THE KEY FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE ACCOMMODATION BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF FOREIGN BACKPACKERS FOR HOSTELS IN THAILAND

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A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF MANAGEMENT
COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
2015

Thematic paper
entitled

THE KEY FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE ACCOMMODATION BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF FOREIGN BACKPACKERS FOR HOSTELS IN THAILAND

was submitted to the College of Management, Mahidol University
for the degree of Master of Management
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August 29, 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to observe the consumer behavior of foreign backpacker on selecting the hostel to stay in Thailand and to understand the key factors that influence their buying behavior for hostels. This research adopted questionnaires targeted at foreign backpackers. The data were collected from 60 respondents who stayed in Thailand, at Khao San Road in Bangkok.

The findings of this research show that the most important factors that the foreign backpackers consider when making a decision to buy hostel accommodation are that the hostel must provide internet service and the cleanliness of the bedroom and bathroom. The price is a secondary factor that they consider, and they also consider paying a higher price if it provides a trade–off to having a good location. In terms of gender, there are only some variables that are significantly different between male and female backpackers, but most of the factors are not statistically different between age groups.

KEY WORDS: Accommodation/ Hostel/ Foreign Backpackers/ Buying Behaviour

40 pages

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

"Where should we stay?" is the kind of question that everyone who plans to travel for either vacation trip or business trip will have. Thailand is one of the most famous destinations in South East Asia and the numbers of tourists are increase every year (25.5% increase March 2015 compare with March 2014; Statistic, (http://www.tourism.go.th/home/details/11/221/24710). Some of the visitors are "Backpackers" who like to travel with low budget of transportation cost, hostel and budged accommodations.

Along with the increase of backpacker in Thailand, the numbers of hostel service also increase. The hostels business is easy to jump in and they compete with each other based on lower prices. Even though, price is the basic factor for the backpackers to make a decision of where they want to stay but they do not decide based on the price alone. If the business owners focus only to compete with price, the business can fail easily.

The Hostel is the low cost of hotel that the tourists can stay with low prices. It provides the place for visitors to stay with the value of money. There are a lot of kinds of room such as single room with build in bathroom, shared bedroom with the shared bathroom or dormitory with a few bathrooms.

In Thailand, the tourist industry is one of the main contributors to national income. The numbers of tourists are increase every year. The hostel business is one of the businesses that support the tourist industry. Therefore, in finding the key factors that influence the decision making of the backpackers may help to increase profit in the hostel businesses, which help strengthen Thailand's tourist industry.

1.1 Research Question

The main purpose of this study is "What are the key factors that influence the buying behaviour of foreign backpackers for choosing hostel in Thailand?" and "How the guests make the purchase decision, using what kind of information or hostel attributes?"

1.2 Research Objective

1. To observe the consumer behaviour of foreign backpacker on selecting the hostel to stay in Thailand

2. To understand the key factors that influences the buying behaviour of foreign backpackers on hostel in Thailand.

1.3 Research Scope

The method to collect data is the internet questionnaire with 60 respondents. The target respondents are the foreign backpackers who visit Thailand. The research focuses the foreign backpackers because they are the main groups that stay in hostel.

1.4 Expected Benefit

1. To use the data to identify which factors influence the buying behaviour of foreign backpackers for hostel in Thailand.

2. To use the data to help strengthen hostel business for small business owner.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

The hotel accommodation business in Thailand is expanding according to the increasing number of tourists. Thailand is the famous destination country in South East Asia that the backpackers who come to visit to admire the local culture, the natural environment and the lifestyle with low cost of living. The hostel businesses increase every year but for the late political situation in Thailand caused a dramatic decrease in the number of tourists and the hostels become over supplied.

"The success of backpacker accommodation depends on the steady streams of backpackers patronizing the establishment" (Musa and Thirumoorthi, 2011) Most of the hostel competes in prize to attract customers. The less number of tourists the higher bargaining power of the customers. The accommodation management must look at other factors that are the key influence to backpacker to make purchasing decision and consider adding the value to their business. This research will help to understand the key factors that influence the accommodation buying behaviour and what kind of information or hostel attributes that the backpacker use to make their purchasing decision?

2.1 The Backpackers

Locker-Murphy, Pearce and Cook, 1995 defined "The Backpackers" as the type of tourists that prefer to stay in budget accommodation, spend more time traveling around than the average visitors, and enjoy interacting with people, both locals and other travellers. They are also more likely to independently organize their travels. They often plan their journeys by using guidebook or internet and most likely travel to more than one destinations. (Musa and Thirumoorthi, 2009) "Backpackers travel to explore on a limited budget, yet with such limited travel funds what would motivate a backpacker to visit that location?"(Hsu, Wang, and Huang, 2014) Importantly, what is the key decision to make a choice of picking where to stay in the limited budget?

The backpackers are the same in terms of their social lifestyle, but they are also a heterogeneous group of people. Hecht and Martin, (2006) key finding is "The backpackers cannot be treated as a homogeneous group, and there are differences due to demographics of gender, age and country of origin."

Nash, Thyne and Davies, (2005) mention that there are considerable problems associated with defining exactly what or who a backpacker actually is, because backpackers are not easily distinguished economically or demographically. They do the summary of literature outlined and established the following characteristics associated with backpackers:

1. A preference for budget accommodation.
2. An emphasis on meeting other travellers.
3. An independently organized and flexible travel schedule.
4. Aged between 20 to 24, but can range from 15 to 60 years of age (as is the case with the Scottish Youth Hostel Association (SYHA).
5. Longer rather than brief holidays.
6. An emphasis on informal and participatory holiday activities.

The backpackers, which is the one type of tourists are often defined by their particular behaviour of travelling style of low cost budget, low cost accommodation, travel to multiple destination, may or may not like to meet other people. They also differ in their demographic background and wants and need of specific services, so these will affect their buying behaviours and purchasing decision for hostel.

2.2 The Hostel

A **hostel** is a budget-oriented, shared-room ("dormitory") accommodation that accepts individual travellers (typically backpackers) or groups for short-term stays, and that provides common areas and communal facilities. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hostel)

To be considered a **hostel**, the property must provide short-term, shared (dormitory-style) accommodation for individual travellers, though many hostels also provide private rooms.

The word "dormitory" refers to a room where travellers independently book individual beds in a shared room as opposed to booking entire rooms like in a hotel or guesthouse.

Synonyms & related:

1. Youth hostel (this is falling into disuse because most hostels accept all ages, or 18+)

2. Backpackers (from **backpackers hostel**)

(http://www.hostelmanagement.com/glossary/hostel.html)

The hostel is the low cost hotel accommodation that the backpackers who travel on low cost budget choose to stay. In general, the hostels do not provide luxury facility the same as hotels. The main purpose of the hostel is to be the place to stay for the backpackers or any travellers who seek budget accommodation. Even though the hostel is much cheaper than the hotel with less luxury and may by less comfortable, but that does not mean that there are some factors that influence the travellers to compare and make a choice where they want to stay or why they prefer to select one place over others.

Locker, (2005) finds that there are four critical factors that influence the selection of hotel accommodation which are location, price, facilities and cleanliness. However, to tell that which the most important factor is depends on the circumstances of the travellers.
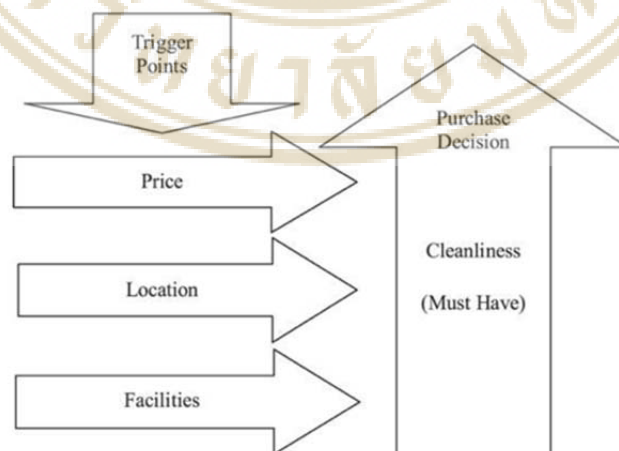

Figure 2.1 Relationship of factors as identified from research. (Locker, 2005)

Location	Price	Facilities	Cleanliness
Price – judgment of value of being close to attraction vs transport cost	Availability – price not import if no vacancies	Fridge, hairdryer parking, cooking – need for basic facilities	Price, smell, facilities, staff – basic expectations of guests
Needs – what is the purpose of the stay, what is required	Reason, pay, price – relationship between reason and amount paid	Sky, pastime, playground – attractions dependent on reason for stay	Curtains – indication of overall cleanliness
Business – need in relation to time restraints	Afford budget – expectation of amount to pay	E-mail – growing expectations	Bathroom – importance of cleanliness
Family area – subject to purpose of stay	Business accommodation – different cost expectations	Children's movies, bath, bathroom shower – needs for specific groups	Windows, furnishings – indicators of care for guest comfort
Look – appeal of the property from the road	Price vs location – cost of transportation		Looks, pictures – importance of promotional material

Figure 2.2 Brief description of identified factors. (Locker, 2005)

Hecht and Martin, 2006 results mention about five service preferences that are significantly influence backpackers when picking a hostel which are cleanliness, location, personal service, security and hostel service such as internet and laundry. Backpackers from different demographics backgrounds of gender, age and country of origin give different important to each service preferences. There are four key factors that hostel management should focus to compete or consider in developing.

1. Technology factor: not meaning only providing internet but the hostels must be seen on the reservation website and provide a place where the customers can share their experience which can be reference to others.

2. Female factor: promote "female friendly", accommodation, address security concern.

3. Age factor: the different age customers are looking for different service preferences.

4. Continent factor: deferent country of origin perceive hostel service differently

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The framework below in Figure 3 based on the literature review shows; the motivation factors are for backpacker requirements and satisfaction.
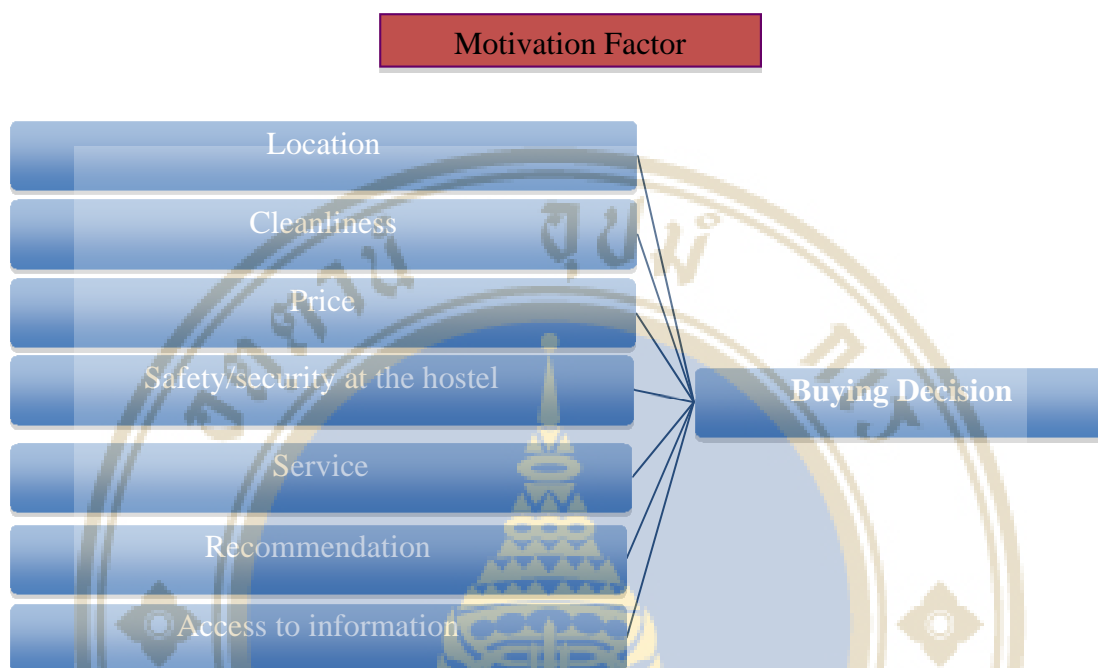
Figure 2.3 Framework of factors that influence the Accommodation Buying Behaviour of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand.

2.3 Question

What is the important factor that influences the Accommodation Buying Behaviour of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand?

2.4 Hypothesis Summary

The objective of this study is to learn if and how backpackers who visit Thailand are different in term of these factors for choosing a hostel?

According to literature review, Hecht and Martin (, -2006) key finding is "The backpackers cannot be treated as a homogeneous group, and there are differences due to demographics of gender, age and country of origin."

H1: The key factor that influence the Accommodation Buying Behaviour of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand are different for male and female.

H2: The key factor that influence the Accommodation Buying Behaviour of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand are different in age groups.

H3: The key factor that influence the Accommodation Buying Behaviour of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand are different in country of origin.

CHAPTER III
METHODLOGY

This research will focus on tourists who are backpacker that travel in Thailand. In this research, backpacker definition is anybody who travels with a preference for budget accommodation, an emphasis on meeting other people, an independently organized and flexible travel schedule, longer rather than brief holidays, and an emphasis on informal and participatory holiday activities (Loker-Murphy and Pearce, 1995). The method of collecting data will be through an online questionnaire.

The research method will be quantitative method to measure what are the key important factors that backpackers use for decision making to buy hostel accommodation. In this research, it includes sample size selection and the data analysis. Moreover, the method of data analysis that used in this paper include: descriptive analysis and cross tabulation.

3.1 Sample size

The sample size will be 60 backpackers who stay in Bangkok. Bangkok was chosen as the provinces to collect data because they are the famous destination for tourists and high tourists' traffic.

3.2 Questionnaire Designs

The survey questionnaire was developed from the literature review, which are aspects of accommodation (Nash, Thyne and Davies, 2005) and critical backpacker requirements and satisfaction items (Hecht David Martin, 2006). The questionnaire is designed to ask for motivation factor, which contain 7 variables following the conceptual framework.

The purpose of this survey is to study the key influence accommodation buying behavior of foreign backpackers for Hostels in Thailand.

This questionnaire consists of 4 sections, which contain 40 questions in total.

Part 1: Screening Information is using nominal scale for 2 questions.

Part 2: General Information as warm up questions, by using ordinal scale for 2 questions.

Part 3: Specific information for understanding consumer behavior by using interval scales for 33 questions and use five point Likert scales, from 1 to 5 that are:

1 — Not at all important

2 — Not very important

3 — Somewhat important

4 — Very important

5 — Extremely important

Part 4: Demographic Information is using nominal scales for 3 questions

3.3 Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program software version 22.0 for calculate and test the variables that are related to the topics.

This research uses measurement tools as follows:

1. Descriptive analysis

2. Cross Tabulation

CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the analysis and findings of this study. In this research, we collected information from 60 respondents. This paper set the significant level at 0.05. This chapter consists of the following parts: Demographics Information, Descriptive Statistics and Cross Tabulation.

4.1 Demographic Information

The demographics of the 60 respondents are as follows.
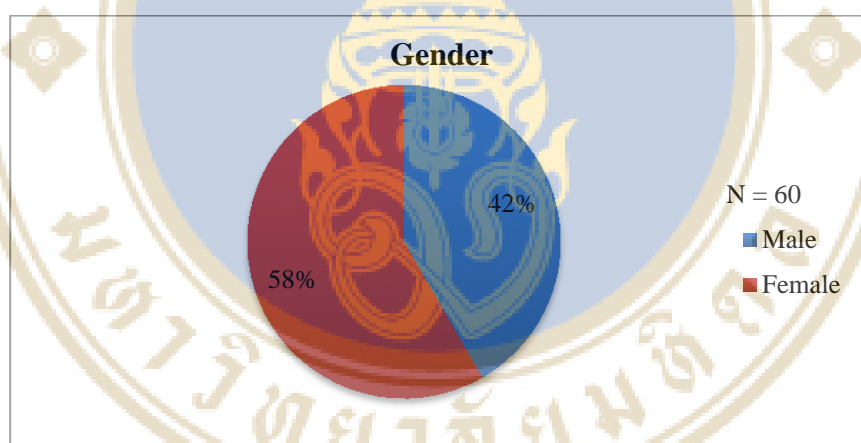
Figure 4.1 Gender
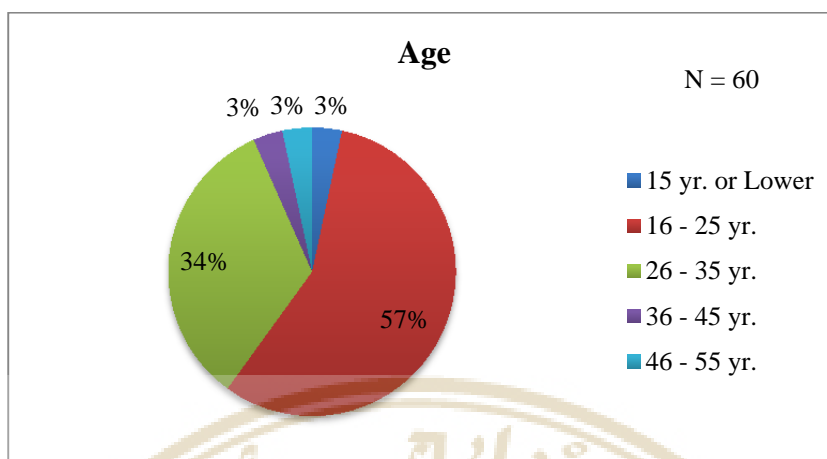
Figure 2.2 Age

Figure 4.3 Nationality

Continent of origin

N = 60

3%

9%   10%   5%

73%

- Asia
- Australia
- Europe
- North America
- South America
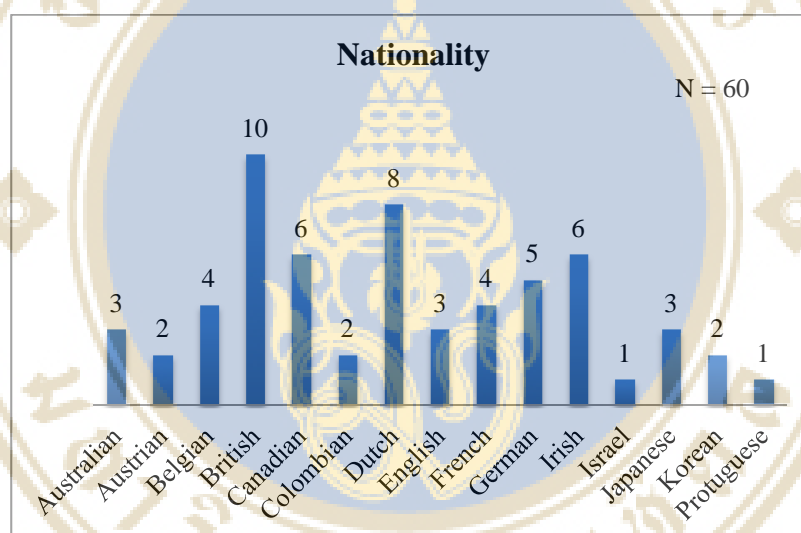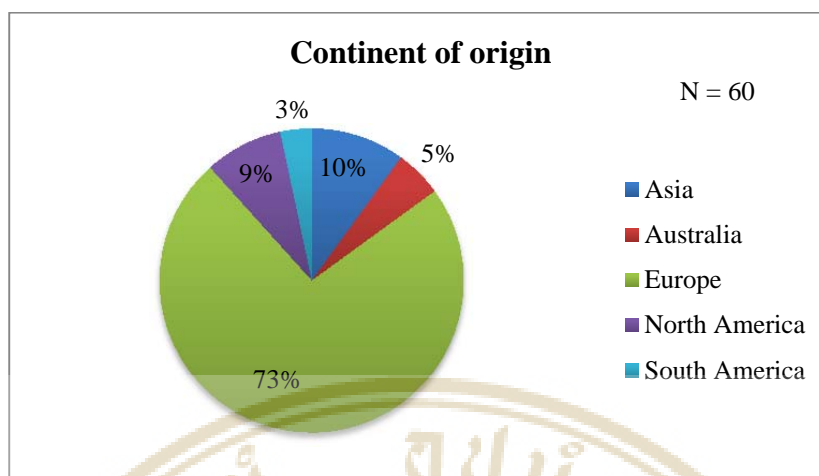
Figure 4.4 Continent of origin

From figure 4.1 to 4.4 it shows information about gender, age and nationality and continent of origin from 60 respondents.

Figure 4.1 shows that the majority of the sample for this paper is 58% from female and 42 % from male.

Figure 4.2 shows the age that the largest respondent groups is aged 16 – 25 years at 57% and follow by 26 to 35 at 34%, 15 or lower, 36 – 45 and 46 or higher as the smaller group at 3%.

Figure 4.3 shows about nationality the British is the largest group at 16.67% and follow by Dutch at 13.33%, Canadian and Irish at 10% equally, German at 8.3%, Belgium and French at 6.67% equally, Australian, English and Japanese at and 5%, Austrian, Colombian and Korean at 3.33% equally and the smallest are Israel and Portuguese at 1.67% equally.

Figure 4.4 shows where are the respondents come from by continent. The majority of the respondents are from Europe at 73%, Asia at 10%, North America at 9%, and Australia at 5% and South America at 3%.

4.2 Travelling time and typical accommodation
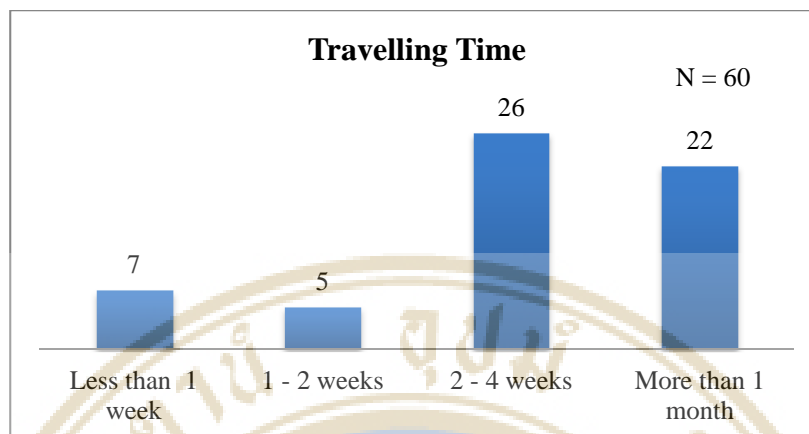
Figure 4.5 Travelling Time
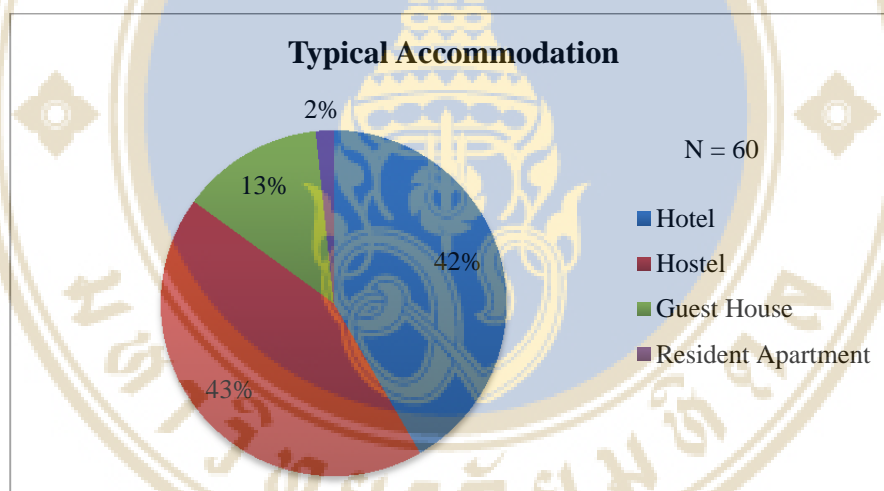
Figure 4.6 Typical Accommodation

Figure 4.5 shows the travelling time in Thailand of the respondents. The majority of respondents are travelling 2 - 4 weeks at 43.33%, 36.67% are travelling more than 1 month, 11.67% are travelling less than 1 week and the smallest 6% are travelling 1 – 2 weeks.

Figure 4.6 shows the typical accommodation that the respondents choose to stay when they travel. The majorities typically stay at a hostel at 43%, hotel at 42%, guesthouse at 13% and the smallest is resident apartment at 2%.

4.3 Main Finding

Table 4.1 Factor 1: Location

| Factors	Level of Importance					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.	0.00%	3.30%	3.17%	50.00%	15.00%	100%
The hostel is close to transportation.	0.00%	11.70%	35.00%	36.70%	16.70%	100%
The hostel is close to the city center	0.00%	15.00%	35.00%	33.30%	16.70%	100%
The hostel is in a safe neighborhood.	0.00%	11.70%	26.70%	36.70%	25.00%	100%

Table 4.2 Factor 1: Location statistics

		The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.	The hostel is close to transportation.	The hostel is close to the city center.	The hostel is in a safe neighborhood.
N	Valid	60	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.7667	3.5833	3.5167	3.7500

The results show that based on the four criteria more than 70% of backpackers think that staying in a hostel that is close to attractions, bars and restaurants, close to transportation, close to the city center and that is in a safe neighborhood are somewhat important to very important. The average scores of these four criteria are 3.76, 3.58, 3.51 and 3.75 respectively. From this result, the location is an important factor that affects the buying decision of foreign backpackers.

Table 4.3 Factor 2: Cleanliness

Factors	Level of Importance					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
The overall hostel cleanliness.	0.00%	8.30%	26.70%	45.00%	20.00%	100%
The cleanliness of the bedroom.	0.00%	0.00%	18.30%	48.30%	33.00%	100%
The cleanliness of bathrooms.	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	50.00%	30.00%	100%
The cleanliness of kitchens.	0.00%	6.70%	30.00%	43.30%	16.70%	100%
The cleanliness of dorms.	0.00%	3.30%	33.30%	38.30%	25.00%	100%

Table 4.4 Factor 2: Cleanliness statistics

		The overall hostel cleanliness.	The cleanliness of the bedroom.	The cleanliness of bathrooms.	The cleanliness of kitchens.	The cleanliness of dorms.
N	Valid	60	60	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.7667	4.1500	4.1000	3.6333	3.8500

The results show that based on the five criteria more than 90% of backpackers think that the hostel that has overall cleanliness, the cleanliness of the bedroom, the bathroom, the kitchen and cleanliness of dorms are somewhat important to extremely important. The average scores of these five criteria are 3.76, 4.15, 4.1, 3.63 and 3.85 respectively. From this result, the cleanliness is an important factor that affects the buying decision of foreign backpackers.

Table 4.5 Factor 3: Price

Factors	Level of Importance					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
The hostel provides value for money.	0.00%	1.70%	25.00%	53.30%	20.00%	100.%
The hostel provides the lowest possible price, so I can spend money on other things.	1.70%	20.00%	35.00%	33.30%	10.00%	100.%

Table 4.5 Factor 3: Price (cont.)

Factors	Level of Importance					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price.	0.00%	5.00%	25.00%	50.00%	20.00%	100.%

Table 4.6 Factor 3: Price statistics

		The hostel provides value for money.	The hostel provides the lowest possible price, so I can spend money on other things.	The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price
N	Valid	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3.9167	3.3000	3.8500

The results show that more than 70% of backpackers think that the hostel that provides the lowest possible price, so they can spend money on other things is somewhat important to very important, with the average score of 3.3. Moreover, more than 90% of backpackers think that the hostel that provides value of money and provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price are also somewhat important to extremely important. The average scores of these two criteria are 3.91 and 3.85 respectively. From this result, the price is an important factor that affects the buying decision of foreign backpackers.

Table 4.7 Factor 4: Safety and Security

Factors	Level of Importance					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
It provides lockers.	8.30%	18.30%	25.30%	30.00%	20.00%	100.%
It provides safety deposit boxes.	3.30%	26.70%	35.00%	23.30%	11.70%	100.%
The front desk opens 24 hours.	5.00%	16.70%	35.00%	26.70%	16.70%	100.%
It has a lock on windows and doors.	3.30%	13.30%	16.70%	35.00%	31.70%	100%

Table 4.8 Factor 4: Safety and Security statistics

		It provides lockers.	It provides safety deposit boxes.	The front desk opens 24 hours.	It has a lock on windows and doors.
N	Valid	60	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.3500	3.1333	3.3333	3.7833

The results show that based on the four criteria more than 70% of backpackers think that the hostel that provides locker, safety deposit boxes, has the front desk opens 24 hours and has a lock on windows and doors are somewhat important to extremely important. The average scores of these four criteria are 3.35, 3.13, 3.33 and 3.78 respectively. From this result, the safety and security is an important factor that affects the buying decision of foreign backpackers.

Table 4.9 Factor 5: Service

Factors	Level of Importance					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
It has clothes washing facilities.	11.70%	26.70%	38.30%	13.30%	10.00%	100.00%
It has a pick-up service from bus/train stations.	16.70%	31.70%	35.00%	16.70%	0.00%	100.00%
It has provides of travel information.	8.30%	16.70%	25.00%	36.70%	13.30%	100.00%
It has a booking office for local trips.	15.00%	26.70%	38.30%	18.30%	1.70%	100.00%
It has good internet service (Wi-Fi).	0.00%	8.30%	11.70%	36.70%	43.30%	100.00%
It accepts credit card payment.	8.30%	23.30%	28.30%	20.00%	20.00%	100.00%

Table 4.10 Factor 5: Service statistics

		It has clothes washing facilities.	It has a pick-up service from bus/ train stations.	It provides travel information.	It has a booking office for local trips.	It has good internet service (Wi-Fi).	It accepts credit card payment.
N	Valid	60	60	60	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.8333	2.5167	3.3000	2.6500	4.1500	3.2000

The results show that based on the three criteria more than 70% of backpackers think that the hostel that has clothes washing facilities, has a pick-up service from bus/ train station and has booking office for local trips are not at all important to somewhat important, with average score 2.83, 2.51 and 2.65 respectively.

On the other hand, based on two criteria more than 60% of backpackers think that the hostel that has provide of travel information and accepts credit card payment are somewhat important to very important, with the average score 3.30 and 3.20. Moreover, more than 90% of backpackers think that the hostel that has good internet service (Wi-Fi) is the most important. The average scores of this criterion are 4.15. From this result, the service is an important factor that affects the buying decision of foreign backpackers.

Table 4.11 Factor 6: Recommendation

Factors	Level of Importance					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
It has good recommendations from a guidebook.	1.70%	11.70%	41.70%	30.00%	15.00%	100%
It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I know.	1.70%	10.00%	36.70%	33.30%	18.30%	100%
It has good online reviews from guests who stayed there.	1.70%	6.70%	30.00%	33.00%	28.30%	100%
It has a high ranking on Trip Advisor.	5.00%	16.70%	33.30%	26.70%	18.30%	100%
It has many good online reviews by guests, not just a few, so the results are reliable.	0.00%	13.30%	31.70%	35.00%	20.00%	100%

Table 4.12 Factor 6: Recommendation statistic

		It has good recommendations from a guidebook.	It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I know.	It has good online reviews from guests who stayed there.	It has a high ranking on Trip Advisor.	It has many good online reviews by guests, not just a few, so the results are reliable
N	Valid	60	60	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.4500	3.5667	3.8000	3.3667	3.6167

The results show that based on the four criteria more than 70% of backpackers think that the hostel that has good recommendations from a guidebook, from other backpackers that they know, has a high ranking on Trip Advisor and has many good online reviews by guests are somewhat important to extremely important, with the average score of 3.45, 3.5, 3.36 and 3.61. Moreover, more than 90% of backpackers think that the hostel that has good online reviews from guests who stayed there are the most important. The average score of this criterion is 3.80. From this result, the recommendation is an important factor that affects the buying decision of foreign backpackers.

Table 4.13 Factor 7: Access to information

Factors	Level of Important					Total
	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important	
The hostel has a website.	10.00%	16.70%	30.00%	28.30%	15.00%	100%
The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.com.	5.00%	15.00%	26.70%	33.30%	20.00%	100%
The hostel is listed on an online hostel website with guest reviews.	3.30%	8.30%	33.30%	36.70%	18.30%	100%
The hostel has been reviewed on Trip advisor.	10.00%	16.70%	30.00%	30.00%	13.30%	100%
The hostel can be booked through the internet.	6.70%	8.30%	13.30%	38.30%	33.30%	100%
I can contact the hostel by e-mail.	8.30%	8.30%	23.30%	35.00%	25.00%	100%

Table 4.14 Factor 7: Access to information statistics

		The hostel has a website.	The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.	The hostel is listed on an online hostel website with guest reviews.	The hostel has been reviewed on Trip advisor.	The hostel can be booked through the internet.	I can contact the hostel by e-mail.
N	Valid	60	60	60	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.2167	3.4833	3.5833	3.2000	3.8333	3.6000

The results show that based on the six criteria more than 70% of backpackers think that the hostel that has a website, listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, listed on an online hostel website with guest reviews, has been reviewed on Trip advisor, can be booked through the internet and can be contacted by e-mail are somewhat important to extremely important. The average scores of these six criteria are 3.21, 3.48, 3.58, 3.20, 3.83 and 3.60 respectively. From this result, the access to information is an important factor that affects the buying decision of foreign backpackers.

Table 4.15 Compare Mean of all factors

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Service [It has good internet service (Wi-Fi).]	60	2	5	4.15	0.93564
Cleanliness [The cleanliness of the bedroom.]	60	3	5	4.15	0.7089
Cleanliness [The cleanliness of bathrooms.]	60	3	5	4.1	0.70591
Price [The hostel provides value for money]	60	2	5	3.9167	0.71997
Price [The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price]	60	2	5	3.85	0.79883
Cleanliness [The cleanliness of dorms.]	60	2	5	3.85	0.8402

Table 4.15 Compare Mean of all factors (cont.)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Access to information. [The hostel can be booked through the internet.]	60	1	5	3.8333	1.1813
Recommendation [It has good online reviews from guests who stayed there.]	60	1	5	3.8	0.98806
Safety/security at the hostel [It has a lock on windows and doors.]	60	1	5	3.7833	1.13633
Location [The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.]	60	2	5	3.7667	0.74485
Cleanliness [The overall hostel cleanliness.]	60	2	5	3.7667	0.87074
Location [The hostel is in a safe neighborhood.]	60	2	5	3.75	0.9677
Cleanliness [The cleanliness of kitchens.]	60	1	5	3.6333	0.9561
Recommendation [It has many good online reviews by guests, not just a few, so the results are reliable]	60	2	5	3.6167	0.95831
Access to information. [I can contact the hostel by e-mail.]	60	1	5	3.6	1.19604
Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online hostel website with guest reviews.]	60	1	5	3.5833	0.99646
Location [The hostel is close to transportation.]	60	2	5	3.5833	0.90744
Recommendation [It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I k2w.]	60	1	5	3.5667	0.96316
Location [The hostel is close to the city center.]	60	2	5	3.5167	0.94764
Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.]	60	1	5	3.4833	1.12734

Table 4.15 Compare Mean of all factors (cont.)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Recommendation [It has good recommendations from a guidebook.]	60	1	5	3.45	0.94645
Recommendation [It has a high ranking on TripAdvisor.]	60	1	5	3.3667	1.11942
Safety/security at the hostel [It provides lockers.]	60	1	5	3.35	1.23268
Safety/security at the hostel [The front desk open 24 hours.]	60	1	5	3.3333	1.09956
Service [It has provides of travel information.]	60	1	5	3.3	1.15421
Price [The hostel provides the lowest possible price, so I can spend money on other things]	60	1	5	3.3	0.96199
Access to information. [The hostel has a website.]	60	1	5	3.2167	1.1945
Access to information. [The hostel has been reviewed on TripAdvisor.]	60	1	5	3.2	1.17603
Service [It accepts credit card payment.]	60	1	5	3.2	1.24601
Safety/security at the hostel [It provide safety deposit boxes.]	60	1	5	3.1333	1.04908
Service [It has clothes washing facilities.]	60	1	5	2.8333	1.12245
Service [It has a booking office for local trips.]	60	1	5	2.65	1.00549
Service [It has a pick-up service from bus/train stations.]	60	1	4	2.5167	0.96536
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 4.15 shows the order of the mean response from the highest to the lowest. The factor that has the highest mean is more important for the respondents and the lowest mean is less important. The result show that the top 5 factors with more important are "Service [It has good internet service (Wi-Fi).]", "Cleanliness [The cleanliness of the bedroom.]", "Cleanliness [The cleanliness of bathrooms.]", "Price [The hostel provides value for money]" and "Price [The hostel provides a good

between trade-off between having a good location and its price]" with mean 4.15, 4.15, 4.10, 3.91 and 3.85 respectively. The 5 factors that are less important for the responders are "Service [It has a pick-up service from bus/train stations.]", "Service [It has a booking office for local trips.]", "Service [It has clothes washing facilities.]", "Safety/security at the hostel [It provide safety deposit boxes.]" and "Service [It accepts credit card payment.]" with mean 2.51, 2.65, 2.83, 3.13 and 3.20 respectively.

4.4 Compare Mean and Cross tabulation Analysis

4.4.1 Gender

Cross tabulation was conduct to compare the effect of gender on each variable in male and female condition.

Table 4.16 Compare Means of all factors between male and female backpackers

| | Gender | | | | p-value |
| | Male | | Female | | |
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
1. Location [The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.]	25	3.96	35	3.63	0.355
2. Location [The hostel is close to transportation.]	25	3.72	35	3.49	0.494
3. Location [The hostel is close to the city center.]	25	3.72	35	3.37	0.421
4. Location [The hostel is in a safe neighborhood.]	25	3.56	35	3.89	0.087
5. Cleanliness [The overall hostel cleanliness.]	25	3.84	35	3.71	0.925
6. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of the bedroom.]	25	4.28	35	4.06	0.332
7. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of bathrooms.]	25	4.20	35	4.03	0.64
8. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of kitchens.]	25	3.60	35	3.66	0.167

Table 4.16 Compare Means of all factors between male and female backpackers (cont.)

	Gender				
	Male		Female		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
9. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of dorms.]	25	4.04	35	3.71	0.14
10. Price [The hostel provides value for money]	25	4.08	35	3.80	0.47
11. Price [The hostel provides the lowest possible price, so I can spend money on other things]	25	3.12	35	3.43	0.513
12. Price [The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price]	25	4.12	35	3.66	0.037
13. Safety/security at the hostel [It provides lockers.]	25	3.48	35	3.26	0.818
14. Safety/security at the hostel [It provide safety deposit boxes.]	25	3.36	35	2.97	0.602
15. Safety/security at the hostel [The front desk open 24 hours.]	25	3.32	35	3.34	0.402
16. Safety/security at the hostel [It has a lock on windows and doors.]	25	3.60	35	3.91	0.848
17. Service [It has clothes washing facilities.]	25	2.88	35	2.80	0.984
18. Service [It has a pick-up service from bus/train stations.]	25	2.72	35	2.37	0.544
19. Service [It has provides of travel information.]	25	3.48	35	3.17	0.066
20. Service [It has a booking office for local trips.]	25	2.88	35	2.49	0.057
21. Service [It has good internet service (Wi-Fi).]	25	4.24	35	4.09	0.137
22. Service [It accepts credit card payment.]	25	3.20	35	3.20	0.812
23. Recommendation [It has good recommendations from a guidebook.]	25	3.72	35	3.26	0.065
24. Recommendation [It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I know.]	25	4.08	35	3.20	0.013
25. Recommendation [It has good online reviews from guests who stayed there.]	25	4.16	35	3.54	0.051

Table 4.16 Compare Means of all factors between male and female backpackers (cont.)

| | Gender | | | | |
| | Male | | Female | | p-value |
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
26. Recommendation [It has a high ranking on TripAdvisor.]	25	3.56	35	3.23	0.836
27. Recommendation [It has many good online reviews by guests, 2t just a few, so the results are reliable]	25	3.84	35	3.46	0.385
28. Access to information. [The hostel has a website.]	25	3.16	35	3.26	0.968
29. Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.]	25	3.28	35	3.63	0.742
30. Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online hostel website with guest reviews.]	25	3.60	35	3.57	0.881
31. Access to information. [The hostel has been reviewed on TripAdvisor.]	25	3.36	35	3.09	0.242
32. Access to information. [The hostel can be booked through the internet.]	25	3.92	35	3.77	0.797
33. Access to information. [I can contact the hostel by e-mail.]	25	3.60	35	3.60	0.235

From table 4.16 there are a significantly different mean scores between gender at the $p < 0.05$ levels for two variables which are "12 Price [The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price]" (p-value = 0.037), and "24 Recommendation [It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I know.]" (P-value = 0.013).

The result shows that males rate the factor of "12 Price [The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price]" more important than females with statistical significance (mean 4.12 vs 3.66). The same as "24 Recommendation [It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I know.]" that male also rate more important than female with statistical significance (Mean 4.08 vs 3.20).

According to *Hypothesis 1: The key factor that influences the Accommodation Buying Behavior of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand are different for male and female.*

The result shows that only two criteria of price and recommendation are different for male and female.

4.4.2 Age Group

Cross tabulation was conduct to compare the effect of 2 age groups of younger group (age 15 – 25) and older group (age 26 and up) on each variable in male and female condition.

Table 4.17 Compare Mean of all factors between Age Group

	Age Group				
	Younger 15 - 25		Older 26 and up		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
1. Location [The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.]	36	3.86	24	3.63	0.039
2. Location [The hostel is close to transportation.]	36	3.50	24	3.71	0.229
3. Location [The hostel is close to the city center.]	36	3.33	24	3.79	0.077
4. Location [The hostel is in a safe neighborhood.]	36	3.61	24	3.96	0.472
5. Cleanliness [The overall hostel cleanliness.]	36	3.67	24	3.92	0.528
6. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of the bedroom.]	36	4.03	24	4.33	0.225
7. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of bathrooms.]	36	4.00	24	4.25	0.274
8. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of kitchens.]	36	3.53	24	3.79	0.448
9. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of dorms.]	36	3.69	24	4.08	0.179
10. Price [The hostel provides value for money]	36	3.94	24	3.88	0.167
11. Price [The hostel provides the lowest possible price, so I can spend money on other things]	36	3.31	24	3.29	0.93

Table 4.17 Compare Mean of all factors between Age Group (cont.)

	Age Group				
	Younger 15 - 25		Older 26 and up		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
12. Price [The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price]	36	3.89	24	3.79	0.153
13. Safety/security at the hostel [It provides lockers.]	36	3.17	24	3.63	0.686
14. Safety/security at the hostel [It provide safety deposit boxes.]	36	2.97	24	3.38	0.461
15. Safety/security at the hostel [The front desk open 24 hours.]	36	3.03	24	3.79	0.092
16. Safety/security at the hostel [It has a lock on windows and doors.]	36	3.64	24	4.00	0.622
17. Service [It has clothes washing facilities.]	36	2.58	24	3.21	0.323
18. Service [It has a pick-up service from bus/train stations.]	36	2.33	24	2.79	0.036
19. Service [It provides travel information.]	36	3.19	24	3.46	0.009
20. Service [It has a booking office for local trips.]	36	2.61	24	2.71	0.206
21. Service [It has good internet service (Wi-Fi).]	36	4.03	24	4.33	0.128
22. Service [It accepts credit card payment.]	36	2.97	24	3.54	0.418
23. Recommendation [It has good recommendations from a guidebook.]	36	3.33	24	3.63	0.742
24. Recommendation [It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I k2w.]	36	3.67	24	3.42	0.413
25. Recommendation [It has good online reviews from guests who stayed there.]	36	3.81	24	3.79	0.322
26. Recommendation [It has a high ranking on TripAdvisor.]	36	3.28	24	3.50	0.167
27. Recommendation [It has many good online reviews by guests, 2t just a few, so the results are reliable]	36	3.61	24	3.63	0.842

Table 4.17 Compare Mean of all factors between Age Group (cont.)

	Age Group				
	Younger 15 - 25		Older 26 and up		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
28. Access to information. [The hostel has a website.]	36	2.94	24	3.63	0.025
29. Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.]	36	3.25	24	3.83	0.016
30. Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online hostel website with guest reviews.]	36	3.47	24	3.75	0.212
31. Access to information. [The hostel has been reviewed on TripAdvisor.]	36	3.06	24	3.42	0.25
32. Access to information. [The hostel can be booked through the internet.]	36	3.75	24	3.96	0.185
33. Access to information. [I can contact the hostel by e-mail.]	36	3.44	24	3.83	0.185

From table 4.17 there are significantly different mean scores between two age groups of younger group (15 – 25 years old) and older group (26 years old and up) at the $p < 0.05$ level for six variables which are "1 Location [The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.]" (p-value = 0.039), "18 Service [It has a pick-up service from bus/ train stations.]" (p-value = 0.036), "19 Service [It has provides of travel information.]" (p-value=0.09), "28 Access to information. [The hostel has a website.]" (p-value = 0.025) and "29 Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.]" (P-value = 0.016).

The result shows that the younger group rate the factor of "1 Location [The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.]" more important than older group with statistical significance (mean 3.86 vs 3.63). The older group rates the other four variables more important than the younger group with statistical significance. The other four variables are "18 Service [It has a pick-up service from bus/train stations.]" (Mean 2.79 vs 2.33), 19 Service [It has provides of travel information.] (Mean 3.46 vs 3.19), 28 Access to information. [The hostel has a website.] (Mean 3.63 vs 2.94) and

29 Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.] (Mean 3.83 vs 3.25)

According to *Hypothesis 2: The key factor that influences the Accommodation Buying Behavior of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand are different in age group.*

The result shows that only some criteria of location, service and access to information are different for younger (15 – 25 years old) and older (26 years old and up) backpackers.

4.4.3 Country of origin

According to *Hypothesis 3: The key factor that influences the Accommodation Buying Behavior of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand are different country of origin.*

The hypothesis cannot be tested because of the respondents in this study in terms of country of origin mostly are from Europe (Figure 4.3), without much variety. So within the collected sample of data we cannot compare well between countries of origin.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Discussion

The main objective of this study is to study the key factors that influence the accommodation buying behavior of foreign backpackers for hostels in Thailand.

The research model was developed to understand what are the factors important to backpackers when selecting an accommodation? and how backpackers who visit Thailand are different in term of these factors for choosing a hostel?

The result of the analysis is useful for the hostel owners in Thailand, and investors who are interested to invest in the hostel accommodation and researchers who are interested in this topic.

The results from this research support the conceptual framework. All seven key factors which are location, cleanliness, price, safety/security, service, recommendation and access to information are somewhat important to extremely important to influence foreign backpackers' purchase decision.

In addition, this research shows that the most important factor that the foreign backpackers make a decision to buy hostel accommodation are that the hostel must provide internet service and the cleanliness of the bedroom and bathroom. The price is the secondary factor that they consider, and they also consider paying a higher price if it provides a trade –off to having a good location.

Less important factors are if the hostel provides a pick-up service from bus/ train stations, has a booking office for local trips, has clothes washing facilities, provide safety deposit boxes or accepts credit card payments.

Regarding to the hypotheses, there are only some variables that significantly differ between genders. Most of the factors are not statistically different between male and female except it is more important to males that the hostel provides a good trade-off between having a good location and its price, and it has good recommendations from other backpackers that they know.

This research separates the respondents into two age groups which are the younger group (age between 15 – 25 years old) and the older group (age 26 years old and up. Most of the factors are not statistically different between age groups. The factor that is more important to the younger group is the location of the hostel being close to attractions, bars and restaurants. It is more important to the older group that the hostel has a pick-up service from bus/ train stations, provides travel information, the hostel has a website and the hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.

5.2 Contribution of the Study

This research supports the theory of the principles of relationship of factors as identified from earlier research in the literature. Locker (2005) finds that there are four critical factors that influence the selection of hotel accommodation which are location, price, facilities and cleanliness. According to the results, all factors can have an important influence on the purchasing decision of foreign backpackers for hotel accommodation at different levels.

5.3 Recommendations

The results of the current research show that the most important factors for the accommodation purchasing decision of foreign backpackers are cleanliness and internet service. The hostel owner and investors should focus on these two factors as important selling points of their hostel.

5.4 Limitations

This research only captures the groups of tourists who travel during the period of July. Most of the respondents come from Europe, so this research cannot analyze the hypothesis whether there are any differences between nationalities in the factors that influence their purchasing decision of hotel accommodation. Moreover,

this research only focuses on finding the various factors influencing backpackers to choosing hotel accommodation, but does not go deep into details about those factors.

5.5 Future Research

There is a new type of accommodation called "Airbnb" that may be considered a new competitive threat to the hostel business, becoming more popular these days. Future research can study about comparing between hostels and Airbnb: which one will backpackers more likely to choose as an accommodation, and why? Are there any advantages and disadvantages between hostels and Airbnb?

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaires

The Key Factors that Influence the Accommodation Buying Behavior of Foreign Backpackers for Hostels in Thailand.

This survey is a part of subject "Thematic paper: Consulting Practice" of College of Management Mahidol University. All responses in this survey are treated anonymously, and used for the completion of your Master Degree at CMMU.

The purpose of this survey is to study the key influence accommodation buying behavior of foreign backpackers for Hostels in Thailand.

The backpacker definition: anybody who travels with a preference for budget accommodation, an emphasis on meeting other people, an independently organized and flexible travel schedule, longer rather than brief holidays, and an emphasis on informal and participatory holiday activities.

This questionnaire consists of 4 sections, which contain 38 questions in total.

This survey will take less than 15 minutes to finish.

Please fill out the entire questions in this survey.

1. Do you consider yourself a backpacker?

(The backpacker definition: anybody who travels with a preference for budget accommodation, an emphasis on meeting other people, an independently organized and flexible travel schedule, longer rather than brief holidays, and an emphasis on informal and participatory holiday activities.)

   ○ Yes   ○ No

2. Have you ever stayed at a hostel?

(A hostel definition: a budget-oriented, shared-room ("dormitory") accommodation that accepts individual travelers (typically backpackers) or groups for short-term stays, and that provides common areas and communal facilities.)

   ○ Yes   ○ No

3. How long is your travelling time?

     ○ Less than 1 week

     ○ 1 - 2 weeks

     ○ 2 - 4 weeks

     ○ More than 1 month

4. What kind of accommodation that you typically choose to stay?

     Hotel   Bed & Breakfast

     Hostel   Airbnb

     Motel   Others……………

     Guesthouse

5. When choosing a hostel to stay, rate on a scale from 1 to 5 how important the following factors are to you.

	1 Not at all important	2 Not very important	3 Somewhat important	4 Very important	5 Extremely important
1. Location [The hostel is close to attractions, bars and restaurants.]					
2. Location [The hostel is close to transportation.]					
3. Location [The hostel is close to the city center.]					
4. Location [The hostel is in a safe neighborhood.]					
5. Cleanliness [The overall hostel cleanliness.]					
6. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of the bedroom.]					
7. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of bathrooms.]					
8. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of kitchens.]					
9. Cleanliness [The cleanliness of dorms.]					
10. Price [The hostel provides value for money]					
11. Price [The hostel provides the lowest possible price, so I can spend money on other things]					

	1 Not at all important	2 Not very important	3 Somewhat important	4 Very important	5 Extremely important
12. Price [The hostel provides a good between trade-off between having a good location and its price]					
13. Safety/security at the hostel [It provides lockers.]					
14. Safety/security at the hostel [It provide safety deposit boxes.]					
15. Safety/security at the hostel [The front desk open 24 hours.]					
16. Safety/security at the hostel [It has a lock on windows and doors.]					
17. Service [It has clothes washing facilities.]					
18. Service [It has a pick-up service from bus/train stations.]					
19. Service [It has provides of travel information.]					
20. Service [It has a booking office for local trips.]					
21. Service [It has good internet service (Wi-Fi).]					
22. Service [It accepts credit card payment.]					
23. Recommendation [It has good recommendations from a guidebook.]					
24. Recommendation [It has good recommendations from other backpackers that I know.]					
25. Recommendation [It has good online reviews from guests who stayed there.]					
26. Recommendation [It has a high ranking on TripAdvisor.]					

	1 Not at all important	2 Not very important	3 Somewhat important	4 Very important	5 Extremely important
27. Recommendation [It has many good online reviews by guests, 2t just a few, so the results are reliable]					
28. Access to information. [The hostel has a website.]					
29. Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online booking website with guest reviews, such as Expedia or Booking.Com.]					
30. Access to information. [The hostel is listed on an online hostel website with guest reviews.]					

6. Please specify your genders.

     O Male   O Female

7. What age group do you belong to?

     O 15 or Lower

     O 16 - 25

     O 26 - 35

     O 36 - 45

     O 46 - 55

     O 56 or Higher

8. What is your nationality?