

The Guidelines for Service Quality Enhancement of Chiang Saen Tourist Boat Service Linking Tourism Routes in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region

Duang Siri Poomvichchuvech¹
Khwanruetha Krongyut²

This research aims to evaluate the service quality of Chiang Saen tourist boat service linking travel routes in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), and to propose the guidelines for service quality enhancement of Chiang Saen tourist boat service linking travel routes in GMS. The data collection involved 400 tourists in responding to questionnaire and focus group discussion. The data was analyzed by percentage, frequency, standard deviation and content analysis. The results showed that most of respondents were female (66.0 %), aged over 51 years old (43.0%), and post-grad degree holder (47.0%). Their income was 50,001-70,000 baht/month (67.7%). Leisure was their main traveling purpose (63.7%). They preferred traveling with friends and family (69.3%). The chosen traveling was weekend (81.9%). The affecting decision-making factor in choosing tourist boat service was reasonable price (22.6%), and they preferred visiting natural attractions (60.2%). The evaluation of service quality towards Chiang Saen tourist boat service linking travel routes in GMS indicated that most of tourists voiced their expectation about the boat standards at the highest level ($\bar{X}=3.90$, S.D. = 0.81), followed by the boat activity standards ($\bar{X}=3.66$, S.D.= 0.80), service fairness of entrepreneur and service staff ($\bar{X}=3.65$, S.D.= 0.83). However, the respondents showed their satisfaction towards service quality of the staff at the highest level ($\bar{X}=4.29$, S.D.= 0.50), followed by the boat activity standards ($\bar{X}=4.28$, S.D.= 0.69), and human rights ($\bar{X}=4.27$, S.D.= 0.57) respectively. The overall quality of Chiang Saen tourist boat service linking travel routes in the Greater Mekong Sub-region showed the tendency to satisfactory. And, the tourists were satisfied with the staff and quality service of the staff at the highest level. The guidelines for service quality enhancement of Chiang Saen tourist boat service linking travel routes in GMS was offered in 3 aspects. 1) boat physical environment: improve and allocate clear sections for service area on the boat; design and provide facilities and amenities that can serve elderly travelers, children and handicapped travelers; boat facilities and amenities must be clean and hygiene. 2) service staff: improve quality of the service with emphasis on security standards, personality for hospitality, communication skills, coordination skills, one-stop service management. 3) boat services: focus on responsible tourism and fairness, improve the presentation of tour program, itinerary, boat timetable, accurate information about boat specification, and pay attention on social and environmental responsibility.

Keywords: Service Quality, Tourist Boat Service, Chiang Saen, Greater Mekong Sub-region

¹ Lecturer, School of Tourism, Chiangrai Rajabhat University

² Lecturer, School of Tourism, Chiangrai Rajabhat University