model is confirmed.

Figure 3: CFA

Table 7: Structural Equation Modeling

| Total Effect	Esca	Ente	Esth	Educ	TourAtt
TourAtt	.149**	.304**	.238**	.256**	.000
TourSat	.189**	.333**	.224**	.256**	.380**
Direct effect	Esca	Ente	Esth	Educ	TourAtt
TourAtt	.149**	.304**	.238**	.256**	.000
TourSat	.133**	.217**	.133**	.159**	.380**
Indirect Effect	Esca	Ente	Esth	Educ	TourAtt
TourAtt	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
TourSat	.056**	.116**	.090**	.097**	.000

For verification of purposed relationship among tourist education, esthetics, entertainment, escape, tourist attraction and tourist satisfaction structural equation model is performed. So it can be witnessed that all five variables have significant and positive direct and indirect relationship with tourist satisfaction, because it was observed from result that when Escape, entertainment, esthetics, education is changed by 1 unit, 13.3%, 21.7%.

13.3% and 15.9% upsurge was noticed in tourist satisfaction due to significant relationship, so unquestionably all direct hypotheses are validated. On other hand, the indirect effect of tourist attraction on tourist experience and tourist satisfaction is also checked. Thus, tourist attraction also devised positive indirect effect on tourist experience and satisfaction as tourist attraction mediated education and tourist

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satisfaction with 5.6 % addition (Hameed, Basheer, Iqbal, Anwar, & Ahmad, 2018; Hassan, Hameed, Basheer, & Ali, 2020; Loukil, 2020; Ma & Zhang, 2019; Meng, Yang, & Dai, 2019; Mensah, Jianlin, & Jun, 2019; Mujahid & Begam, 2019; Ngo, 2019; Nguyen, 2020; Ul-Hameed, Mohammad, & Shahar, 2018). Overall all hypotheses were valid and approved the significance of purposed research model.

Figure 4: SEM
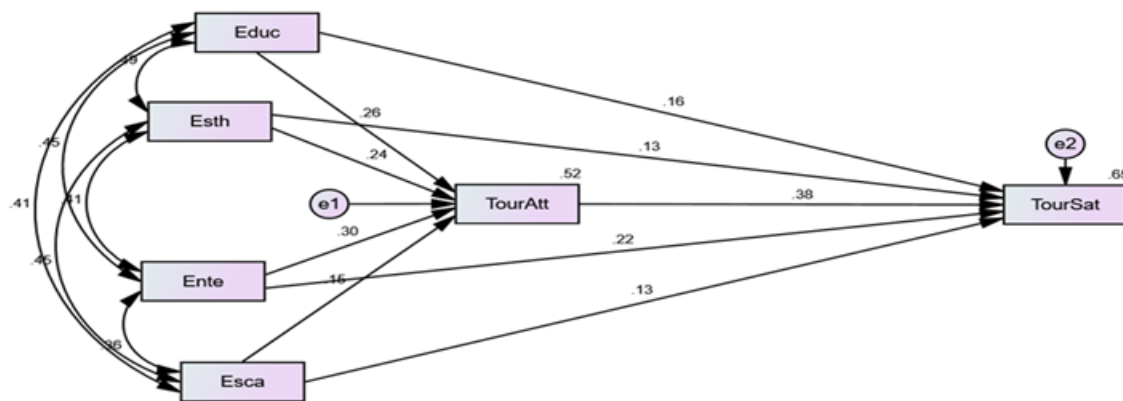
Discussion and Conclusion

Due to change in tourist's demands and needs it has become a common concentration of tourism destination and attraction to deliver utmost experience to its tourist beyond normal experiences as now a day's tourist consider tourism as an entertaining and learning experience that give them escape from routine and has esthetic element as well. Considering all, this study is designated to explore how tourist experience influence tourist satisfaction and attract in Nan province. To statistically test the research concept this study developed hypothesizes after reviewing existing work on potential constructs. The structural equation model tested this hypotheses and results indicated that H1 which is purposing significant relationship between education and tourist satisfaction is accepted as if a tourist learns from a tourism spot it increases it satisfaction. As Balloffet, Courvoisier, and Lagier (2014) stated that museums contribute in educational development of tourists. Concerning the impact of esthetics H2 projected that there is a significant relationship between esthetics and tourist satisfaction which is

turned out to be significant. That means the beauty and attraction of a place plays and important role in satisfying the visitors demand (Hosany & Witham, 2010). H3 significant relationship between entertainment and tourist satisfaction, statistically it signposted positive and significant relationship, as superior entertainment experience will cause greater satisfaction(Radder & Han, 2015). The relationship between escape and tourist satisfaction are examined in hypothesis H4 which is significant and feeling of escape gives utmost satisfaction so this hypothesis is accepted (Nowacki & Kruczek, 2020). The mediating effect of tourist attraction on tourists' experience and tourists' satisfaction is also found to be significant. It was confirmed that tourist attraction positively mediates impact on a tourist education and Satisfaction level (H5). Tourist attraction gives tourist pleasure and generally inherent cultural and historical value that enhance tourist's education experience which end up in tourist satisfaction. Moreover, it was seen that tourist attraction also mediates esthetics and tourist satisfaction (H6) as tourist attraction beauty and environment affect esthetics which subsequently

influence tourist satisfaction. The mediating impact of tourist attraction on entrainment and tourist satisfaction is also significant (H7) because a tourist attraction primary feature is entertainment so tourist attracted to a tourist destination and is fully entertained it will enhance tourist attraction. H8 proposed that tourist attraction significantly mediated escape and tourist satisfaction the findings supported this hypothesis and indicated that tourist attraction provide escape from dull and monotone routine and ensure that tourist is satisfied.

It is obvious from the study's findings that tourist satisfaction holds an important place in tourism which is influenced by many factors most importantly tourist experience (education, esthetics, entertainment and escape), the study is self-evidencing that experience has great influence on tourist satisfaction which also indicate that it is utmost important to focus on creating experience for tourists. Taking into account the impact of experience many researches have been conducted previously (Prayag, Hosany, Muskat, & Del Chiappa, 2017), however no enough amount of study is found on experience and attraction in Thailand context. Moreover, the role of education in stimulating tourist's satisfaction is unexplored in Thailand which needed attention. Importantly this study is a contribution in research that will increase the amount of theory and literature regarding proposed variables. This study also serves as guideline for tourism attractions that how they can create experience which is associated with attraction in order to obtain tourists satisfaction. It also tells managers at these places to provide experience that are educational and have entertainment factor as well to keep these tourists attracted. The findings of this study also facilitates government and administrations of tourism points to enhance esthetics and beauty of these places.

Regardless of prior stated contributions this study is not let off from limitations and gaps that are basically opportunity for forthcoming researchers. One of the limitations is study is cross sectional study so in future it can be conducted in different intervals. This study sample is small and it conducted only on national parks and museum, in future other places like amusement parks, hotels and religious spot can be studied. Mixed method can be adopted to gather more generalized results.

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