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China's National Image: the Analysis of Chinese Tourists on New Media in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

This article comparatively analyzes the images of Chinese tourists on the news websites of Bangkok Post (E-Newspaper) and Channel 7 (E-media), to examine the tone of images of Chinese tourists on the websites of selected mainstream media in Thailand. The results showed a variety of discovery data of Chinese tourists' images happening in Thailand. When studying the national image of each country, it is regarded as a normal problem that the result came out both in a positive and negative way. Through the content analysis approach, this article reveals the basic framework of Chinese tourist behavior within and outside the national image, highlights the close relationship between tourism and national image-building. According to the findings, the frequent keywords that were mostly used and often appeared in news are negative words. The media agenda presented highly in Bangkok Post and Channel7 was the social agenda. Also, the political news received the lowest coverage in both Bangkok Post and Channel7 in regard to the chosen timeframe for the study. Overall, the social agenda was the most presented media agenda in both Bangkok Post and Channel7.

Keywords

Chinese tourists, Thai media, national image, new media, tourism

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INTRODUCTION

China has been globally observed as a nation with an early evolution and progressive financial, culture, and technological growth. This means, China's international prominence in relations of financial and technological development has been observed. Additional significant feature of China is its national image, for which the

government of China has advanced and focused universal strategy to be acknowledged amongst the international society (Xiang, 2013). Subsequently, the research linked to this matter is valuable to enhance the status, importance and worth to the national image (Hang & Wang, 2015).

Formerly, China's image was studied and identified to the mass media such as international newspapers which signified evidences to readers and had impact on individual attitude and ideas on China's image (Xiang, 2013; Xiao & Mair, 2016). China is

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regarded as one of the highest influential nations in the world based on characteristics like governance, economy, ancient treasure and huge land. Furthermore, it was an outstanding country in terms of academy, policy planning, and had a unique identity of mass media. In previous years, China's image had been offered through global press; some activities are hosting the Summer Olympics Games Of 2008, 2010 Shanghai Expo, and the 2014 APEC China (Ding; 2011, Li & et al.; 2009, Jianping; 2008).

During 21st century, China's image is shown through numerous kinds of the new media in the English language predominantly. Also the new media have influenced the daily lives of many people including Thai people. New media is widespread amid the people of Thai, and Thai is their official language amid a lot of Thai nationals (Anurit, et al.; 2011). Currently, new media is a significant partner in the public diplomacy (Suyono & Hanathasia, 2014) and tourism industry as it has been witnessed from famous platforms like virtual worlds, microblogs, websites, and social networking sites. The above mentioned online platforms have a resilient impact on the planning of trips by international tourists, particularly Chinese tourists, to travel to other nations which comprises of Thailand.

However, the mainstream media can extensively publish news articles and they also have online presence through websites, which their readers can also access easily and often fast (Wu & Pearce; 2014). Therefore, the new media has an important part in choosing destinations amongst Chinese tourists, due to the fact that it influences their plans and information opinion on tourism in a specific nation (Sparks & Pan; 2009).

Previous study by Banterng (2017) about Chinese tourists on Social Media in Thailand revealed that the images of Chinese tourists on social media in Thailand are more negative than positive and stereotyped. In regards to some of the representations of Chinese tourists, which were often found on Social media in Thailand

are: "poison of Chinese tours, break regulations, drop garbage, effects, steal, watch out, act violently, and uncivilized" (Banterng, 2017).

From the point of view of sources and ways of reporting on this two major media — People's Daily Overseas Edition and New York Times — have faced up to the uncivilized behavior of Chinese tourists more objectively. It represents the national image of China to outsiders. The study shows that the contents from two media have a lot of disagreement over the reports of Chinese tourists which is incompatible. PD mentions about the significance of Chinese tourist's on economic development, and also reasonable consumers; they not only comply with social order but also widely by destination countries. NYT, by the way, presenting the image of Chinese's tourists is more complex, they are social order and cultural customs violators; both economic development contributors and ecowarriors; they are both welcomed by destination country but are also hated by the locals (Hu, 2017).

From the previous study, the image of Chinese tourists includes two parts: cognitive image and emotional image. The report of Thai media focuses on the display of the behavior image, cultural image and economic image of Chinese tourists. Among them, Thai society plays a dominant role in the cognitive image of Chinese tourists' economic purchasing power. The market value and consumption ability of Chinese tourists have increased their influence on Thai economy and society. Media public opinion has guided the society to establish a positive emotional image of Chinese tourists as a whole, and has affected the response strategies of Thai tourism industry to the image of Chinese tourists.

The cognitive differences between the micro-behavior of tourists and the macro-image of a big country form the tension and conflict of Thai society's understanding of Chinese tourists, which brings new enlightenment to the shaping and optimization of the image of Chinese outbound tourists. It is also found from the

research that the discrepancy in the perception of micro image of tourists and macro image of the country leads to the tension in Thailand people's understanding towards China, and it sheds new light on the construction and refinement of Chinese outbound tourist image (Feng, Wu & Xu, 2017).

Due to the national image study, some of the scholars have implemented and analyzed the media attributes of China's image according to the following sections: the public agenda (China's national image in the western eyes), political, economic and cultural image based on media reports reflecting the specific attributes of this categories for subsequent domination of this focus in media and public agenda of Western countries (FengYuan Liu, 2013).

The national image of the country is also strongly connected with the attitude and the foreign policy of the country towards the foreign country. So, the policy agenda is also an important point, which is affecting the media agenda and public agenda construction. In this case, the positive or negative image of foreign country can also influence the media coverage (Zhang Cui, 2012).

The objective of this study is to examine the tone of images of Chinese tourists on the websites of selected mainstream media in Thailand. Moreover, the study seeks to identify the images of Chinese tourists travelling to Thailand through new media to analyze dissimilarities of content production in relation to Chinese tourists on E-Newspaper and E-Electronic media in Thailand.

METHOD

The Context: Chinese Tourists

This study was conducted with the use of China's national image concept by its representation in media agendas and images among Thai new media outlets. The important point of the research process will be bounded up with the current image of Chinese tourists in Thailand, which will be analyzed through it's the representation in Thai new media outlets.

China was rated as the world's leading center of international tourists in 2012. In relation to the United Nations World Tourism Organization statistics, Chinese tourists used up to \$102 billion throughout their trips to other nations (Skift Trends Report, 2013; Lahouati, 2012). The number of Chinese tourists making trips to other nations has been swiftly growing due to advanced acquisition power and economic development (Li & Stepchenkova, 2012).

In 2012, tourists in Thailand amounted to 21 million tourists and this included 2.8 million Chinese tourists or 12.1% of the entire tourists, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). In a previous study, Xiang (2013) explores significant reasons which have led to the exceptional traits of Chinese tourists. The researcher discovered that there are five factors influencing the travel of Chinese tourists, which are; socio-demographic features, enthusiasms, the process of making decisions (for instance travel expenses, lodging, extent of stay), places of destination (nations, provinces and towns), and travelers styles (financial plan). Maximum of Chinese tourists are mid-class status and their touring is in relation to the period they have in the precise nation.

Another study by Dung and Reijnders (2013) examined the "history of tourism of Chinese tourists" and their attitude in Paris, France. The findings revealed that the Chinese tourists started travelling overseas in 1980. The Chinese tourists visited other bordering nations in Asia, Southeast Asia, and further to Europe when many European nations were exposed to tourism in 2004.

Also an earlier study by Han and Wang (2015), proved that the tourists including Chinese tourists have an impact on the perceptiveness of national images of the nation they travel to. The Chinese tourists have impact on the perceptiveness of other individuals with diverse culture due to the fact that they signify "China's national image." Hence, positive attitude can affect good national image. The

national image of China is transported through essential mass media mediums too, specifically newspaper headlines imitating their identity and individuals' views towards the country (Xiao & Mair; 2016).

Previous studies (Xiang; 2013, Dung & Rejinders; 2013, Han & Wang 2015) focused on the traits, history and attitude of Chinese tourists, as well as their impact on China's national image. Therefore, this current study will fill the gap of examining China's national image through Chinese tourists' attitude on new media platforms in Thailand. This study comparatively analyzes the images of Chinese tourists on the websites of Bangkok Post (E-Newspaper) and Channel 7 (E-media) by answering two main questions:

1. What are the images of Chinese tourists as it is represented through selected new media in Thailand?
2. Does E-Newspaper in Thailand present media agenda of Chinese tourists that are different from that presented by the E-media in Thailand?

Sample

After the military takeover in 2014 the new government became alarmed because of the mass decrease of tourists visiting the country. The main reason was connected with political instability in the country since the civil government has been overthrown. That's why the Tourism Authority of Thailand has provided a new campaign for tourists attraction "2015: Discover Thainess".

According to this program, the government was estimating to increase the touristic flow into the country due to the financial promotion of touristic destinations (via advertisement and special promotions) and creation of new touristic routes. Subsequently the touristic sphere has been increased and gained additional revenues for the state economy.

Due to the importance of this program in promoting the tourists and current relations

between the countries, the data collection period will be composed for 4 years from 1 January 2015 to 31st December 2018 and realized by implementation of constructed week into the work. The researchers will use two Thailand news media organizations which are Channel 7 News and Bangkok Post for collecting the samples based on their new media platforms.

The searching keyword of "Chinese Tourist" will be used both in Thai and English language to collect the news reports. Due to the content analysis approach, our group will transfer the raw data into the numerical data sets based on the coding process. That's why the creation of code book and coding manual will become the subsequent step after the data collecting procedure based on the sampling framework.

The research sampling will be based on the articles collected from two media outlets accordingly to the keywords "Chinese tourist" and "Chinese tourists" or "นักท่องเที่ยวจีน" in Thai language. That's why in line with the time frameworks of the research, the scientific group has identified 125 samples based on the news reports of Channel7 and Bangkok Post. Therefore, the sampling size is limited by the amount of articles found according to the research dimensions. The subsequent comprehensive analysis of data and results of the research will be based on this exposed samples.

Data Collection Method: Content Analysis

The research was conducted by using the content analysis as the most reliable research approach for transferring the textual content into the numerical data with the observance of such criteria as research validity, generalizability and replicability of the final results. The findings were represented and summarized in the form of statistical tables for ensuring of the reliable and consistent analysis of numerical data. The transformation of textual signed into the numerical data was enabled by the coding

process and creation of the codebook to describe the steps of variables transformation. So, in the current research the content analysis was considered as the systematic correlation of media content with the formed categories using the statistical methods for providing the consequent analysis of data (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2014).

For the comprehensive content analysis, the research group selected two media outlets as the representatives of Thai new media journalism — Channel 7 News and Bangkok Post — apply the descriptive research design in the current project for the reinforcement of research's validity due to the direct use of collecting data for description and subsequent analysis of research results. Moreover, the findings were generalized and used in other scientific researches in the purpose to describe and enlarge the understanding of concepts covered in this work (Baha, 2016).

Why Channel 7 News?

According to Channel 7's official website, it is both the most popular and most commercially successful station in Thailand with more than 50% of the total audience followed by Channel 3 at just under 30%. It began establishing broadcasting relay stations since 1973. In 1978, the provincial stations began broadcasting service from Bangkok and were relaying through network stations in rural areas, which was the first such service in Thailand. Currently, Channel 7 has altogether 37 network stations broadcasting signal covering nationwide as well as border areas of neighboring countries (Channel 7).

Therefore, since Channel is the most popular channel broadcasting in Thai language, as well as its popularity is covered among local Thai people of all ages, the research group will implement this media outlet into the research sampling. Channel 7 News can be seen as a more localized view of sorts. It qualitatively measured as fairly radical especially in the aspect of culture, and it seems to address cultural

values more often. From Channel 7 News, the researchers will gain attitude of how the media reports on image of Chinese tourists on this influential local media.

Why Bangkok Post?

Bangkok Post is one of the two largest Thai daily newspapers written in English. With the oldest history founded in 1946, Bangkok Post's daily circulation is about 70,000. Bangkok Post has E-Paper daily electronic newspaper which contains news and analysis together with features and articles about economics, education, technology, entertainment, and so on. Because of the language, it carries influence beyond their size in Thailand because as foreign-language media, they operate with more editorial freedom than most of their Thai-language complements (Reed, 2018).

Bangkok Post reputation is a highly trusted source for news and information for English-language newspaper. It is interesting to note that as much as 60% of the 300,000 unique visitors daily to the Bangkok Post's online platform are from outside Thailand. Indeed, a new record for website traffic was reached on 13 October 2016 when we recorded some 1.04 million-page views in a single 24-hour period (Bangkok Post, 2016).

Since the readers from Bangkok Post are both Thai people and foreigners, Bangkok Post is playing a significant media role both in national and international level. Bangkok Post is therefore appropriate for this study especially to see how Bangkok Post reports on Chinese tourists.

Coding Scheme

For the coding scheme, since this study used content analysis to examine the images of Chinese tourists on two websites of selected Thai mainstream media, coding sheet was applied for quantitative analyses. The samples of every column of the coding sheet were the news articles on two media official websites that

mentioned about Chinese tourists in Thailand, which represents the national image of China.

The researchers defined all the variables for coding from each news article. The first variable is “news agency”. This category was designed to represent where the news articles were retrieved from. The second variable is “date”. This category aims to show the publication date of each news article. All news headlines were entered into third category “headline” and coded for their article placement. The next variable is “media agenda”. This category describes the features of the news contents.

The researchers divided variants of media agenda as following categories: (1) economy, (2) politics, (3) culture, (4) sports, (5) entertainment, (6) social, and (7) technology. The next variable is “attitude” or tone of the news stories. This category illustrates to the tones which is referred to the attitude and feeling of the news article towards the subject — Chinese tourists. The responding variants was divided into three following levels: (1) positive, (2) neutral and (3) negative. Another variable that the researchers categorized is the “keywords.” The keywords category is about the kind of adjectives that were used in the news stories. This will show how China’s image was described with particular words or adjectives.

The last variable that was categorized is “event.” The event category was created so as to determine the different kinds of occasions or events that Chinese tourists participated in and those that were related to the national image of China in Thailand by Chinese tourists. The event variable was divided into four categories, which were analyzed. They are as follows; (1) Police Investigations, (2) Accident, (3) Press Conference, (4) Social activities.

In the aspect of the events categories, the events were categorized into four groups. The first category Police Investigations was labeled as 1 (one). This category was made up of events like; bag snatching, the street swindle, the shops inspection, the street theft, airport check-in,

rape, the law violation against tourist, the law violation caused by tourist, overstaying in Thailand. The next category as Accident and it was labeled as 2 (two). The accident category was made up of incidents like; car accident, boat accident, death, suicide, bombing, tourist drown, accident during the tour.

Also, Press conference was labeled as 3 (three) in categorical wise. The Press conferences included category included events like press release, expansion of special promotions for tourists, the introduction of special promotions for tourist, decline of Chinese tourist flow. The Social activities category was labeled as 4 (four). This category comprised of events like; Chinese New Year celebrations, sight-seeing, traveling, zipline activity, Chinese New Year celebration, food banquet.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The number of Chinese tourists coming to Thailand is increasing during the last few years, that’s why the number of contents devoted to the “Chinese tourists” published by the media outlets is also expanding. So, the research group has collected 125 articles released by Bangkok Post and Channel7 and limited by the research time framework, which can help to analyze the terms of “tourism image” and “national image” in a comprehensive way. With the use of such keyword as “Chinese tourist” the researchers have defined the required content and identified the attitude towards the research object.

So, considering the Bangkok Post, 41 articles (57.7%) contain the lexical indicators linked with the negative attitude towards the Chinese tourists, 21 articles (29.6%) are depicting the key object in a positive way and only 9 articles (12.7%) are balanced in their coverage. The research group made the same procedure for identification of indicators inside the text and determination of an attitude on Channel7. In this case, 35 articles (64.8%) are bounded up with the negative frame, 14 articles

(25.9%) are representing the Chinese tourists in a positive way and only 5 articles (9.3%) are neutral towards the key object (table 1).

Table 1. Media outlet * Attitude Crosstabulation

Media outlet		Attitude			Total
		Pos.	Neut.	Neg.	
Bangkok Post	Count	21	9	41	71
	% within Media outlet	29.6 %	12.7 %	57.7 %	100%
	% of Total	16.8 %	7.2 %	32.8 %	56.8%
Channel7	Count	14	5	35	54
	% within Media outlet	25.9 %	9.3 %	64.8 %	100 %
	% of Total	11.2 %	4.0 %	28.0 %	43.2%

Source: research results

The same tendency is going through the other research findings. The category of “event” has been separated into four categories correlated subsequently with the keywords. So, the most frequent category of event was “accident”, which has been covered in 37 articles (29.6%), the next two are “press conference” and “social activity”, which have been described in the equal number of articles – 34 (27.2%). The last category “police investigation” has the smallest coverage among considering mass media outlets with the 20 articles (16%) devoted to this kind of event (table 2).

During the data analysis, the research group has identified the keywords related to the depiction of negative and positive national images based on coverage of tourists. So, the keywords related to the negative image: accident victim, the lack of etiquette, safety issues, the theft, decreasing tourist flow, the

missing tourist, death, law violation, economy issues, theft victim, attack victim, bad behavior, fight, injured, dissatisfaction, stealing, rape victim and decreased revenue. Then the keywords related to the positive image: growing tourist flow, increased revenue, rich tourist attraction, the tourist assistance, happy Chinese tourist, grateful and safe.

Table 2. Event

	Freq.	Perc. (%)	Valid Perc. (%)	Cumulative Perc. (%)
Valid Police Investigation	20	16.0	16.0	16.0
Accident	37	29.6	29.6	45.6
Press Conference	34	27.2	27.2	72.8
Social Activity	34	27.2	27.2	100.0
Total	125	100.0	100.0	

Source: research results

According to the identified keywords, the research is considering the frequency of tone representation of Chinese tourists among Thai media outlets. It shows that the negative toned keywords are dominating the media agenda with the frequency of 381 times or 70.04%, however the positive toned keywords were replicating only 163 times or 29.96% in the articles (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The word cloud (keyword frequency) (source: research results)

Table 3. Media outlet * Content Cross-tabulation

			Content				Total
			Economy	Politics	Culture	Social	
Media outlet	Bangkok Post	Count	21	2	4	44	71
		% within Media outlet	29.6%	2.8%	5.6%	62.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	16.8%	1.6%	3.2%	35.2%	56.8%
	Channel7	Count	10	0	12	32	54
		% within Media outlet	18.5%	0.0%	22.2%	59.3%	100.0%
		% of Total	8.0%	0.0%	9.6%	25.6%	43.2%

Source: Research results

The category of “content” is also interconnected with the previous findings, that’s why the content orientations of both Bangkok Post and Channel7 have the similar angle. So, the articles of Bangkok Post are setting the media agenda mostly in the social field based on 44 articles (62%), the next significant part makes the economic content, which is represented by 21 articles (29.6%). The political and cultural types of content are influencing the media agenda less than previous categories: only 2 political (2.8%) and 4 cultural articles (5.6%) have been published during the analyzing period of time.

The similar tendency is peculiar to the content of Channel7: the social agenda is dominating among the rest of topics with 32 articles (59.3%), however the cultural content is more widely represented on Channel7, which is confirmed by 12 published articles (22.2%). The economic media agenda in terms of Chinese tourists is less popular and makes 10 articles (18.5%). At the same time, the political case hasn’t been represented at all in the content of Channel7 (table 3).

Agenda Setting and National Image

“The things the public is reading in newspapers and the things people are hearing from the radio or watching from the TV are the things that the whole nation is talking about” (Mccombs, 2005).

There exists a great relationship between the agenda setting and national image. The study of a nations’ image fits the field of communication, because a country’s image, in a way, replicates the impact of communication.

The Agenda Setting Theory is founded on the necessity that publics’ agenda of day-to-day issues rest on what the mass media expect them to discuss about. The theory was initially propounded by Lippmann and later enhanced by McCombs and Shaw. The agenda-setting theory is about the importance the mass media places on an issue which impacts in creating that particular issue to be a public agenda and the media “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” Cohen (1963). Currently, in this global society, it influences the national image of countries (Manli, 2008).

The public agenda is the central issue which the people in society or populace care about. The theory has been described as the link in terms of relations between the prominence that the media places on an issue and the public response to the issue (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009). Therefore, the more the mass media stresses on a matter or incident, the more significance media audience puts on that incident.

Also to an extent, the mainstream media has flourished on the people’s day-to-day living attitudes. “From this point of view, similar habits

do not seem to have been established among large numbers of users of online news and other websites. Use of the Web still seems to be more an occasional thing for most people” (McCombs, 2005). It can also be said, that the mainstream media continues to play a significant role in this modern world although the emergence of the internet have advanced quickly and have occupied several parts of the public’s everyday being.

Meanwhile, the national image is the production of amassed opinion about people, historical, beliefs, political affairs, the finances and consular affairs of a nation perceived from the features of a different cultural value as it signifies characteristics of such nation through the news media. The characteristic image is projected and developed as a component of constructing “identity” (Xiang, 2013).

National image is a significant authority to the opinion of other nations which can classify the uniqueness of a nation as it is an important strategy toward public relations (Ding, 2011). The image of a nation that is formed in people’s cognitive are based on various features. The mass media, to a degree has molded the image of a country through foreign media coverage. In all, a nation’s image is a reflection of its past, values, culture, governance, economy and the people.

Likewise, Anholt (2007) explains that national branding is an image recognized globally. This is acknowledged in similar manner as individuals identify the brand of goods. The general image of a nation can be identified either in a positive or negative way.

Furthermore, the national image can be classified as a type of soft power of a country’s government to deliver information in numerous features at a global stage to convince and affect the views of the people and mindset towards its nation. The concept of national image is also considered as the typical image of the individuals in that nation (Li & Chitty, 2009).

According to Lippmann (1922), in order to construct a national image, the news stories

on diverse types of mass media has substantial impact on other countries since it shapes a perception of characteristics in the minds of individuals. It guides in making choices to consent and trust however the journalists’ standpoint. Also, it creates the journalists’ character and opinion to choose and submit only particular kinds of news through the mass media.

In a case of Thai-Chinese relations, the attitude to China among Thai media outlets and in public opinion has been changed many times, due to the key events in relations, which were influencing the formation of media frames (Alexander, Michele G.; Levin, Shana & Henry, P.J. 2005). Previous study by Pew Research Center (Kohut, 2013) has revealed that the national image of USA is more positive than China’s national image (Astarita, 2009).

The study of national image refers to the research of political science due to the correlation of this theory with the term of soft power, which indicates the ability of the country to enforce and widen internationally the basic meanings and understanding of its own image.

In the process of national image creation, the news is playing very significant role, because they are shaping the reality of considering country and persuading the viewers or readers to adopt the media frames as the basic attitude towards the country. That’s why the media content is an important part of this process, which transfers all the identities into media frames represented in the text with the use of metaphors, symbols, visual images and concepts (Lippmann, 1922).

The data analysis on image of Chinese tourists represented in selected media outlets founded in Thailand has determined the clear tendency of media attitude towards the coming tourists among the media companies based on the analyzed articles. In this case, the category of attitude is linked with the overall image of the Chinese tourists in Thailand. For the increase of research validity, the researchers implemented into the study two media outlets with different

backgrounds and financing roots, however the similar angle of attitude towards the Chinese tourists is related to both of them. The traditional and electronic newspaper Bangkok Post has published 71 articles devoted to the research topic during the selected period.

The attitude of the content becomes strongly apparent in most of them. So, the most prevalent attitude towards the Chinese tourists was negative, which was related to the 57.7% of the articles, the positive attitude has been expressed in the 29.6% of content and only 12.7% of the content portrayed the Chinese tourists in the neutral way. The broadcasting media outlet Channel 7 with its internet version published 54 materials connected with the representation of Chinese tourists in Thailand.

The attitude towards the analyzing object here was even more unbalanced than in Bangkok Post. So, the negative attitude has been defined in 64.8% of the articles, the positive – in 25.9%, at the same time the balanced position has been expressed only in 9.3% of the content. According to the data analysis, the negative or positive attitude usually became clear initially and came from the headlines of the articles. For example, “Chinese tourist found dead in Mae Sot”, “Chinese tourist banned from the temple”, “Chinese tourist killed in car crash” etc. Therefore, the analysis of keywords dominated through the articles has confirmed the negative tendency of the Chinese tourists’ representation in Thailand.

Hence, the most frequent keywords are also related to the negative image: the most frequent keyword “Accident victim” was used 109 times in the content, however the keywords with the positive trace were used more seldom: the most frequent keyword related to positive attitude “Growing tourist flow” – 65 times. This tendency has been also depicted in the previous studies researched the image of Chinese tourists in Thailand. The prevailed attitude was also negative with 47.83%, which is close to the results of the current research project (Banterng, 2017).

The analysis of data in relation to the kind of media agenda of Chinese tourists presented by Bangkok Post (E- Newspaper) and Channel 7 (E-Media) differ to some extent. The media agenda set by the traditional newspaper; Bangkok Post were mostly social issues which represented 62% of news stories agenda. The next media agenda in line was Economy with 29.6%. This was followed by Culture as the media agenda with 5.6%. Politics was also featured sometimes with a percentage of 2.8%. Lastly, none of the news stories on Bangkok Post website had sports, technology and entertainment as their agenda in relation to Chinese Tourists.

On the other hand, the data on Channel 7 showed that 59.3% of the media agenda focused on social issues. Whiles culture was the second highest media agenda with 22.2% of news stories. The next media agenda was economy which had 18.5%. The following media agendas were not covered in Channel 7; Politics, sports, technology and entertainment.

This paper has revealed that the traditional newspaper, Bangkok Post presented media agenda of Chinese tourists in Thailand in a different way as compared to Channel 7. The data analysis showed that even though both Bangkok Post and Channel 7 presented social as the media agenda with the highest agenda, the former had 62%, whiles the latter had 59.3%. Also the second highest media agenda in Bangkok Post was the economy, which is different from Channel 7 which was based on Culture.

Culture as a media agenda was third in Bangkok Post, whereas the third highest media agenda presented in Channel 7 was economy. Bangkok Post also focused on politics but there was no media agenda for politics in Channel 7. The most common activity in relation to both media outlets is that no media agenda was set for news stories in relation to entertainment, sports and technology about Chinese tourists.

On the other hand, some of the headlines that appeared often used for news stories in

Bangkok Post in relation to 'social' as a media agenda were; "Chinese tourist victim of Pattaya bag-snatcher", "Chinese tourist found dead in Mae Sot", "4 Chinese tourists hurt in bus accident", "Jet ski driver caught stealing Chinese tourist's valuables" and "Chinese tourist cheated out of 1,000 baht in Pattaya." These headlines in Bangkok Post clearly show that in relation to social as a media agenda, Chinese tourists were most of the time accident victims in Thailand according to this study.

Also, some of the headlines that appeared frequently in the news stories in Channel 7 in relation to 'social' as a media agenda were; "Phuket police arrested Argentinean for stealing Chinese tourist's wallet", "Arrested Chinese tourists in the province of Chon Buri", "Discovering three Chinese were causing the theft of tourists on the plane", "Thai young-age man raped Chinese tourists" and "Phuket Governor confirms 5 Chinese tourists are safe."

The frequent headlines that appeared in Channel 7 in relation to social news stories showed that, the Chinese tourists were not only victims but also culprits of bad incidents. This therefore reveals that there is a difference between the kind of social news stories presented by Bangkok Post and Channel 7. As Bangkok Post was more of Chinese tourists been victims of accidents, whereas in Channel 7, they were both victims and culprits sometimes.

In the aspect of economic news stories as media agenda, Bangkok Post used headlines such as "Chinese tourists flock to Chiang Mai, Phuket", "TAT focusing on 'quality' Chinese tourist market" and "TAT expects 300,000 Chinese tourists during Lunar New Year." The economic news stories in the traditional newspaper were more about how the Thai government can increase revenue with the increase in Chinese tourists.

Moreover, in the area of culture as media agenda in Bangkok Post, some of the news stories had headlines such as; "Chinese tourists banned from temple", "Chinese tourists to get politeness manuals" and "Amazing Chinese

tourists visit all-you-can-eat buffet." These headlines signify that Chinese tourists were culprits of lack of cultural etiquettes.

Furthermore, in relation to culture as media agenda in Channel 7, some of the frequent headlines were; "Chinese tourists blamed on expensive shrimp in Phuket", "Chinese tourists stepping on the statue sculptures and take a selfie" and "Chinese Government to Publish Guide to help more Chinese tourists behave better abroad."

Therefore, these headlines revealed that, the news stories about the cultural agenda, which even there was a news story signifying that the Chinese government will publish guides for Chinese tourists in order to curtail this cultural problem. So there exist similarities in the nature of culture news stories as a media agenda in both Bangkok Post and Channel 7.

In the variable 'politics' as a media agenda, Bangkok Post presented headlines such; "Prawit: No warning over Chinese tourist airport incident" and "TAT to lure Chinese tourists with military facilities". These headlines were political statements made by the Thai government about the welfare and revenue of Chinese tourists in Thailand. On the other hand, Channel 7 didn't publish any news story in relation to politics as a media agenda.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show a variety of discovery data of Chinese tourists' image happening in Thailand. When studying the national image of each country, it is regarded as a normal problem that the result came out both in positive and negative way. Through the content analysis approach, this paper reveals the basic framework of Chinese tourist behavior of citizens' outbound tourism within and outside the national image, highlights the close relationship between tourism and national image-building.

According to the findings, the frequent keywords that were mostly used and often

appeared in news are in negative words: accident victim, the lack of etiquette, safety issues, the theft, decreasing tourist flow, the missing tourist, death, law violation, economy issues, theft victim, attack victim, bad behavior, fight, injured, dissatisfaction, stealing, rape victim and decreased revenue respectively. In the same time, the keywords related to the positive image include growing tourist flow, increased revenue, rich tourist attraction, tourist assistance, happy Chinese tourist, grateful and safe.

The media agenda presented in Bangkok Post often was the social agenda, the next significant part is the economic, social and political news respectively. As well as in Channel7, the social agenda is the most mentioned, in the same time, the cultural news article is more generally represented on Channel7. The economic media agenda in terms of Chinese tourists is less popular in Channel 7. Also, the political news hasn't been published in the content of Channel7 during the study period but in the Bangkok Post. Over all, the social agenda was the most presented media agenda in both Bangkok Post and Channel 7.

Research of national image through Chinese tourists' attitude on new media has become a new kind of cross-cultural interaction. The study of the relationship between the subject and the object has become a basic theme for the study. For new media approach, the media environment has undergone remarkable transformation, and new media is building a new information dissemination model with its incomparable impact.

This impact has eliminated the boundaries between traditional media, and between the country and the country. It has become more and more integrated with each other, and the new media has turned into a powerful tool for building a national image of each country. Especially for tourist destinations and hosts, it has always been an important issue to continuously receive tourists from all over the world, as a result, the media in particular online media has an important role to form as well as

reflect an impression of China through the outlook of Chinese tourists' behavior into outsider.

Nonetheless, the national image of China represented in Thai media by Chinese tourists were showed in an unattractive way, it was frequently enhanced by the Chinese government through press releases and publishing of guides for Chinese tourists. This was supportive with a previous research by Li, Pan, Zhang and Smith (2007) which discovered that new media had an impact on the improvement of national image. So, any individuals familiar with this aspect should strategize operational ways to use new media to enhance the national image through the media by implementing diverse plans, comprising awareness and attitudes.

Limitation and Recommendation

This study comparatively analyzed the national image of China through the images of Chinese tourists on online pages of mainstream media in Thailand within a limited frame of four years. The samples for the study were collected from the websites of Bangkok Post and Channel 7. Therefore, future studies should compare the images of Chinese tourists in social media pages like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube in Thailand. Also, there should be a comparison between the image of Chinese tourists before the military takeover in 2014 and after the military take over from 2015.

The current research project was focused on the coverage of Chinese tourists coming to Thailand made by two media outlets during the specific period of time. For conduction of comprehensive analysis, the research group has applied the agenda setting and national image theory. So, for more detailed analysis and identification of new angles of the research object, the focus of the study could be extended to the larger number of media outlets with new specifics, which can influence the media coverage of Chinese tourists. Thus, the sampling size and the number of mass media outlets used

in the research is proposing to be enlarged. Moreover, to depict the new tendencies, as well as to create the full understanding of China's national image in Thailand the publicly accessible content in the Thai popular social media could be considered as the new research angle. The theoretical framework could be also extended or refocused on the theories close to the framing approach.

Furthermore, since only content analysis was used as the methodology for the current study, other research methods could be used in the future study for instance, in-depth interview, survey, focus group discussion or mixed approach. These kinds of research methods are exciting and significant to identity and enhance the national image of China. Also, since the results of this study found out that the attitude of images of Chinese tourists are often negative, future study could focus on image repair, in other to enhance the image of Chinese tourists. Finally, it is significant for researchers to do a comparative study on the images of Chinese tourists among other Asian countries.

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