

THAILAND DEVELOPMENT POLICY UNDER
YINGLUCK SHINAWATRA: THE DEVELOPMENT OF
TOURISM

BY

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of Master of Human Sciences in Political Science

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Sciences
International Islamic University Malaysia

APRIL 2021

ABSTRACT

This study examines tourism development policies under Yingluck Shinawatra's administration and how they were achieved. It answers important questions on the drivers and barriers to tourism development, government roles in promoting tourism and the performance of Yingluck's government in tourism development. The study employs qualitative methods to provide an in-depth analysis of government policy and factors influencing the tourism sector. Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and Tourism Council of Thailand (TCT) reports are used in analyzing the Yingluck's performance. Furthermore, the study identifies three major factors leading to a decline in tourism in Thailand; the major flood crisis, the political tensions in the final months of Yingluck's government and the period of mourning following the death of King Rama IX. The major conclusions drawn from the study affirm that political tensions led to a decline in tourism and the downfall of Yingluck's government.

خلاصة البحث

تبحث هذه الدراسة سياسة التنمية السياحية في ظل إدارة ينغلوك شيناواترا وكيف تم تحقيق هذه السياسات (أم لا). تجيب الدراسة على أسئلة مهمة حول الدوافع والحواجز التي تعترض التنمية السياحية، والأدوار الحكومية في تعزيز السياحة وأداء حكومة ينغلاك في مجال التنمية السياحية. وتستخدم الدراسة أساليب نوعية لتقديم تحليل متعمق لسياسة الحكومة والعوامل التي تؤثر على قطاع السياحة. وتستخدم هيئة السياحة في تايلاند (TAT) ومجلس السياحة في تايلاند (TCT) التقارير في تحليل أداء ينغلوك. وعلاوة على ذلك، تحدد الدراسة ثلاثة عوامل رئيسة تؤدي إلى انخفاض السياحة في تايلند؛ وهي: أزمة الفيضانات الكبرى، والتوترات السياسية في الأشهر الأخيرة من حكومة ينغلوك وفترة الحداد بعد وفاة الملك راما التاسع. وتؤكد الاستنتاجات الرئيسية المستخلصة من الدراسة أن التوترات السياسية أدت إلى انخفاض أعداد السياح وسقوط حكومة ينغلوك.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All glory is due to Allah, the Almighty, whose Grace and Mercies have been with me throughout the duration of my study. Although, it has been tasking, His Mercies and Blessing on me ease the herculean task of completing this thesis.

My greatest gratitude goes to my supervisor, Assoc Prof. Dr. Abdillah Noh who have been tremendously helpful and kind throughout the time I spent writing this research. I put on record and appreciate his detailed comments, useful suggestions and inspiring queries which have considerably improved this thesis. My boundless gratitude goes to Assoc. Prof. Wahabuddin Ra'ees who guided me before I writing this thesis. I cannot forget to extend my special and sincere appreciation to all the staff members of our esteemed Political Science Department from whom, directly or indirectly, I came to benefit during my two years at the department.

My entire family and relatives, whose love and affection are evergreen in my heart, deserve honorable gratitude for their belief, love and care towards me. Indeed, this entire work would not be complete without their supports

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nation
DAST	Designated Area for Sustainable Tourism
EU	European Union
EWEC	East-West Economic Corridor
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRD	Human Resources and Development
NACC	National Anti-Corruption Commission
NCPO	National Council for Peace and Order
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board
NESDP	National Economic and Social Development Programme
NESEC	North-South Economic Corridor
NLA	National Legislative Assembly
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCA	Partnership Cooperation Agreement
SARB	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SATW	Society of American Travel Writers
SEC	Sothern Economic Corridor
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TAT	Tourism Authority of Thailand
TCT	Tourism Council of Thailand
WTO	World Tourism Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The tourism development has made great strides in the last six decades, and development has been important in the time directly after the Second World War. The Western world has faced the modern challenge of restoring nations. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (which administered by the World Bank) was set up to support and maintain the development process (Kenton, 2020). Development was thus considered essentially synonymous with industrialization. Development aimed to raise wealth by giving vulnerable access to goods and services in a manner that would make them an advanced community (Rapley, 2007).

The concepts for development are related to the principles of modernization. In economic terms, modernity includes industrialization, urbanization, and the increased application of technology in all aspects of the economy (Willis, 2005). Conversely, development is known to be the mechanism by which individuals migrate from their conventional way of life to modernity (Tyndale, 2006). Stavenhagen (2012) explained evolution as transition, evolution, development, metamorphosis. Likewise, the idea of development relates to advancement or evolution (Mcgregor, 2008). Development in these generalist's context are characterized as progressing forward or advancing from one phase to another.

As a result of the Second World War, the imperialist fight for political freedom greatly affected development policy. In the meantime, rapid development was needed to develop potential economic independence to increase living standards. All these are

heavily focused on deliberate strategy and long-term strategy (Kirkpatrick, Clarke & Polidano, 2002).

Moreover, the development policy is targeted at enabling poor states to become prosperous and making development more sustainable in middle-income countries. In developing nations, development policy includes fostering peace process, improving the security system, planning social welfare, administering public utilities, and fostering human rights and freedom. Also, in the international arena, development policy involves negotiating reciprocal international frameworks on a wide variety of topics, like reducing tax evasion by multinational firms, securing a fair and transparent trade environment (Barder, 2015).

The goal of development policy is to help the initiatives of developing countries to raise per capita income and foster economic development. There are several forms of development policies like support for tourism, economic reform, support for cooperation between surrounding states, and so forth. This study will analyze the development policy in Thailand in the field of tourism development, especially under the Yingluck Shinawatra administration.

Tourism is essential because the movement of individuals as tourists often raises the flow of financial capital. Tourist investment reflects a large-scale voluntary transfer of capital (Sharpley, 2015). It makes tourism one of the swiftest emerging sectors in the global economy. According to the International Labour Organization, in 2015, Travel & Tourism is projected to produce more than 107 million jobs, contributing 3.6 percent of total employment globally, and to add approximately 3 percent to the gross domestic product (ILO, 2016).

According to the World Tourism Organisation (1998), Thailand has indeed been ranked among the top three most famous tourist destinations in Asia. Substantially, the

tourism sector is among the largest contributors to Thailand's economy, accounting for about 7% of Thailand's GDP, and the number of international tourists has been gradually risen to 22.3 million in 2012.

The tourism sector has a significant part in the economy of Thailand. Thailand is also geographically situated in a central region of South East Asia that can sustain tourism. Thailand's government also claims that tourism is a fast road to development in the economy and needs less spending than other sectors in Southeast Asian countries. Consequently, the Yingluck Shinawatra has also given importance to encouraging the development of tourism. Its tourism development policies are as follows: (1) Encourage the development of infrastructure to help tourism (2) Create, preserve and restore existing natural, cultural and historical tourist hotspots (3) To follow international standards, raising and sustaining the standard for tourism services (4) Advertise the market for quality foreign tourists (5) Promote tourism activities to bring quality to the tourism industry (6) Promote inter-agency coordination to offer quality services to tourists and (7) Enhance communications and public relations. (Shinawatra, 2011).

Indeed, the development of tourism under Yingluck Shinawatra is an aspect of the economic reform program. The goal of the Yingluck's government on the development of tourism is to promote investment by the private sector and local authorities. Any of the steps involved enhancing the quality of tourism facilities, avoiding the misuse of visitors, addressing environmental issues, and creating a sustainable tourism sector. Also, the administration has introduced steps to increase the efficacy of issuing visas, waive visa fees for travelers from Thailand's FTA member nations, or those with trade and investment ties with Thailand, and waive visa conditions for tourists from destination countries. The goal of these initiatives was to make Thailand a globally recognized tourist destination.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As a developing nation, Thailand faces development challenges owing to fast-changing economic trends (Siriprachai, 1995). Although it has an economic agenda, skilled labor, manufacturing potential, and services that can boost Thailand's development position, Thailand still has a high level of debt and little money to gain (Bangkok Post, 2015). Thailand, therefore, wants to be deeply active in the development of tourism in the country and its sub-regions. Tourism policy before Yingluck Shinawatra's Prime Ministership was primarily concentrated on improving economic viability but was not focused on sustainable tourism, the quality of tourism facilities, and environmental issues that could improve Thailand's revenue (Wirudchawong, 2012). This analysis will also show the progress of tourism policy under the government of Yingluck Shinawatra. This analysis will figure out how many drivers Thailand has determined to accomplish the ultimate goal of tourism development. Besides, it would also recognize a range of obstacles to the development of tourism in Thailand.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1- What are the drivers and obstacles influencing the advancement of tourism?
- 2- What are the roles of the government in the promotion of tourism development?
- 3- Does the tourism development policy during Yingluck Shinawatra have accomplished its objectives and improved Thailand's revenue?

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- 1- Investigate the drivers and obstacles that affect the development of tourism.
- 2- Analyze the government's role in fostering the development of tourism.

- 3- Identify the status of Thailand's revenue as a result of the development of tourism under the Yingluck's administration.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Studies on the development of the tourism sector are not recent. While there are a variety of studies on the development of tourism, most of them usually concentrate on development without clear regard to a particular government. This study would address the development policy in Thailand by analyzing the development of tourism in Thailand. The study clarifies the tourism development strategy under the government of Yingluck Shinawatra. Tourism development policy in Thailand is intensively studied, but the administration of Yingluck Shinawatra, in particular, is not extensively or well known. None is available on Yingluck's development strategy explicitly on the development of tourism in Thailand. This is necessary because we want to recognize the challenges of tourism development in Thailand and pinpoint the factors that have influenced the great potential of Thailand to achieve success. Thus, it is expected that this study will fill the void in the published literature on the development of tourism in developing countries in general and Thailand in particular.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEWS

The literature for this analysis would be categorized into three major sections. The first part is the literature on the development of the tourism sector in Thailand. The second part is the literature on the problems and prospects for the development of tourism. The third part is the literature on the role of government in the development of tourism.

1.6.1 The Literature on Tourism Development in Thailand

Rooyen (2018) indicated that the Thai government and private sectors in Thailand have been proactive in promoting Thai tourism through a variety of promotional campaigns. The tourism sector has developed as one of the most profitable and sustainable industries in the world. Conversely, the author has presented a variety of impacts from tourism. On the negative hand, tourists coming to Thailand will disrupt local culture, as local people can imitate tourists' lifestyles via the host community, and the outcome may be a lack of native customs and practices. On the positive hand, more tourists mean more money flowing into a country that has a positive impact on the Thai economy. Besides that, not all of Thailand's companies, particularly small local businesses, would benefit from the development of the industry. It might lead to more income disparity between rich and poor, which could increase violent acts, robbery, and scams.

Maliwan and Mujtaba (2012) explored tourists' practices in Thailand during the demonstrations in terms of security, information and tourists' perceptions about political issues. The study centered on the Bangkok district, which is engulfed by a range of important institutions, namely Suvarnabhumi Airport, tourist areas such as Bangkok, Sukhumvit, Kaosan Road, and Silom Road. Their results revealed that there was no longer a long-term effect of the protests but rather a short-term negative impact on tourism; most of the respondents were eager to return to Thailand but indicated that Thailand could change in terms of delivering information to citizens, tourist security, and the maintenance of political order to restore the picture of a peaceful country.

Another research by Untong, Kaosa-ard, Ramos, Sangkakorn, and Maquieira (2010) looked at the causal relationship among the tourism potential of the destination, the effects of tourism, and residents' support for tourism development in four tourist destinations in Thailand: Phuket, Chiang Mai, Pattaya, and Pai. The external factors

included in the analysis were the various impacts of tourism; the socio-cultural effect, the economic impact, the environmental impact, and the destination potential. Resident funding for the development of tourism was an intrinsic latent variable. Private collaboration was shown to play a major role in evaluating residents' support for local tourism development. The economic influence was yet another significant consideration, as the response varied in different regions. Increased investment and industry prospects have been the key economic impacts in popular destinations such as Phuket and Pattaya. Local job opportunities have been the biggest economic influence in newer tourism destinations such as Chiang Mai and Pai. Besides that, environmental, social, and cultural effects have not affected local communities' enthusiasm for the development of tourism.

Patawari and Sharma (2011) described a comparative analysis of tourism in India and Thailand. The research-based on the need for new technologies in the tourism field. The value added by industry is for employment, GDP, and the balance of payments. It also includes ancillary sectors such as hotels, a travel agency that supports tourism in Thailand and India. The authors provided some figures for the global tourism sector, showing its global significance.

OECD (2012) presented a range of immediate policy goals for Yingluck Shinawatra, such as the restoration of democracy, the preservation of macroeconomic stability, and the development of living standards. Agriculture, tourism, and health policy should be highlighted in the first steps of adoption. Such policies discussed in the policy promises to be enforced over the four-year institutional phase seek to establish a fairer distribution of wealth, increase the quality of education, encourage good governance and resolve concerns relating to natural capital and the environment.

1.6.2 The Literature on Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development

One of the main aspects of tourism development is to consider the drivers that affect tourism development. Bramwell and Lane (1993) clarified that sustainable tourism is commonly seen as a constructive approach to tourism development. Byrd said that stakeholder companies, alliances, and funding are the first and most recognized drivers to contribute to tourism development (Byrd, 2007).

Butler (2018) defined a core theme of tourism destination problems and opportunities in 2030. Four tourism problems and concerns were described as follows: (1) shifts in motivation and pressures (2) political and security challenges (3) climate change and (4) over-tourism. He stated that the problems facing tourism in 2030 are likely to be today's challenges. Constraints are most definitely in this respect. Environmental pressures concerning climate change and over-tourism are likely to have risen dramatically and potentially detrimental effects on tourism. Moreover, stability and protection are beyond the expertise of tourism to be resolved.

Veiga, Santos, Aguas, and Santos (2018) studied how businesses and destinations can offset the impacts of climate change and the problem of over-tourism, and the effect of air travel on climate change. These trends are now known to be permanent and the tourism industry needs to move to minimize their effect. Besides, the paper aimed at defining and encouraging common practices among destination managers and organizations in the various tourism industries. This study identified best practices across the industry, ranging from accommodation to tourism, tourism events, tour operators, and destination marketing organizations. Also, best practices have been established that enable tourism companies and destinations to follow creative, strategic strategies to ensure the survival of destinations and, at the same time, to build comparative advantages. The best practices of the authors are as follows: developing

innovative technologies and management processes, minimizing resource use, recycling, encouraging the use of environmentally sustainable transport; using local goods, managing rentals, and delivering education and benefits to stakeholders.

The key lessons for tourism organization and destination were posed by Costa, Montenegro, and Gomes (2018). The first lesson is in organization and destination. It identifies the obstacles and challenges facing tourism in 2030 that are most relevant to those facing it today. The second lesson is surplus demand and over-tourism. This explains how the majority of locals perceive the cumulative effect of tourism to be positive, which provides substantial economic benefits and encourages the greater social and cultural development of the destination. The third lesson lies in the Chinese demand for outbound travel. It provides a deeper understanding of the behavior and experience of Chinese outbound visitors is essential to a near alignment with their preferences and the destination bid, and closer cooperation between academics and industry practitioners may also provide better knowledge of the market. The fourth criterion is the idea of a circular economy that brings a new philosophy, the implementation of which would lead to more sustainable tourism. Technology is the last lesson. It explains how the hospitality and tourism sector is dealing with emerging obstacles requiring the mastery of digital technologies to translate data into information to enable reactive and constructive decision-making. The authors concluded that if the current global context does not change drastically, it would continue to obstruct development. They claim that an aware, reflective mindset is required to truly appreciate destinations while protecting the natural and constructed heritage of future generations, based on the values of justice, sustainability, and respect for all.

Mason and Cheyne (2000) reported the results of a survey that explored the attitudes of rural New Zealand residents to the proposed tourism venture before its

development. The key variables included in the analysis were the perceived impacts of tourists, the degree of development, and other similar factors, such as the proximity of locals to the tourist site and the degree of neighborhood participation. This research gave insights into the attitudes of residents towards tourism in the pre-development process. It also emphasized the significance of researching the development of tourism before its establishment. The study showed that women were more opposed to development than men. Their fears were primarily focused on the negative effects of tourism. Given the resistance, the participants acknowledged that tourism was helpful to the region.

Gusoy, Chi, and Dyer (2009) studied the mindset of locals towards mass tourism and alternative tourism. The variables influencing their perceptions regarding mass tourism and alternative tourism were illustrated by them. The study showed that there is a favorable and negative relationship between the understanding of positive impacts and support for the development of tourism. The study also showed that citizens who see tourism as a creator of positive economic impacts might provide patronage for all forms of tourism development. However, inhabitants who see tourism as a creator of negative socio-economic impacts will reject the creation of mass tourism, and the outcome has also demonstrated that these residents do not favor or resist substitute tourism development.

Yoon, Gusoy, and Chen (2001) analyzed the effects of economic, cultural, social, and environmental influences on the overall impact of tourism. The research also evaluated the cooperation of local people for the development of tourism. The exogenous constructions used in the research were economic, cultural, social, and environmental influences. The research involved two endogenous constructions, namely the overall influence of tourism and the encouragement of tourism by citizens.

As an outcome, the study showed that people would favor more development of tourism if they have a favorable view of tourism. In addition, a favorable view will push the project for an interaction phase with visitors. The analysis also showed that people would resist the development of tourism if they felt that the development of tourism would have a detrimental effect.

Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2001) developed a model of community support based on the social exchange theory. The study showed that the factors affecting the anticipated benefits of tourism were group satisfaction, institutional confidence, the ability to control tourism, and neighborhood circumstances. The perceived cost of tourism has not been influenced by the satisfaction of the community, although neighborhood problems and the ability to control tourism have no major effects on the satisfaction of the community. The research separated the impacts into 2 groups of gains and costs.

The concept of sustainable tourism development was given by the World Tourism Organisation (1998). The WTO concept highlights that sustainable tourism addresses the needs of the existing visitor and host areas, while at the same time protecting and improving prospects for the future. It is anticipated that it would contribute to the management of all resources in such a way that fiscal, social and esthetic needs can be met while preserving cultural dignity, critical ecological systems, biological diversity, and the life support system. Accordingly, the concept of sustainable tourism offered by the WTO centered on the contribution of ‘the present tourist’ and ‘the host community’ to sustainable tourism development.

Buckley (2012) assessed the global tourism industry that represents global sustainable development studies. The author claimed that the sector is not yet close to sustainability. Regulation rather than business measures can be an important catalyst

for change. Any tourism promoters are also using political approaches to achieve access to public natural resources and escape environmental constraints. Social and ecological influences, like population, noise, stability, peace, and security, are responses and indices for the global mainstream tourism market.

Sarnagadharan and Unuskutty (2004) discussed the value of encouraging young people to be tourism practitioners for social, national progress and development. In the era of globalization, liberalization, and privatization, young people need the help of specialists in the field of expertise to start up their own companies and to serve as competent managers of other-owned enterprises. The study claimed that tourism is known as a modern frontier that young people will fulfill their social and economic ambitions. The three essential components are related to the sustainability of the economy, the development of entrepreneurship, and youth education.

1.6.3 The Literature on Government Roles in Tourism Development

Goymen (2000) identified the various phases of development of tourism in Turkey and discussed the mechanism of development in the context of national, economic, and social sectors of society. The analysis showed that the state had played a critical role in certain periods. The creation of tourism in the 1980s was a state-sponsored operation but later shifted to a public-private partnership.

McDavid and Ramajeessingh (2003) addressed the possible role of government in the development of tourism. They concluded that the regional government would take strong steps in the planning and development process to ensure the survival of the tourism industry. They recommended good regulation by the government to mitigate the effects of tourism. The research debated about the dominant government's role in the tourism sector by direct and subsidiary market involvement, planning and