

Marketing Innovations for Sustainable Destinations

10 Assessing Mainland Chinese Tourists' Satisfaction with Hong Kong using the Tourist Satisfaction Index

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 Published by Goodfellow Publishers Limited, Woodeaton, Oxford, OX3 9TJ
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Design and setting by P.K. McBride

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Introduction

Tourist satisfaction has become an increasingly important issue for destination management organizations. A good understanding of the tourist satisfaction level and its dynamic changes benefits not only tourism goods/services providers, but also government regulators and tourism investors. High tourist satisfaction is likely to contribute to enhanced reputation of tourism product providers and of the whole destination, increased consumer loyalty, reduced price elasticities, lower cost of future transactions and improved productivity (Anderson et al., 1994; Swanson and Kelley, 2001).

Tourism is an integrated system that consists of a number of sectors such as accommodation, catering, transportation, visitor attractions, travel intermediaries (tour operators and travel agencies), retailing and tourism-related public agencies (such as police and travel information centres). Correspondingly, tourists' overall satisfaction with a destination is affected by their satisfaction with each individual component involved in their experiences at the destination. Although many tourism businesses have been carrying out tourist satisfaction surveys within their organizations, and government agencies and academic researchers have also launched a number of one-off tourist satisfaction investigations at the destination level, there has not been a continuous evaluation system that facilitates the assessment of tourist satisfaction on a regular basis at both sectoral and destination levels.

This chapter aims to fill in the above gaps by creating a comprehensive tourist satisfaction index (TSI) system, which will provide government agencies that are responsible for tourism related activities, different sectors of the tourism industry and the general public with much needed information for decision-making and planning purposes.

The empirical study will focus on Hong Kong, where tourism has been seen as one of the major economic pillars (Lo, 2005). In particular, mainland China was the largest source market with the total number of visitor arrivals exceeding 15.4 million in 2007 (HKTB, 2008). Therefore, to evaluate the satisfaction levels within this market is of great practical importance for Hong Kong.

Chapter extract

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