

Role of Service Innovation and Product Innovation for Community-based Tourism in Phatthalung Thailand

Yananda Siraphatthada, Duangkamol Thitivesa, Parichart Rattanabunsakul

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand

Email: yananda.si@ssru.ac.th; duangkamol.th@ssru.ac.th; parichart.th@ssru.ac.th

Abstract

The promotion of community-based tourism (CBT) is important to enhance the tourism industry performance. Therefore, purpose of this study is to examine the service innovation and product innovation to enhance CBT. The mediating role of tourists' satisfaction is also examined. Thus, the relationship between service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion were considered. Questionnaire was used for data collection from Thailand. Phatthalung Thailand has important potential for CBT which is considered in this study. A questionnaire was used to collect data from the tourism management companies in Phatthalung, Thailand. Results of the study shows that; service innovation has important contribution to enhance CBT promotion. Service innovation has positive influence to enhance tourist satisfaction which further lead to the CBT promotion. Similarly, product innovation also has positive influence on the contribution to the CBT promotion with the help of tourist satisfaction. It shows positive influence on tourist satisfaction which further lead to the CBT promotion.

Keywords. Service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction, CBT, Phatthalung Thailand.

1.

Introduction

Community-based tourism (CBT) has the ability to influence overall tourism industry through significant contribution (Fongmanee, Chaikhamwang, Yaibuates, & Jantahajirakowit, 2021; Jomsri, 2020; Sene-Harper, Duffy, & Sarr, 2021). Because the promotion of CBT promotion has the potential to contribute through several aspects. For instance, it has the potential to attract various tourists' interest in culture as well as heritage. The promotion of CBT has also the potential to enhance various income generating opportunities for poor people. Therefore, it is the important tool to decrease the level of poverty. Because the poor people living in villages can earn income through providing various services

related to the accommodation as well as hospitality. CBT is generally connected with the poor people living in different villages. These people invite tourists from different parts of the country to visit various events as well as culture (Fongmanee et al., 2021), in this direction, they generate revenue by providing several services to them. Hence, it led to the welfare of the people. It also increases the welfare of the society through income generating opportunities.

Similarly, CBT is also important for Thailand (Jomsri, 2020; Lo & Janta, 2020; Sawatsuk, Darmawijaya, Ratchusanti, & Phaokrueng, 2018a, 2018b). Along with the other nations, CBT also has same importance to promote tourism industry. There is important role of

tourism to enhance the economic development. CBT can also contribute to the economic development of Thailand through generating high revenue. Opportunities related to this type of tourism is also valuable in Thailand. However, it requires promotional activities through various strategies. Though, the strategies related to the CBT are very limited in Thailand which require special focus. In addition to this, this tourism has less focused by the tourism management companies. In this way, it is needed to prioritize this tourism to gain several benefits including the welfare of the community as well as families through the promotion of income generating activities by promoting CBT.

Tourism practices of Thailand are quite popular in whole world (Watanabe & Patitad, 2020). Several types of tourism have positive influence on the economy. However, CBT has low level of contribution which require various strategies to promote activities. Low contribution of CBT in Thailand requires special intention of tourism related companies. Other types of tourism in Thailand such as religious tourism and sports tourism has more important for Thailand as it has high contribution to the tourism industry as compared to the CBT. Therefore, promotion of CBT is more important for the tourism industry of Thailand (Lo & Janta, 2021). Because the increase in the performance of CBT in Thailand can increase the overall business performance of tourism industry. Hence, the present study is an important attempt to enhance the promotion of this tourism through service innovation and product innovation. Tourism management firms

working in Phatthalung Thailand can enhance the CBT. As Phatthalung Thailand has vital opportunities for CBT which require promotional activities.

Better services from the tourism management companies in Phatthalung Thailand can enhance CBT. The better services can be provided with the help of innovation. Innovative services can promote tourist satisfaction. As highlighted in the literature that service innovation has positive role to promote tourist satisfaction (Xiong & Tang, 2012). Furthermore, product innovation also has key role to enhance CBT. Product innovation has the ability to enhance business in tourism industry through tourist satisfaction. The ability to generate customized products can enhance CBT which lead to the increase in satisfaction level.

Therefore, purpose of this study is to inspect the service innovation and product innovation to enhance CBT. This study considered the relationship between service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion. Several previous studies highlighted the CBT (He, Huang, Mishra, & Alrasheedi, 2021; Lo & Janta, 2021; Sawatsuk et al., 2018a; Sene-Harper et al., 2021), but these studies have not considered the relationship between product innovation and service innovation with mediating role of tourist attraction. Thus, this study has crucial contribution to the literature in terms of CBT.

2. Literature Review

Phatthalung is southern provinces of Thailand along with 3,424 km² covered area. According to the estimation of 2018, this province has population approximately 525,044. The population has various sources to generate income. Tourism is one of the main sources of people in this area. Particularly, CBT can play important role if managed through various strategies because this area has various options related to the CBT. CBT has the ability to influence business activities having positive role to enhance wellbeing of the people. With the growing importance of CBT, very rare studies considered CBT in this area. Several studies have identified tourism potential in Phatthalung Thailand (Jomsri, 2020; Songkhla, Wanvijit,

Charoenboon, & Ninaroon, 2021), but, literature is rare on community based tourism promotion in relation to the service innovation, product innovation and tourist satisfaction. In this direction, the current study is the effort to promote CBT through product innovation and service innovation. Both the innovations can enhance the tourism in Phatthalung Thailand. The tourism companies working in Phatthalung Thailand can promote CBT through service innovation and product innovation. As both the service and product innovation can enhance the tourist satisfaction leading to the tourism promotion. Hence, the relationship between service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion is given in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study showing the relationship between service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion

2.1 Service Innovation

Innovation is the idea in the process, service or product which can be implemented on reduced cost and increase the level of quality in a short period of time. Service innovation also has similar features in which better services can be produced for customer at reduced cost or at same cost. A service innovation is a service product as well as service procedure that is grounded on latest technology or organized method. Service innovation is utilized to denote to numerous

things. These comprise however not restricted to: Innovation in various services, in service products – novel or better service products. Generally, this is compared with “technological innovation”, though different service products can have important technological features. Previous studies have identified that service is the key part of tourism activities (Oviedo-García, Vega-Vázquez, Castellanos-Verdugo, & Orgaz-Agüera, 2019) because it facilitates the tourists in several ways to promote tourism activities.

2.2 Tourist Satisfaction

Satisfaction is the key concern of business activities. All the business activities are majorly based on the customer satisfaction. A significant level of customer satisfaction can rise the business performance. Similarly, customer satisfaction is also most valuable in tourism industry. Tourists are the customers of tourism industry which should be satisfied to promote higher performance. Therefore, tourist satisfaction is the central position in tourism industry to achieve higher performance. Tourist satisfaction is significant for fruitful destination to achieve by the tourism company, the use of products and services, and the decision to return. A satisfied tourist revisits the same place again which lead to the higher business performance. Consequently, it is really important for the tourism companies to enhance tourist satisfaction. Several previous studies also show the key importance of tourist satisfaction in tourism industry (Mutanga, Vengesayi, Chikuta, Muboko, & Gandiwa, 2017). Thus, the present study is also an effort to promote tourism promotion through tourist satisfaction.

There is important contribution of service innovation in tourist satisfaction. Provision of better-quality services to the tourist enhances the level of satisfaction. The service related to the tourist guidelines to visits specific places also influence positively on the satisfaction level. Furthermore, the delivery of tourist on the required places also shows positive influence on tourists. Tourism industry is majorly connected with the quality services and quality services can be provided with the help of innovation in services. Innovation in services provide better level of quality at reduced cost. Therefore, better level of quality services delivery to the tourists increases the satisfaction. Literature also shows the positive role of service innovation in tourists' satisfaction. Along with the tourism industry, other fields of research also shows the strong

connection between customer satisfaction and service innovation (Weng, Ha, Wang, & Tsai, 2012). Furthermore, increase in tourist satisfaction increases the community-based promotion (Lo & Janta, 2021). Therefore, service innovation has direct influence on CBT along with the indirect influence through tourist satisfaction. Therefore, tourist satisfaction playing the mediating role between service innovation and CBT promotion which lead to the following hypotheses;

Hypothesis 1. Service innovation has positive influence on tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2. Service innovation has positive influence on CBT promotion.

Hypothesis 3. Tourist satisfaction has positive influence on CBT promotion.

Hypothesis 4. Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between service innovation and CBT promotion.

2.3 Product Innovation

Product innovation is described as the development of new products, improvement in design of sound products, or utilization of new materials as well as procedures in the manufacture of various recognized products. Numerous examples related to the product innovation include presenting new products, enhanced quality as well as improvement of complete performance. In this way, product innovation is important in the tourism industry which is reported by the literature (Lita, Maruf, & Meuthia, 2019). This study considered product innovation in terms of various products development by the tourism management companies. These products provided by the tourism management companies should have better quality to facilitate tourism.

Product innovation has major relationship with tourist. The innovation in product can promote the satisfaction level of tourists which has the ability to enhance tourism performance. Especially, product innovation in CBT is most important to enhance tourism activities. Because people living in villages invite the tourists to visit their areas, in this case, tourist require innovative products which may lead to the tourist satisfaction. Product innovation is also mentioned as an important role in tourism industry (Guisado-González, Guisado-Tato, & Rodríguez-Domínguez, 2014; Lita et al., 2019; Sundari, Yusuf, & Kusuma, 2021). Hence, it is proposed that;

Hypothesis 5. Product innovation has positive influence on tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6. Product innovation has positive influence on CBT promotion.

Hypothesis 7. Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between Product innovation and CBT promotion.

3. Research Method

Method selection is the most important part in any research study. Because the suitable method selection lead to the original results. However, inappropriate method selection may lead to different results. Therefore, after examining the nature of current relationship between service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion, this study considered quantitative research approach. Questionnaire research approach is selected by following the previous studies. Because several previous studies examined the tourism promotion with the help of primary measures. While considering the quantitative research approach, this study preferred cross-sectional research approach which is most appropriate to examine the relationship between variables after collecting data by using survey. Cross-sectional research design is also followed by several previous studies in tourism industry (Moghavvemi et al., 2017). Thus, the questionnaire was used in data collection from Phatthalung Thailand. 300 questionnaires were used in data collection. Respondents of the study are the employees working in tourism management companies. Both the private and public companies are selected in this survey. The companies working in the area of Phatthalung Thailand are selected. All the variables; service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion is measured by using questionnaires. Finally, total 160 questionnaire were received out of 300 which were used in data analysis.

4. Findings

Findings of the study are based on the Smart PLS a widely recommended software for data analysis (F. Hair et al., 2014; Guo, Hu, Wei, & Cai, 2020; J. F. Hair et al., 2012; Peng & Lai, 2012). While using PLS, this study examined the outer model and inner model. Before to examine the structural

model, this study removed the errors in the data. It is found that; service innovation has two missing values; CBT has three missing values and tourist satisfaction has one missing value. All the errors related to the missing values were fixed. Table 1 shows that data has no missing value and outlier.

Table 1. Data Statistics

	No.	Missing	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
SI1	1	0	1.769	1	1	5	1.125	1.69	1.568
SI2	2	0	2.476	2	1	5	1.421	-0.925	0.667
SI3	3	0	2.347	2	1	5	1.354	-0.487	0.844
SI4	4	0	2.361	2	1	5	1.24	-0.678	0.627
SI5	5	0	1.993	2	1	5	1.146	0.301	1.11
PI1	6	0	2.66	2	1	5	1.378	-0.955	0.522
PI2	7	0	1.98	2	1	4	0.965	-0.127	0.867
PI3	8	0	2.231	2	1	5	1.024	0.897	0.981
PI4	9	0	2.367	2	1	5	1.351	-0.388	0.896
PI5	10	0	2.592	3	1	5	1.329	-0.845	0.433
TS1	11	0	2.122	2	1	5	1.106	-0.751	0.608
TS2	12	0	2.34	2	1	5	1.353	-0.432	0.927
TS3	13	0	2.048	2	1	5	1.203	0.438	1.187
TS4	14	0	2.224	2	1	5	1.255	0.097	0.985
TS5	15	0	2.401	2	1	5	1.323	-0.698	0.723
TS6	16	0	2.088	2	1	5	1.16	0.581	1.146
TS7	17	0	2.054	2	1	5	1.074	0.756	1.156
CBTP1	18	0	2.218	2	1	5	1.27	-0.302	0.912
CBTP2	19	0	2.143	2	1	5	0.983	-0.142	0.664
CBTP3	20	0	2.395	2	1	5	1.398	-0.704	0.778
CBTP4	21	0	1.973	2	1	5	0.976	0.367	0.943

Factor loadings are given in Table 2 and PLS measurement model is given in Figure 2. This study used 0.5 as minimum level of threshold to hold the scale items. Service innovation is observed through five scale items and all the

items have factor loadings above 0.7. Seven scale items are used to measure tourist satisfaction with factor loadings above 0.5. Product innovation is observed through five scale items and CBT is examined by using four scale items.

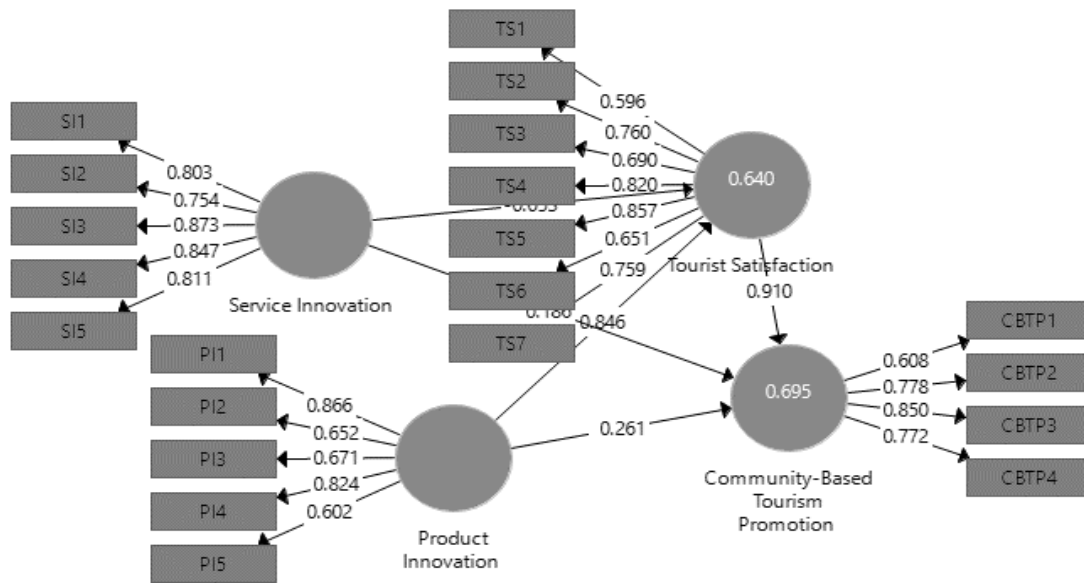


Figure 3. Measurement Model

Table 2. Factor Loadings

	CBT Promotion	Product Innovation	Service Innovation	Tourist Satisfaction
CBTP1	0.608			
CBTP2	0.778			
CBTP3	0.85			
CBTP4	0.772			
PI1		0.866		
PI2		0.652		
PI3		0.671		
PI4		0.824		
PI5		0.602		
SI1			0.803	
SI2			0.754	
SI3			0.873	
SI4			0.847	
SI5			0.811	
TS1				0.596
TS2				0.76
TS3				0.69
TS4				0.82
TS5				0.857
TS6				0.651
TS7				0.759

Table 3 shows the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015) is examined through HTMT as shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Reliability and Convergent Validity

	Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
CBT Promotion	0.745	0.753	0.841	0.574
Product Innovation	0.776	0.79	0.849	0.533
Service Innovation	0.877	0.888	0.91	0.67
Tourist Satisfaction	0.857	0.865	0.892	0.545

Table 4. HTMT

	CBT Promotion	Product Innovation	Service Innovation	Tourist Satisfaction
CBT Promotion				
Product Innovation	0.796			
Service Innovation	0.692	0.639		
Tourist Satisfaction	0.527	0.697	0.783	

Moreover, PLS inner model is given in Figure 3 which is used to examine the connection between service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion. PLS structural model is highly recommended PLS-SEM step to examine the relationship between variables (F. Hair Jr et al., 2014; J. Hair et al., 2017; J. F. Hair et al., 2013). In this data analysis process, it is

CR is above 0.7 for service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion. Furthermore, AVE is also above 0.5 for all constructs.

found that; service innovation has positive effect on CBT promotion. It also has positive influence on tourist satisfaction. Furthermore, tourist satisfaction has positive influence on CBT promotion. Additionally, product innovation has positive influence on tourist satisfaction. Finally, product innovation has positive effect on CBT. To accept the hypothesis, t-value 1.64 was considered and outcomes are given in Table 5.

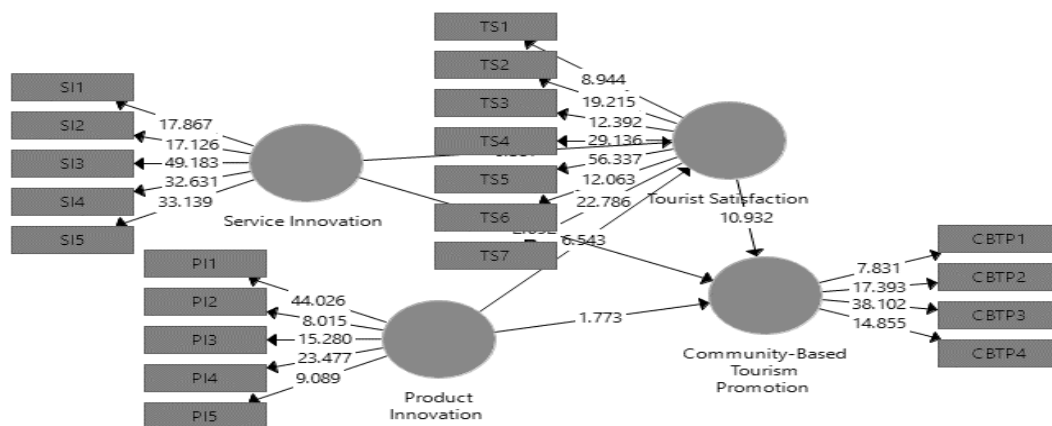


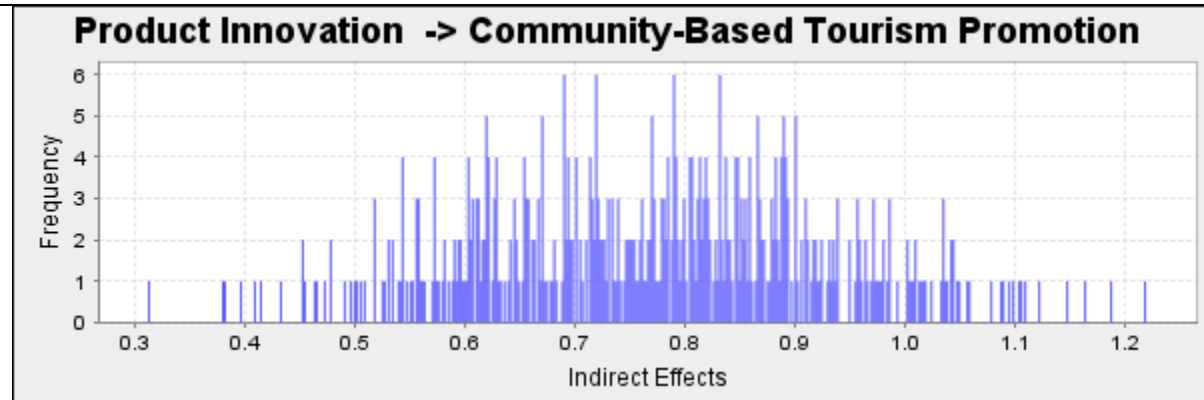
Figure 4. Structural Model

Table 5. Direct Effect Results

	Beta	Mean	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Product Innovation -> CBT Promotion	0.261	0.261	0.147	1.773	0.038
Product Innovation -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.846	0.841	0.129	6.543	0
Service Innovation -> CBT Promotion	0.186	0.188	0.089	2.092	0.018
Service Innovation -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.053	0.042	0.014	3.715	0
Tourist Satisfaction -> CBT Promotion	0.91	0.912	0.083	10.932	0

Table 6. Indirect Effect Results

	Beta	Mean	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Product Innovation -> Tourist Satisfaction -> CBT Promotion	0.769	0.77	0.155	4.96	0
Service Innovation -> Tourist Satisfaction -> CBT Promotion	0.048	0.041	0.136	0.358	0.36

**Figure 5.** Indirect Effect Histogram between Product Innovation and CBT Promotion

Furthermore, mediation effect is reported in Table 6 which indicates that tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between product innovation and CBT promotion. Tourist satisfaction reflect the positive effect of product innovation on CBT. However, the mediation effect of tourist satisfaction between service innovation and CBT is insignificant. The indirect effect histogram between product innovation and CBT promotion is given in Figure 5.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to examine the service innovation and product innovation to enhance CBT. Consequently, the relationship between service innovation, product innovation, tourist satisfaction and CBT promotion were considered. Additionally, the mediating role of tourists' satisfaction is also examined. Results of the study reported important insights for the CBT. This study reported important findings related to the role of service innovation and product innovation in CBT in Phatthalung, Thailand. Results of the study shows that; service innovation has important contribution to enhance CBT promotion. Increase in service innovation increases the promotion of CBT. Furthermore, service innovation has positive influence to enhance tourist satisfaction which further lead to the CBT promotion. Therefore, service innovation increases the tourist satisfaction and tourist satisfaction increases the CBT. In a similar way, product

innovation has positive effect on contribution to the CBT promotion. Product innovation effect through tourist satisfaction. It illustrates positive effect on tourist satisfaction which lead to the CBT promotion. Hence, both the service and product innovation increase the tourist satisfaction which shows major contribution to promote CBT in Phatthalung, Thailand.

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