

Effect of Product Development and Standard Product to Performance of Ecotourism: Case of Ranong Province, Thailand

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Abstract

This world is marvelous place full of mystifying places and spectacular experiences only waiting for travel around and exploration. Ecotourism builds cultural and environmental awareness and recognition of such places. Therefore, the current research has investigated the relationship between historical places, natural environment, cultural values, ecotourists satisfaction, and ecotourism performance. Ecotourists satisfaction has direct impact on ecotourism performance. According to the current research, historical places, natural environment, and cultural values particularly in Ranong, a province of Thailand, play significant role for the ecotourist satisfaction and attraction. Hence a survey was conducted to obtain primary data to know ecotourists' satisfaction level and how it impacts on ecotourism performance. In the survey 850 ecotourists were considered as the respondents of the current research. Hence, after collection of primary data from the respondents, a statistical software name Partial Least Square (PLS) was used to analyze the data for the achievement of end results of the current research. Moreover, the current research helps concerned authorities of Ranong that how they can utilize and earn more profit from ecotourism and make their natural areas recipient of well-being of their people.

Keywords: historical places, natural environment, cultural values, ecotourist satisfaction, ecotourism performance

1. Introduction

Ecotourism is a shape of tourism comprising of visiting pristine, fragile and relatively undamaged natural areas deliberated as a low impact and generally limited scale alternative to quality mass service commercial tourism. Ecotourism generates new job opportunities and yields variety of profits for the world richest ecotourism countries (Das & Chatterjee, 2015). Countries and regions such as Cost Rica, Norway, Kenya, Amazon rainforest, Gilgit, Kohat and Neelam valleys, Galapagos Islands, Antarctic are famous for ecotourism because there is well-preserved natural beauty. Ecotourism in other words is a source to boost financial and employment opportunities for local communities. Local people get financial benefits and let the world know about their expertise, culture and manners (Fang, 2020). Exchange of words between ecotourist and local people cause for clarities in mind. Hence, beautiful natural environment besides providing peace and love in mind are also wealthy assets for their people.

Ecotourism in Thailand because of its natural forests, climate changes, and famous historical places particularly in Ranong provides opportunity to ecotourist to explore world's beauty. Every year several ecotourist visit Ranong because of its great potential in ecotourism. Here in Ranong, ecotourists enjoy natural resource of massage; bubbling hot water or hot springs. Ranong is a land of grassy mountains and hills and most ecotourists' destined hill is Phu Kaho Ya. The hill with no tress attracts ecotourists from all over the world. Ngao temple is another destination for the ecotourists in Ranong. Hence Ranong has an endless list of places that attract tourists every year from all parts of the world.

However, there is yet a need to increase ecotourist satisfaction. According to the current research, ecotourist's satisfaction in Ranong is not at the level where it should be. There are some issues such as lack of good infrastructure that limits ecotourists from many historical places and creating difficulties for them (Leposa, 2020). Natural environment attracts tourists however, there is no definite system to facilitate the ecotourists. Due to all mentioned above reasons ecotourist satisfaction level is not good, and they don't prefer to suggest or come back to the region. Hence, according to the current research ecotourism performance is not good in Ranong, therefore, there is need to develop ecotourists' satisfaction level in regard to increase ecotourism performance for the region.

This is instigating study that explored the role of historical places, natural environment, and cultural values for the ecotourism and ecotourists performance. Different studies are available to investigate the role of natural environment, cultural values, and historical places; however, these studies have not considered Ranong which is also rich in all these sectors. Studies are also available describing the role historical places, natural environment and cultural values however their relationship with ecotourism performance and ecotourists satisfaction is missing. Thus, the current research is a vital contribution to the body of literature.

As it is clear from the past literature that ecotourist satisfaction can only be increased when there are adequate facilities offered by the local government or concerned authorities of the region for the visiting ecotourists. Furthermore, it is also evident from the past literature that ecotourism performance depends upon ecotourist satisfaction. This is the reason the ecotourists satisfaction have significant importance. Hence, the current research has explored the factors such as historical palaces, natural environment and cultural values which have deep impacts on ecotourists satisfaction and ecotourism performance. Therefore, the core purpose of the current research is to evaluate the influence of historical places, natural environment, and cultural values on ecotourists satisfaction and ecotourism performance in Ranong.

Contribution of the current research is very crucial to the body of the literature. Because the current research has explored the relationship between ecotourist satisfaction and ecotourism performance. Hence, the current research has both practical and theoretical contributions. Theoretically, the current research has described the very crucial relationship presented between historical places, natural environment, cultural values, ecotourist satisfaction and ecotourism performance. Practically, the current research is very important for the concerned authorities of Ranong to boost up ecotourism performance.

2. Literature Review

Ecotourism performance depends upon the potential for ecotourism in a country (Kry et al., 2020). If the potential is there, then there is a need to take steps to evaluate that potential as well as to facilitate ecotourists to visit that potential. A number of countries which have rich ecotourism and acquire prominent profits from this sector of tourism. Ranong also have rich ecotourism potential, its natural environment, historical places, and cultural values make it a dream destination for the ecotourists. Every year many ecotourists visit Ranong. However, ecotourists visiting Ranong are not satisfied at that level which can produce distinguished ecotourism performance in the region. According to a previous study, if the potential for ecotourism available in a region and it is not well advertised and explored, it does not generate ecotourism profits for the local people (Yu, 2020). Hence, it is necessary to explore and leave no stone unturned for that potential thus it can attract more ecotourists from all over the world. Therefore, all the historical places, natural environment and cultural values of Ranong, must be well explained with their original values and shape, hence they become final destination among the ecotourists. Bodies working for ecotourism in Ranong, need to take steps to meet requirement of ecotourists and bring such changes that can easily capture ecotourist satisfaction. Because according to the current research, ecotourism performance depends upon ecotourist satisfaction. Hence, a relationship between resources for ecotourism in Ranong such as historical places, natural environment, and cultural values with ecotourist satisfaction and esoterism performance is shown in Figure 2.

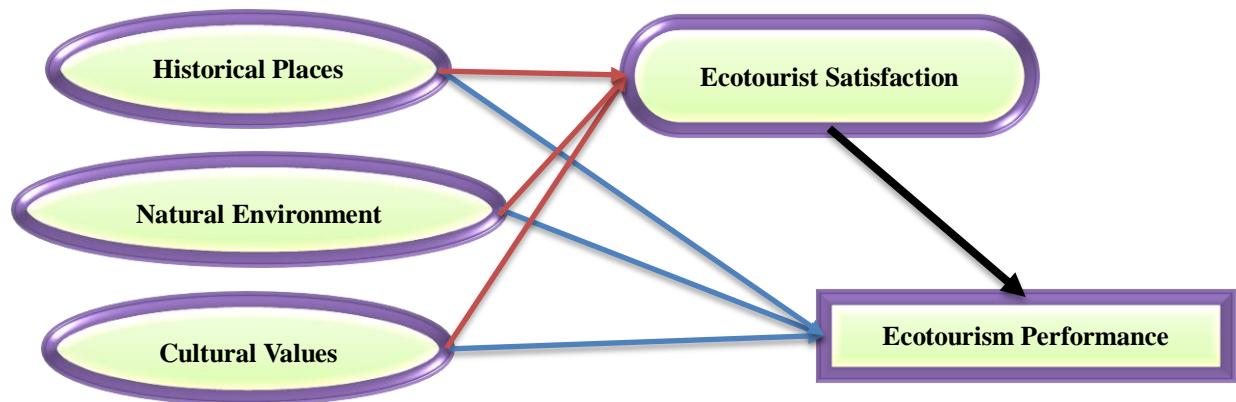


Figure 1. The Theoretical framework of the current study showing the relationship between historical places, natural environment, cultural values, ecotourist satisfaction and ecotourism performance

2.1 Historical Places and Ecotourism Performance

Historical places help people to know about the tradition and culture of a place where the historical places are situated (Fedorova, Fedorova, & Konopleva, 2020; Qian, Watson, & Bell, 2020; Rahman, Bindu, & Islam, 2018). Such places provide awareness about the rulers of past and their manners. Moreover, historical places help to understand about the evolution of human civilization. Hence historical places have significant important particularly for the regions where these places are present (Hewitt et al., 2020; Rizwan, Younas, Zahra, & Jamil, 2020). It will not be wrong to say that historical places are the investment made by elders of a particular place and time in earlier time that are yielding profits for their present rulers. Because historical places attract ecotourists from different part of the world. According to the current research, historical places in Ranong have plenty of potential available to attract ecotourists hence, it helps to increase ecotourism performance for the region. According to a previous study, ecotourism performance of a country depends upon number of available sources for ecotourism (Kry et al., 2020; Ramesh, Noor, & Zarina, 2020). Ranong has many historical places such as a final destination of ecotourists is in Ranong is the Nago temple that attracts number of ecotourists from all over the world every year. Hence, if there are more historical places and infrastructure is as developed in the region that ecotourists have no problem to visit the places, it will ultimately increase ecotourism performance for the region. Therefore, it is encapsulated that;

H1: Historical places have positive effects on ecotourism performance.

2.2 Natural Environment and Ecotourism Performance

Air, land, animals, plants, and water all form the natural environment that is necessary for all living creatures (Chowdhary, Bharagava, Mishra, & Khan, 2020; Saad, Mas'ud, Abdul Manaf, & Ishak, 2019; Shaibu, Christopher, William, & Linda, 2020). Oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, estuaries and other sources of water, mountains, hills, and land all comprises a natural environment. Crops and agriculture also add values in natural environment (Gülsün, Yıldız & Yılmaz, 2017; Borlu & Glenna, 2020). Natural environment has significant importance for humanity's entire life as it helps to regulate climate and air. It also provides natural beauty which is mandatory for mental as well as physical health. Moreover, natural environment provides habitation for animals and other wildlives. Ecosystem becomes more perfect for life with the diversity of natural environment. Hence, natural environment plays a vital role for human. However, in the world of today where developing societies have consumed natural environment around them, and have made up colonies without natural environment, it has increased the value of the natural environment that still provides natural beauty and peace of mind (Çelikkol, 2020; Seyram, Matuka, & Dominic, 2019). Hence, ecotourists from all over the world visit those places. According to the current research, natural environment of Ranong is also famous among ecotourists. However, local bodies of the region are needed to take steps to facilitate ecotourists hence, they can capture more ecotourism performance. There is more beautiful natural environment when an easy access to the environment is available it will ultimately increase ecotourism performance for the region. Hence, it is hypothesized that;

H2: Natural environment has positive effects on ecotourism performance.

2.3 Cultural Values and Ecotourism Performance

Core ideals and principles upon which a whole community get along in life are called cultural values (Travaglino & Abrams, 2019). There are several parts of cultural values such as customs; traditions and manners of a society, values; beliefs and acceptance, culture; values put on display by an entire society. Culture provides crucial economic and social benefits (Towse, 2019). Cultural values help to establish opportunities to come close with others. These values bring excellencies in life and enhance overall prosperity, welfare, and happiness for both communities and individuals. Cultural values cause for increase in tolerance (Budd, Herron, & Sartin, 2020). According to the previous studies cultural values give shape and framework to the societies. One more thing about cultural values is that these values cannot be changed, or it is quite difficult to change these values because these values are entrenched in social norms. Tourists from all over the world travel to explore cultural values of other societies hence, they can come together with other societies (Uduji, Okolo-Obasi, & Asongu, 2020). According to the current research, Ranong is also famous among the ecotourists because of its cultural values. There is plenty of potential present in the cultural values of the region. Because it is mixed culture having strong influences of Indian culture and Chinese rituals. Hence, deeply explored and increased cultural values also cause for an increased ecotourism performance for a region. Hence, it is enclosed that;

H3: Cultural values have positive effects on ecotourism performance.

2.4 Historical Places and Ecotourist Satisfaction

Historical places of a place bring ecotourists from all parts of the world every year wishing to explore the beauty of those places and to know how human civilization has shifted from old ages to the modern ages (Fennell, 2004). Such places help to understand history well and to be aware of the revolutionary human civilization. Some of historical places are the place of worship such as mosques, temples, and stupa. While other buildings have particular historical memories. However, according to the current research, there are many famous religious historical places in Ranong. Such as Wat Ko Phayam a buddhist temple might be the final destination of ecotourists in the region, Nai Suan Bang Non-Shrine another famous place of worship every year attracts several ecotourists from all over the world. Hence, there are many other historical places in the region which becomes final destination of the ecotourists visit the region. However, there is need to make these places publicly open and provide an easy access for ecotourists. If there are more historical places with unique values, this will increase ecotourist satisfaction level (Jacobs, Du Preez, & Fairer-Wessels, 2020). While the less historical places available in a region with common values don't draw attention of ecotourists. Hence, it is hypothesized that;

H4: Historical Places has positive effects on ecotourist satisfaction.

2.5 Natural Environment and Ecotourist Satisfaction

The world is losing places such as with natural beauty and adventure that provide peace of mind and reconciliation with nature (Ried et al., 2020). Hence, people travel to visit such beautiful places all around the world. Luckily there are still some places with natural environment and beauty that provide natural products to its visitors such as fresh air to breath, pure food to eat, and unpolluted space to live. According to the current research natural environment which brings people closer to the nature catch more ecotourists. Natural environment of Ranong, is also capable to attract more ecotourists from all around the world with its natural beauty and adventure. Forests, waterfalls, grassy hills, landscape, and rivers in Ranong take attention of ecotourists and cause for an increase in their satisfaction level (Currano et al., 2020). If ecotourists visit a natural environment and they don't find proper arrangements instead they have to face other difficulties, it will bother them very soon and they prefer to fly over to their next destined natural environment (Mitchell et al., 2020). Hence, to earn ecotourist satisfaction it is mandatory to take steps by the local government and concerned authorities such as easy access of carriages, verity of food, accommodation and other facilities that help to increase ecotourists' security. Therefore, it is encapsulated that;

H5: Natural environment has positive effects on ecotourist satisfaction.

2.6 Cultural Values and Ecotourist Satisfaction

To increase ecotourist satisfaction cultural values play a significant role. Cultural values bring harmony and unity among people (Peng, Zulnaidi, & Hutagalung, 2020). According to a previous study, cultural values of a society tell about the values and customs of its people. Moreover, cultural values bring aspirations and give hope to the people for their national or regional identity (Aslam et al., 2020). Hence, it is very important to care for cultural values. Societies which maintain their cultural values are recognized as amalgamated nation (Ardila, 2020). For ecotourist satisfaction convenience and accessibility are crucial elements. If there is lack of convenience facilities for ecotourists to visit their destined places and cultural values, it will offend them. Because they are at the toe of their

destination place but cannot observe and experience from inside due to inconvenience and inaccessibility. If there are adequate resources available for the ecotourists that help them instead, limiting them from their destination, it will definitely increase their satisfaction level for ecotourism for that particular region. Hence, it is hypothesized that;

H6: Cultural values has positive effects on ecotourist satisfaction.

2.7 Ecotourist Satisfaction and Ecotourism Performance

It is very important to calculate satisfaction level of ecotourists hence, precautions, preorganized, and timely rearrangement can be ensured for them (Kannaujiya, Arora, & Maurya, 2020). Ecotourists must be connected with trekkers particularly when they are visiting mountains and forests. Because management and security providing authorities should be well aware of ecotourists position hence, they are easily available to them if there is need for it. Moreover, accommodation facilities must be in accordance with ecotourists' desire and need (Meilida & Tuah, 2020). To earn satisfaction level of ecotourists it is also important for the concerned authorities hence, they can provide better services for the next time or to the next ecotourists planning to visit that places. According to the current research, Local authorities of Ranong are needed to take such steps hence, they can achieve more ecotourism performance for their region by increasing satisfaction level of ecotourists visiting there. Moreover, it is also observed that increased satisfaction level of ecotourists positively influence on willingness to pay extra eco fee for the visited area (González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, & Font, 2020). Hence, with the increased value of ecotourists satisfaction level, ecotourism performance will ultimately be increase. Therefore, it is encapsulated that;

H7: Ecotourist satisfaction has positive effects on ecotourism performance.

H8: Ecotourist satisfaction mediates between the relationship of historical places and ecotourism performance.

H9: Ecotourist satisfaction mediates between the relationship of natural environment and ecotourism performance.

H10: Ecotourist satisfaction mediates between the relationship of cultural values and ecotourism performance.

3. Research Methodology

Initially, selection for population of the current research was made. Hence, it was purposed that ecotourists who have visited Ranong will be the population and the respondents of the current research. After selection of the respondents, sample size for the current research was followed with the recommendation of Comrey and Lee (1992), it was suggested by them that a sample size of 1000 is an excellent sample size. Hence, the current research adopted this sample size. Therefore, contact information of the 1000 respondents were obtained from Ranong foreign office by letting the office know about the objective of the current research. Hence a list of 1000 ecotourists who recently visited Ranong, their contact information such as name, contact number, home address and email address, was prepared.

Furthermore, research method for the current research was picked according to the nature of the current research. It was decided to select quantitative research approach for the current research. While other two research approaches; qualitative and mixed method approaches were not opted, because they were not appropriate for the current research. Moreover, a questionnaire was designed to collect primary data from the respondents of the current research. The questionnaire has two major parts. In the first part, the respondents are to answer the questions about demographic information such as their name, age, gender, tour duration, number of visited places, and some other linked questions. Whereas the second part of the questionnaire comprises the questions about key variables of the current research, such as historical places, natural environment, cultural values, ecotourist satisfaction, and ecotourism performance. Additionally, a 5-point Likert scale containing 15 questions to add more values in primary data set of the current research, was also the part of the questionnaire.

Copies of the questionnaire were distributed among the respondents, attached with a descriptive paper describing objective of the current research and that all the feedback given from the respondents and their privacy will remain confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the current research work. National courier service of Thailand was used to distribute the copies of the questionnaire among the respondents. After the gap of 16 days, 470 responses were received from the respondents. Hence, a reminder using cellular network on the contact number of the respondents were sent. Hence, 20 days after the reminder 410 more responses were received. In 36 days, there were 880 responses were received. 30 responses were not answered all the questions asked from the respondents hence, after excluding the 30 partially filled responses, rest 850 responses were considered as primary data of the current research. Then PLS was used to analyze the primary data for the accomplishment of end results of the current research.

4. Data Analysis

According to Aydin and ŞENOĞLU (2018), errors in the data such as missing value and outlier must be removed before data analysis to get accuracy in results. In this direction, Table shows the missing value as well as outlier which shows that data is clear having error. Moreover, data normality is not an issue while using PLS.

Table 1. Data statistics

	No.	Missing	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
NE1	1	0	3.515	4	1	5	1.216	-0.652	-0.503
NE2	2	0	3.462	4	1	5	0.231	-0.809	-1.442
NE3	3	0	3.637	4	1	5	1.311	-1.669	-0.726
NE4	4	0	2.557	4	1	5	1.382	-0.892	-0.625
NE5	5	0	3.546	4	1	5	1.377	-0.771	-0.731
NE6	6	0	3.405	4	1	5	0.216	-0.818	-0.366
NE7	7	0	3.408	4	1	5	1.256	-1.865	-0.436
HIS1	8	0	3.603	4	1	5	1.297	-0.669	-1.698
HIS2	9	0	2.557	4	1	5	1.357	-0.806	-0.67
HIS3	10	0	3.454	4	1	5	1.177	-0.556	-0.49
HIS4	11	0	3.496	4	1	5	0.232	-0.799	-0.472
CUL1	12	0	3.538	4	1	5	1.383	-0.815	-0.698
CUL2	13	0	3.469	4	1	5	1.181	-1.55	-0.514
CUL3	14	0	3.447	4	1	5	1.221	-0.753	-0.476
CUL4	15	0	3.42	4	1	5	1.146	-0.423	-1.599
ES1	16	0	3.416	4	1	5	1.241	-0.719	-0.505
ES2	17	0	3.294	4	1	5	0.183	-0.777	-0.405
ES3	18	0	2.42	4	1	5	1.241	-1.708	-0.49
ES4	19	0	3.523	4	1	5	1.174	-0.516	-0.525
EP1	20	0	3.523	4	1	5	1.125	-0.52	-0.519
EP2	21	0	3.626	4	1	5	1.35	-0.812	-1.663
EP3	22	0	3.599	4	1	5	1.09	-0.507	-0.625
EP4	23	0	3.615	4	1	5	1.305	-1.834	-0.553
EP5	24	0	2.45	4	1	5	1.147	-0.599	-0.442

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used in this study which is shown in Figure 3. It indicates the factor loadings which is also given in Table 2. Factor loading must not be less than 0.5 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010). According to Hair, Hollingsworth, Randolph, and Chong (2017), factor loadings should be above 0.7. In this study, all items have factor loadings above 0.7, except one item. Hence, this study fulfilled the minimum criteria for factor loadings.

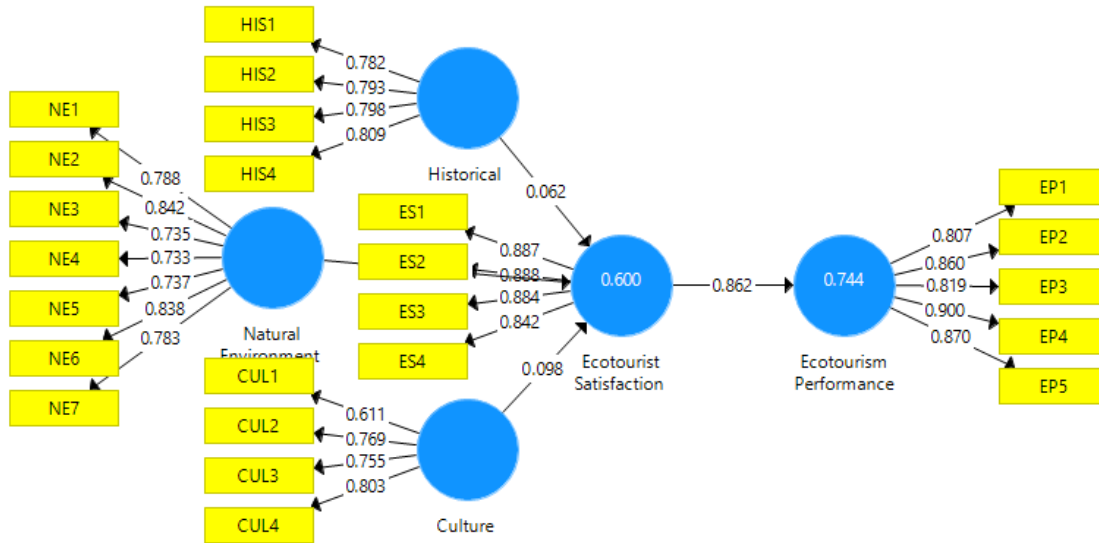


Figure 2. Measurement model

Table 2. Factor loadings

	Culture	Ecotourism Performance	Ecotourist Satisfaction	Historical	Natural Environment
CUL1	0.611				
CUL2	0.769				
CUL3	0.755				
CUL4	0.803				
EP1		0.807			
EP2		0.86			
EP3		0.819			
EP4		0.9			
EP5		0.87			
ES1			0.887		
ES2			0.888		
ES3			0.884		
ES4			0.842		
HIS1				0.782	
HIS2				0.793	
HIS3				0.798	
HIS4				0.809	
NE1					0.788
NE2					0.842
NE3					0.735
NE4					0.733
NE5					0.737
NE6					0.838
NE7					0.783

Cronbach Alpha, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) was examined which is shown in Table 3. It is found that Alpha and CR is above 0.7 for culture, historical places, natural environment, ecotourist satisfaction and ecotourist performance. Along with this, it is found that AVE is above 0.5 for all these variables. Moreover, this study followed HTMT criteria to determine the discriminant validity as shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Alpha, CR and AVE

	Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	(AVE)
Culture	0.741	0.82	0.826	0.545
Ecotourism Performance	0.905	0.907	0.929	0.725
Ecotourist Satisfaction	0.898	0.899	0.929	0.766
Historical	0.807	0.807	0.874	0.633
Natural Environment	0.893	0.893	0.916	0.61

Table 4. HTMT

	Culture	Ecotourism Performance	Ecotourist Satisfaction	Historical	Natural Environment
Culture					
Ecotourism Performance	0.763				
Ecotourist Satisfaction	0.808	0.756			
Historical	0.657	0.552	0.585		
Natural Environment	0.625	0.526	0.563	0.631	

Nevertheless, this study tested direct and indirect hypotheses as shown in Table 5 and Table 6. PLS bootstrapping is the most famous method for hypotheses testing which is recommended by various studies (Dahri, Hameed, Nawaz, Sami, & Bux Shah, 2019; Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014; Zahra, Hameed, Fiaz, & Basheer, 2019). Direct effect is given in Table 5 which highlighted that historical places, natural environment and culture has positive effect on ecotourist satisfaction and ecotourist satisfaction has positive effect on ecotourism performance.

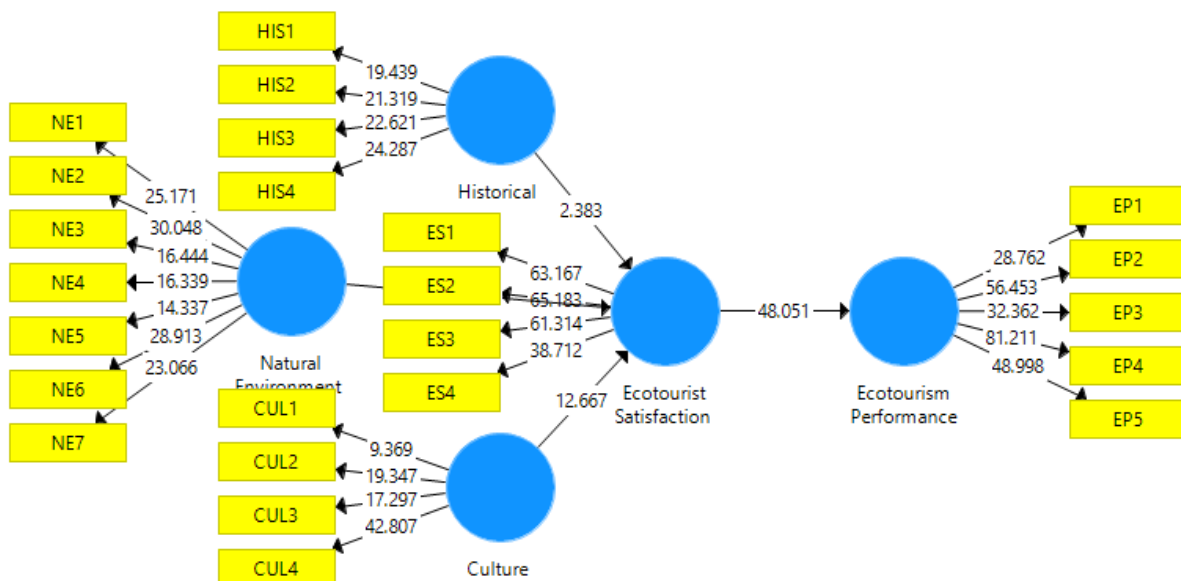


Figure 3. Structural model

Table 5. Direct effect results

	β	(M)	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Culture -> Ecotourist Satisfaction	0.098	0.097	0.008	12.667	0
Ecotourist Satisfaction -> Ecotourism Performance	0.862	0.864	0.018	48.051	0
Historical -> Ecotourist Satisfaction	0.062	0.057	0.062	2.383	0.019
Natural Environment -> Ecotourist Satisfaction	0.361	0.349	0.148	2.448	0.015

This study examined the mediation effect of ecotourist satisfaction. In this regards, three mediation effect was examined as shown in Table 6. Among these three indirect effects one is insignificant, however, two are significant. The significant effect is shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6. The mediation effect between historical places and ecotourism performance is not significant. Moreover, all the variables are expected to bring 74.4% change in ecotourism performance.

Table 6. In-direct effect results

	β	(M)	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Culture -> Ecotourist Satisfaction -> Ecotourism Performance	0.947	0.939	0.078	12.211	0
Historical -> Ecotourist Satisfaction -> Ecotourism Performance	-0.054	-0.049	0.14	0.382	0.702
Natural Environment -> Ecotourist Satisfaction -> Ecotourism Performance	-0.312	-0.302	0.128	2.439	0.015

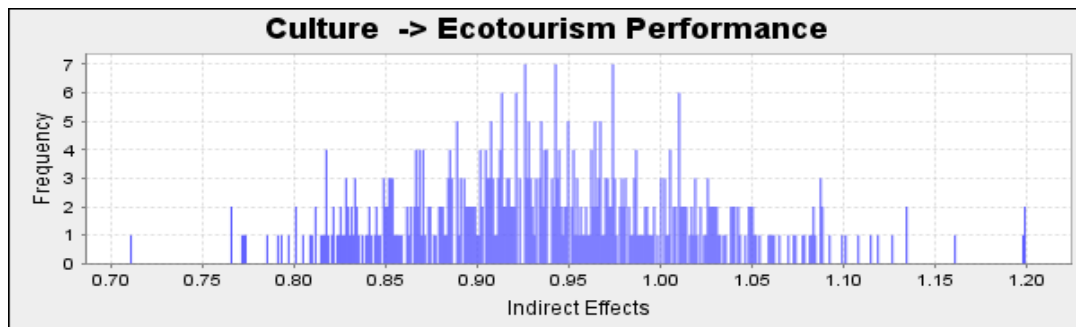


Figure 4. Mediation effect histogram: Culture -> Ecotourist satisfaction -> Ecotourism performance

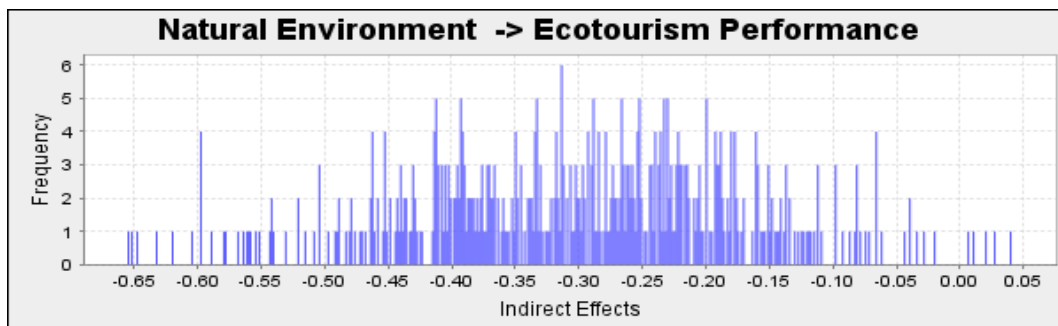


Figure 5. Mediation effect histogram: Natural environment -> Ecotourist satisfaction -> Ecotourism performance

5. Discussion

First hypothesis of the current research is; historical places have positive effects on ecotourism performance. For development of a community and protection of natural environment ecotourism play significant role. Hence, ecotourism is an establishment of synergetic relationship between indigenous people, natural areas, and historical places. In a venerate shape of ecotourism, assimilation of development and conservation occurs in which government

agents, entrepreneurs, and tourists amid to build continual relationships with the environment while developing the well-being of local people (Lund et al., 2008). According to the second hypothesis of the current research; natural environment has positive effects on ecotourism performance. It is obvious that international development community galvanized to adopt tourism depend on the attractiveness of natural environment for the betterment of indigenous people by improving economic welfare. Hence, natural environment present in a specific area cause for an increase in ecotourism performance of the area (MirarabRazi, Navrodi, Ghajar, & Salahi, 2020). The third hypothesis of the current research is that; cultural values have positive effects on ecotourism performance. Ecotourism has all the possibilities for achievements to transport a new socio culture existence to a host community. The ecotourists visit to a host society not only with their intentions, images, and expectations, but with the fiscal capability to financially satisfying them. Their expenditures and short investments have capabilities which can reshape the society's way of life. Therefore, cultural values impact on ecotourism performance.

Fourth hypothesis of the current research is stated as historical places have positive effects on ecotourist satisfaction. Ecotourist's behavior comprises of many stages that contain pre visit conclusion, experience appraisal, onsite experience, and post-visit behavioral acceptance, satisfaction and purposes, and behavior. Hence, ecotourists experiences are not finite towards a specific historical place instead, the whole experience has an influence on post visit, onsite visit and pre visit stages at destined historical places. The fifth hypothesis of the current research is; natural environment has positive effects on ecotourist satisfaction. If ecotourists find the natural environment more beautiful than their expectation or they meet with nature hence, there are fulfilled deep inside after viewing the nature, they return with full satisfaction (Carrier, 2010). If they had to face hurdles such as unavailability of carriage system that might limit the ecotourists from exploring unreachable or less accessed part of natural beauty, then they are not satisfied with the concerned authorities governing or organizing management system of that natural environment.

The sixth hypothesis of the current research is; cultural values have positive effects on ecotourist satisfaction. True ecotourists should be well satisfied with the cultural values of their destined places. However, ecotourists are a burgeoning class that is deviating from the devouring of things against the devouring of consequential experiences. However, cultural values of destined place for the ecotourists play a vital role for their satisfaction (Gohary, Pourazizi, Madani, & Chan, 2020). The seventh hypothesis of the current research confesses that; ecotourist satisfaction has positive effects on ecotourism performance. Ecotourists satisfaction is not only mandatory to increase ecotourism performance, it is also compulsory to know ecotourism satisfaction level hence, measurement and steps to make the tourism place more attractive and a destination place for maximum ecotourists, can be taken such as convenience facilities as per the required level of ecotourists, accommodation related facilities just in accordance with the visitors desire and need, and a valid trekking system to assist them. In the last three hypothesis of the current research it is explored that ecotourist satisfaction mediates between the relationship of historical places, natural environment, and cultural values and ecotourism performance respectively.

6. Conclusion

Historical places in Ranong, are the origin to capture more tourists especially those who are exploring innovation in natural means of health. Historical places of Ranong such as Tinidee Hot Springs, Punyaban waterfall, Porn Rang Hot Springs attracts tourists from all over the world every-year however, there is a need for proper management and administration to enhance ecotourism performance by increasing ecotourists satisfaction level. Natural environment of Ranong grabs attention of ecotourists however, deforestation, biodiversification, decrease in wildlife population, water scarcity, water and air pollution, desertification and climate changes are ruining natural environment of the region. Therefore, there is a need for proper and indispensable actions to stop and overcome the problems mentioned above to make the natural environment more beautiful and purer. Hence, it can attract more ecotourists that will eventually increase ecotourism performance for the region. In cultural values of the region, influence of Thai Theravada Buddhism is illuminated because 95% of the country's population follow the religion. However, there is Muslim minority only 6% of the population adding values in the culture of the region. Hence culture of the region is based on religious values that also attract tourists from all over the world to observe the religious values. However, there is yet a need to present all hidden diverse cultural values by exploring regional Ranong dining, manners and customs, costume, dress, birth traditions and many other such cultural values. Deep exploration and presentation of such values will ultimately increase ecotourist satisfaction. Ecotourist satisfaction is mandatory to increase ecotourism performance. Hence, there is a strong need to maximize allocated budget with proper attention and management to enhance values of historical places, natural environment and cultural values. The current research also deducted that there is lack of proper arrangement for ecotourists Hence there is a need to review for relieve in visa policies and fair rules for tourists.

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