An Analysis of the Comparative Advantage of Thai Tourism with Chinese Tourists Compared to Other ASEAN + 6 Countries

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Abstract

The tourism industry is a very important part of the Thai economy. The purpose of this study was to investigate the potential of Thai tourism and to analyze the competitive advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries except China from 2000 to 2015. The investigation of the competitive advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries except China was analyzed by the Revealed Comparative Advantage a methodology.

The result of the study demonstrated that Vietnam had the greatest RCA with the Chinese tourists followed by Korea, Laos, Japan, Thailand, Australia, Singapore, Cambodia, New Zealand, The Philippines, Myanmar, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, and India. Firstly, Vietnam, Korea, Laos, Japan, and Thailand have tourism competitiveness with Chinese tourists throughout the whole period of study. The largest RCA for Vietnam, Korea, Laos, Japan, and Thailand were 9.68, 12.69, 6.97, 4.35, and 4.62 in 2000, 2013, 2001, 2012, and 2013 respectively. The result of the study found that Laos, Japan, and Singapore were competitors of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists. Secondly, Australia, Singapore and Cambodia had tourism comparative advantage almost every year of study except one year. Thirdly, New Zealand, The Philippines, Myanmar, Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists in the same period. For example, The Philippines, Brunei, and Indonesia had no competitiveness in the first period but they had tourism competitive advantage in the last period. Lastly, India had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists throughout the whole year of study. It was shown that the RCA index was less than 1 the whole year of study.

In conclusion, Thai tourism had a competitive advantage with the Chinese tourists in 2000 to 2015. It can predict that the trend of Chinese tourists visiting Thailand will increase in the future. Countries in ASEAN +6 had different tourism comparative advantages with Chinese tourists. It depends on the situation, law, and tourism strategies in each country.

Keywords: Competitive advantage, Thai tourism, Chinese tourists, and RCA

1. Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the most rapidly growing in the world economy. As a result of economic crises, many countries around the world focus on tourism, especially developing countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2016) reported that tourism contributed 10.2% of world GDP (US$7.6 trillion). Tourism is not only creating employment but also increasing more export and import products, accommodations, and transportation to tourist destinations. The United Nation World Tourism Organization expects that the number of international tourists around the world will be more than 1,600 million people in 2020. Europe was the most popular destination followed by Asian Pacific. Furthermore, Europe produced the largest number of outbound tourists, approximately 607 million in 2015. (The Statistic Portal of Hospitality and Tourism, 2017).

Thailand is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. The tourism industry is a significant part of the Thai economy. It represented 20% of GDP total contribution in 2016. WTTC predicts that Thai tourism will rise by 31.7% in 2027 (WTTC, 2016). Thailand has many popular tourist destinations such as Bangkok, Phuket, Krabi, and Chiang Mai. Furthermore, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) had promoted Thai tourism for many decades including many campaigns such as Discover Thinness, Amazing Thailand Always Amazes You and Miracle Thailand. That is one of the reasons why Thailand is so well known around the world. In addition, the number of international tourists who traveled to Thailand was 24.78 million in 2014. The largest among of

international tourist were 26.1 million in 2013. It increased by 19.6% from international tourists in 2012. International tourists decreased by 6.66% during 2014 because of political demonstrations in Thailand (Tourism Statistics Thailand, 2014). It impacted the image of Thailand negatively. By region, tourists from East Asia remained the largest contributor of tourists to Thailand at 16.09 million. It represented a 60.18% share of Thailand's tourism market. Europe is the second largest market which included 6.3 million tourists. This was followed by South Asia tourists at 1.34 million. There were 1.17 million tourists from America. (Arunyik, 2014).

Chinese tourists have become an important fast-growing target of Thai tourism. The Chinese population was 1.379 billion in 2016. They were 71.1 million Chinese tourists traveling to other countries during a five-year period. The largest number of Chinese tourists were from the eastern region of China, such as Shanghai. There were approximately 6.2 million tourists in 2013. (Investigate Chinese high-value Tourists project, 2016). Another research mentioned that most of the Chinese tourists who traveled to Thailand were from Guangzhou, Beijing, and Shanghai. (Walsh & Tachawimon, 2004). It is because of the development of trade and tourism between Thailand and China, the increase of tourist routes, and the growth of low-cost airlines that have supported travel between the countries easily. For instance, the direct flights from China to Thailand increased. This included the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, and Kunming to Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, Krabi and Surat Thani. Currently, Chinese tourists are the largest number of international tourists visiting Thailand. During 2014, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Thailand amounted to 1.5 million people. According to the number of international tourists in Thailand, Chinese tourists ranked number one in Thailand followed by Malaysian and Russian tourists respectively. The revenue from Chinese tourists was more than 70,778.54. billion baht in 2014 (Tourism Economic Review, 2016). The purpose of Chinese tourists visiting Thailand is sightseeing. For example, they like to visit the Grand Palace, the floating market, elephant rides, and shopping as well. Sightseeing and spending holidays in Thailand have become fashionable for Chinese tourists. Moreover, it is because of the influence of the movie "Lost in Thailand" which attracted Chinese tourists to Thailand.

The growth of Chinese tourists to ASEAN + 6 countries has sharply increased. It is a challenge for Thai tourism to take a large share of the Chinese market. However, it is not only Thailand who wants to increase Chinese tourists to the country, but other countries in ASEAN + 6 also want to increase Chinese tourists to their countries as well. Therefore, there is very strong competition within ASEAN + 6 countries (except China) to attract Chinese tourists to their country. The study aims to analyze the comparative advantage of Thai tourism compared to other countries in ASEAN + 6 (except China).

2. Related Theories and Literature Review

2.1. Absolute Advantage Theory

Absolute Advantage Theory was created by Adam Smith in 1723 as part of his division of labor doctrine. Absolute Advantage is the ability of a country, individual, or company to produce a good or service at a lower cost per unit than the cost at which any other producer can produce that same good or service. It explained international trade under a free trade situation. He claimed that the home country could limit its production of the country's goods. It could benefit the country to produce a greater quantity of one good rather than many other goods.

Heckscher-Ohlin model

David Ricardo (1817) described the benefits of international trade for countries. A country could increase its income by specializing in different firm products and services and selling these on the international market. Businesses also may have a comparative advantage over their competitors resulting from certain assets such as skills or geographical and historical factors. For example, an agricultural business may be situated in an area of rich soil and favorable climate. The benefits of comparative advantage of the country are a potential for worker productivity for producing one product than another country that has a comparative advantage in making that product.

The Heckscher-Ohlin model considered that which can be most efficiently and plentifully manufactured of the country's exports. The country should operate the business when resources are imbalanced throughout the world. This means that resources that are absent in one country are abundant elsewhere, with different countries having different resources in to feed into the global market. He also mentions that there are two factors that affect production. Those are land and labor-intensive skills. This model is used to evaluate trade and, more specifically, the balance of trade between two countries that have varying specialties. Emphasis is placed on the exportation of goods taking advantage of factors of production that a country has in richness and the importation of goods

that the country cannot produce as effectively.

Competitive Advantage theory

Competitive Advantage theory was created by Porter Michael in 1990. It contributes to understanding the competitive advantage of countries in foreign trade and goods. His theory focuses on individual industries which are applied to the principles of competitive advantage. His theory begins from individual industries and builds up to the economy as an overall. In fact, he explained that the key success of the international company is to understanding the firm's work and maintain competitive advantage of the company.

His argument that the significance of home country influences is key to success in the particular industry. Michael Porter considers the competitiveness of a country as a function of five major determinants, including demand conditions, related and supporting industries, firm strategy, structure, and rivalry. Even though these determinants influence the existence of competitive advantage of an entire nation, their nature suggests that they are more specific to a particular industry rather than typical of a country. The reason for this is that in Porter's theory, the basic unit of analysis for understanding competition is the industry. "The industry is the arena in which the competitive advantage is won or lost." "So, seeking to isolate the competitive advantage of a nation means to explain the role played by national attributes such as a nation's economic environment, institutions, and policies for promoting firms' ability to compete in a particular industry."

2.2 Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA)

RCA is one of the methodologies for analyzing international trade. RCA has been used to help evaluate a country's export potential. It was created by Balassa (1965). The RCA indicates whether a country is in the system of exporting the products in which it has a trade potential, as opposed to situations in which the number of products that can be competitively exported is static. It can also provide useful information about potential trade prospects with new partners. There are differing explanations that if the country exports one product to the world market, it can be that the country has a competitive advantage for exporting that product, at that time. If the numeric value of RCA is higher than 1, it means that the country has a high competitive advantage on exporting that product. Or, the country is said to have a revealed comparative advantage in the product. On the other hand, if a value of RCA is less than 1, it implies that the country has a revealed comparative disadvantage in the product. RCA has been used an important methodology for international trade as performed by Balassa in 1965.

In tourism research, the authors used RCA for analyzing the tourism competitive advantage. Bento (2012) used RCA as a methodology for Evaluating International Competitiveness and Comparative Advantage of European travel services in 2004 to 2012. He found that the comparative advantage of European travel services remained stable over that period. However, it presented that Greece, Portugal, and Italy had not increased their external competitiveness. On the other hand, the countries in the south and the east of Europe had strong comparative advantage in tourism and the countries in the north of Europe had less tourism comparative advantages. It is similar to Jackman, Lorde, Lowe, & Alleyne (2011) study which evaluated the Tourism Competitiveness of Small island, Developing states by using RCA approach. They found that eighteen small island, developing states had a weak tourism competitive advantage in 2000 to 2007. All eighteen small island developing states should improve a standard of tourism product.

Zhang & Jensen (2005) studied comparative advantage of tourism. They aimed to relate the tourism-demand model with the traditional theories that explained international trade flow. They believed that tourism flow was a trade flow. The result of the study presented that the factor which affected the tourism competitive advantage of the country was service activity. The factor which explained international tourism flows were natural endowment and the creation of foreign investment. Dragos (2014) studied Travel & Tourism competitiveness: A study of the World's Top Economically Competitive Countries by the Record of World Economic Forum in 2011 to 2012. These included Switzerland, Singapore, Finland, USA, Germany, Netherland, Denmark, Japan, United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Canada, Taiwan, Qatar, and Belgium. His study used travel and tourism index for methodology. The result of the study indicated that the competitiveness of 15 countries was not an identity in the same group. There was some index difference; it depended on the internal factor of each country.

Weravess (2016) analyzed Tourism Competitiveness of the City of Pattaya in the World market. The aim of the study was to analyze the tourism competitiveness of Pattaya in the world market by using tourism competitive advantage index (TCA). The result of the study presented that the numerical value of TCA index of Pattaya was higher than 1 in every year of the study time; next were Macau and Ayuttaya, respectively. She also compared

Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Thailand which are countries in ASEAN. It reported that Thailand had a more competitive advantage than Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore. Wei, fang, & Feng (2011) investigated A Potential Impact Upon Chinese tourism Export and E-tourism Service Trade of Five countries including China, Japan, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. They use RCA as a methodology. They reported that it was very important to develop tourism industry by tourism e-commerce.

Kaosa-ard & Untong, (2008) analyzed Tourism Competitiveness in the Greater Mekong sub-region. It aimed to analyze tourism potential and tourism competitiveness in the greater Mekong sub-region including Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand. The study was conducted 1999 to 2003. The method of their study was Competitive Advantage Ratio (CAR). It was presented that tourism is a very important economic activity of the countries in the greater Mekong sub-region. Thailand had tourism competitive advantage in the greater Mekong sub-region with the international tourists, but there was no competitive advantage with the Singapore's tourists, Indonesia's tourists, and American tourists in 1999 to 2003. They also studied about the competitive advantage in tourism of ASEAN in the Chinese market. The objective was to analyze the competitive advantage in tourism of ASEAN but it did not include Brunei. It was analyzed from 2003 to 2014. CAR was a method as well. They reported that Thailand and Vietnam had competitiveness in tourism in the Chinese market and other ASEAN countries had different a competitive advantage.

2.3 Chinese Outbound Tourism Policy for ASEAN + 6 countries

Historically, China has been a closed country. Chinese outbound tourism was started in 1983. This is the beginning of using Approved Destination Status (ADS). ADS is an agreement of Chinese government for controlling Chinese outbound tourism. In the first period of this policy, the Chinese government allowed Chinese citizens to go to Hong Kong and Macao to visit their friends and relatives. Then, the ADS policy allowed Chinese tourists to go to Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and The Philippines. However, Chinese tourists needed to go with a tour company or a local agency that was approved by the Chinese government. The Chinese government allowed their citizens to visit friends and relatives in 1988. Thereafter, they allowed them to go to Singapore and Malaysia to visit their friends and relatives in 1990 as well. Then they were allowed to visit The Philippines to see their friends and relatives in 1992. ADS not only allowed Chinese citizens to travel to other countries but also included open borders between China and other countries as well. For example, the border was opened between China and Korea in 1987. The borders between China with Mongolia, Russia, and Vietnam opened in 1992. The border between Laos and Myanmar opened in 1993.

Australia and New Zealand were approved by ADS policy for Chinese citizens traveling in 1999. Brunei, Cambodia, Japan, Myanmar, and Vietnam were approved by ADS policy in 2000. Indonesia was approved by ADS in 2001. India and Russia were approved by ADS in 2002. Australia was joined by ADS in 2004. It can be stated that the Chinese Open Policy affected the tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists around the world. This policy helped Chinese tourists traveling to other countries with tour companies.

The official data of comparative advantage of outbound Chinese tourists was recorded by the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA). CNTA reported that the top destination for Chinese tourists was Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, France, Italy, and Switzerland. The factors which had affected Chinese tourists making decision for traveling were flight fees, visa convenience, exchange rate, destination safety, and incidents of disaster. Moreover, long holidays in China are very important as well, especially the Spring festival, and the national holiday. Many Chinese tourists travel to neighboring countries for the long holiday. For example, South Korea and Japan are popular. Moreover, countries in Oceania such as New Zealand and Austria were popular destinations as well. Since 2014, The trends of Chinese tourists had changed. It is because of the Millennial market who grew up with computers and other technologies. This market prefers individual travel more than group tours. The Millennial market uses online travel agencies for searching and purchasing flights, hotels, and program tours. They use less cash and make payments using online methods. We chat account is very important in influencing Chinese tourists' decisions. They believe that traveling is a value in one's life experience.

2.4 Behavior and Interests of Chinese Tourists in Thailand

The growth of Chinese tourists is rapidly increasing in the world of tourism. Of all the international tourists in Thailand, Chinese tourists were the largest group of international tourists visiting Thailand in 2015. There were 7,298,937 Chinese tourists in 2015. The number of Chinese visitors grew by 12% from 2014. The growth of Chinese tourists to overseas countries has been continually increasing. According to the report of Tourism

Economic Review in 2016, Chinese tourists were ranked first of international tourists to Thailand. This was followed by Malaysian and Russian tourists respectively. Chinese tourists spent 70,778.54 billion baht in the last quarter of 2016 alone. Chinese tourism has swiftly increased because of economic growth in China. People have more income which improves their consumer power. Moreover, China's open country policy helps people obtain a visa more easily for traveling to other countries. That is why Chinese overseas tourism is increasing more and more. The main interests of Chinese tourists in traveling to other countries were sightseeing and shopping respectively. Based on a report of Chinese tourism in Thailand, they found that Chinese tourists traveling to Thailand were interested in the Grand Palace, floating market, and elephant rides (Walsh & Tachavimol,2004). According to Visa Global Travel Intentions Study (2013), it was reported that Chinese tourists spent an average of $3,824 for a trip. That was the third most amount spent of world tourist expenditures after Saudi Arabia and Australia respectively. Moreover, it reported that Chinese tourists also spent money on shopping. That is similar to the research of Export-Import Bank of Thailand (2014) which presented that to understand Chinese tourist behavior is very important in order to capture the Chinese tourism market because they are the largest group of tourists currently. They have great consumer power according to the report of Global Blue Analytics in 2012. The report stated that Chinese tourists were the largest market for tax-free shopping in the world in 2012. The study of China Tourism Academy (2011) reported that Chinese tourists spent 26% of their total trip expenditure on shopping.

Chinese tourists who came to Thailand were typically between 25-44 years old. Normally, they travel by tour company because of their limited knowledge of and experience with Thailand. Moreover, most of them traveled abroad as a first-time visitor. They felt more comfortable and safe travelling with a tour company. However, in the future, as Chinese tourists have more experience with Thailand, they will likely travel more by themselves. Amonhaemanon's paper (2015) indicated that most of the Chinese tourists who travelled to Thailand by themselves were female. Their friends and family influenced them in making the decision to choose Thailand as a destination. Currently, more than 9 million Chinese tourists spend a holiday in Thailand. They make up 30% of all international tourists in Thailand. The Thai government supports tourism by canceling a visa fee. This included 21 countries from March to August in 2017 and China was on the list as well. That is one of the reasons why the number of Chinese tourists traveling to Thailand increased in that year. Additionally, there is a problem with the impact of tour zero-dollar situation. (Thailand Consulate in Shanghai report, 2017). Moreover, there was growth of e-commerce in China. More than 3,840 million Chinese searched online for information about tourism since 2010. (Wei, Fang, & Feng, 2010). It is clear that making online information available about tourism in Thailand is very important to increase the market share of Chinese tourists. Furthermore, it is because of the success of a Chinese movie called "Lost in Thailand" which influenced the flow of Chinese tourists travelling to Thailand and made it fashionable to travel to Thailand.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Focus

Data collection focused only on Chinese tourists who visited ASEAN + 6 countries which included: Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Brunei, South Korea, Japan, India, New Zealand, and Australia. The statistics of China tourism export were included from 2000 to 2015.

3.2 Population and Sampling

According to an analysis of the comparative advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN countries, the sample included statistics of Chinese tourists who visited Brunei, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, India, New Zealand, and Australia from 2000 to 2015.

3.3 Data collection

The data of this research was collected from secondary data. Firstly, an analysis of the comparative advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries was collected by using statistics of Chinese tourists' revenue in ASEAN + 6countries except China, total tourism export of ASEAN + 6 countries except China, total tourism export of China, and total world tourism export. Statistics were gathered from the World Tourism Organization, World Bank national accounts data, and ASEAN statistics, etc. The data was collected from 2000 to 2015.

3.4 Methodology

The study used Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA)as a methodology for an analysis of the comparative advantaged of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compare to the other ASEAN. RCA is one of the methodologies for analyzing international trade. RCA has been used to help evaluation a country's export potential. It was created by Balassa in 1965. The RCA indicates whether a country is in the system of exporting the products in which it has a trade potential, as opposed to situations in which the number of products that can be competitively exported is static. It can also provide useful information about potential trade prospects with new partners. There are differing explanations that if the country exports one product to the world markets it can be that the country has a comparative advantage for exporting that product at that time. If the number of RCA is higher than 1, it means that the country has a high competitive advantage on exporting that product or the country is said to have a revealed comparative advantage in the product. On the other hand, if a value of RCA is less than 1, it implies that the country has a revealed comparative disadvantage in the product. Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) is one of the methodologies for analyzing international trade by using the formula as follows:

$$RCA = \frac{The\,share\,of\,product\,i\,in\,country\,j\,total\,exports}{The\,share\,of\,product\,i\,the\,world\,total\,exports}$$

$$RCA_{ij} = \frac{(X_{ij}/X_{tj})}{(X_{iw}/X_{tw})}$$

RCA_{ij} = demonstrates the ratio of Revealed Comparative Advantage goods "i" in country j

X_{ij} = represents that country j's export of product i

X_{tj} = represents that total exports of country j

X_{iw} = represents world exports of product i

X_{tw} = represents the total world export

i = represents the exporting of products
j = represents the country

Tourism uses RCA for analyzing of tourism competitive advantage. The revenue of tourism export indicates the competitive advantage of tourism in that country. A large revenue of tourism export in a country indicates the satisfaction of the tourists to that country. (Peterson, 1988), (Fourie, 2011), and (Waravess, 2014). Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) is one of the methodologies for analyzing tourism competitive advantage by using the formula as follows:

$$RCA_j = \frac{(X_{ij}/X_j)}{(X_{iz}/X_z)}$$

$$RCA = \frac{Chinese\,tourist\,reciept\,of\,countries\,j\,/\,total\,tourism\,reciept\,of\,countries\,j}{Total\,tourism\,export\,m\,of\,China\,/\,total\,world\,tourism\,export}$$

RCA_j = demonstrates that the ratio of Revealed Comparative Advantage Tourism in countries "j"

X_{ij} = represents Chinese tourists revenues in country j

S_t = represents total export tourism of country j

X_{iz} = represents total tourism export of China

X_Z = represents total world tourism export

i= represents Chinese tourist revenues
j = countries in ASEAN + 6

3.5 Analysis

An analysis of the comparative advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compared to the other ASEAN + 6 countries except China was analyzed by secondary data and descriptive analysis. It was calculated by the formula of RCA Chinese tourist revenue in ASEAN+ 6 countries except China divided by the total tourism revenue in each country divided by total tourism export of China divided by total world tourism export. The results demonstrate the tourism competitive advantage of Chinese tourists of each country.

4 Results

4.1 The Potential of Thai tourism

Tourism industry is rapidly growing in Thailand. Since 2000, international tourists receipt in Thailand was more than 9,935,000,000 US dollars. Fifty years ago, Thai tourism revenue from international tourists was more than 48,527,000,000 US dollars (World Bank, 2017). Thailand is an attractive destination for tourists around the world. Thailand has very strong tourism competitive advantage. This is because of support from the Thai government. For example, investing in infrastructure to tourist places, choosing policy to increase visitors. The competitive advantage of Thai tourism includes good air transport infrastructure, prioritization of tourism, business travel, human and labor resources, and business environment. However, Thailand was weak in ground and port infrastructure to connect between downtown and tourism places. Health and hygiene factors need improvement. Moreover, the safety and security image of Thailand has a negative impact on Thai tourism. There is less environmental stability as well. The Thai government invests in many projects to increase the quality and standards of infrastructure to provide for the demands of tourists, such as accommodation, airport, and roads to connect downtown with tourist places. They adjusted visa rules to increase international tourism. For example, they allowed visa-free status for 57 countries and visa on arrival for 21 countries. The Thai government announced issuing 10-year visas for tourists over 50-years old from USA, UK, Australia, Japan, and countries in the EU. This group needs to have income of at least 100,000 baht per month and they need to buy insurance coverage while they are in Thailand. Thailand had a competitive advantage of medical tourism. Thailand is a leader of MICE (Meeting Incentive Convention & Exhibition) tourism which increases the tourism comparative advantage of Thailand. Partnership is one of the most important factors which promoted Thai tourism to be well-known in the world. Thailand had signed with partners to promote Thai tourism, which includes, the Emirates, Etihad Airway, Qatar Airway, and Michelin. Moreover, it is because of the success of the crack-down on tours zero-dollar: the Chinese buy very cheap tour packages from travel agents. That price is so cheap that the company makes no profit, and then they will push the Chinese tourist to buy or shop in very expensive restaurants or shops. This tour zero-dollar results in a negative image of Thai tourism.

4.2 Tourism Comparative Advantage of Chinese tourist in ASEAN + 6 countries

According to Revealed Comparative Advantage theory of Balassa (1965), reported that the success of resource management is based on competitive advantage of the economic system. In tourism, RCA is used for analysis of competitive advantage index. The concept of analyzing tourism competitive advantage is the numbers of tourists visiting a country and represents the tourism competitive advantage index of that country (Peterson, 1988). Moreover, the research of Wei, Fang, & Feng (2011), Tonompongphandh, Uttama, &Buadapthip (2013), Weravess (2016), and Jindatam (2016) used RCA for analyzing competitive advantage of tourism as well. Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) is one of the methodologies for analyzing tourism competitive advantage by using the formula as follows:

$$RCA_j = \frac{(X_{ij}/X_j)}{(X_{iz}/X_z)}$$

RCA_j = demonstrates that the ratio of Revealed Comparative Advantage Tourism in countries "j"

X_{ij} = represents Chinese tourist revenues in country j

S_t = represents total export tourism of country j

X_{iz} = represents total tourism export of China

X_Z= represents total world tourism export

i= represents Chinese tourist revenues
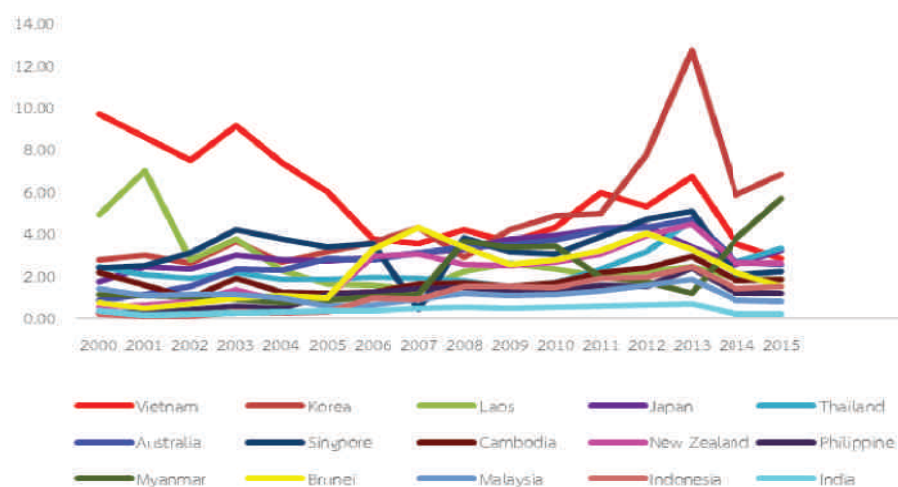
j = countries in ASEAN + 6

If the number of RCA is higher than 1, it means that the country has competitive advantage on tourism industry. On the other hand, if the number of RCA is less than 1, it implies that the country has a revealed comparative disadvantage in tourism industry.

The author used the above formula to analyze the comparative advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compare to the other ASEAN + 6 countries except China.The data was analyzed from 2000 to 2015. The result isdemonstrated by Table 1.

Table 1 RCA index with the Chinese tourists of ASEAN + 6 countries except China from 2000 to 2015

| Year	Viet nam	Korea	Lao	Japan	Thai land	Aus tralia	Singa pore	Cam bodia	New Zealand	Philip pines	Myan mar	Brunei	Malay sia	Indone sia	India
2000	9.68	2.78	4.89	1.75	2.43	0.84	2.37	2.17	0.50	0.24	1.14	0.72	1.38	0.19	0.34
2001	8.57	2.99	6.97	2.43	2.03	1.14	2.52	1.57	0.61	0.31	1.05	0.47	1.05	0.10	0.16
2002	7.49	2.61	2.74	2.35	1.91	1.49	3.11	0.95	0.80	0.39	0.99	0.68	1.14	0.11	0.18
2003	9.12	3.67	3.75	2.98	2.15	2.34	4.19	1.91	1.33	0.58	0.90	0.94	1.15	0.32	0.27
2004	7.39	2.65	2.26	2.79	1.85	2.30	3.74	1.22	0.77	0.48	0.76	1.05	0.97	0.27	0.27
2005	6.03	3.18	1.62	2.70	1.83	2.83	3.37	1.16	1.00	1.14	0.83	0.98	0.55	0.29	0.35
2006	3.74	3.59	1.55	2.87	1.94	2.75	3.55	1.23	2.92	1.22	1.03	3.27	0.65	0.97	0.36
2007	3.57	4.29	1.32	3.09	1.90	3.08	0.39	1.61	3.06	1.40	1.13	4.32	0.90	0.90	0.48
2008	4.21	2.89	2.24	3.28	1.76	3.35	3.80	1.67	2.56	1.43	3.66	3.35	1.17	1.48	0.51
2009	3.58	4.18	2.63	3.77	1.47	3.46	3.18	1.51	2.48	1.31	3.40	2.56	1.10	1.50	0.49
2010	4.30	4.88	2.32	3.93	1.69	3.70	3.07	1.70	2.67	1.28	3.44	2.75	1.10	1.44	0.50
2011	5.98	4.94	2.02	4.26	2.32	4.21	3.85	2.18	3.05	1.58	1.93	3.21	1.28	1.90	0.57
2012	5.32	7.79	2.22	4.35	3.15	4.30	4.67	2.38	3.94	1.50	1.71	4.01	1.59	1.96	0.66
2013	6.72	12.69	2.42	3.38	4.62	4.71	5.09	2.93	4.49	2.41	1.18	3.26	1.86	2.45	0.67
2014	3.52	5.83	1.90	2.56	2.65	2.66	2.07	1.77	2.63	1.16	3.74	2.16	0.84	1.40	0.20
2015	2.82	6.81	1.82	3.19	3.34	2.56	2.20	1.83	2.62	1.15	5.66	1.53	0.82	1.53	0.20

Source: It was calculated by the author on 1th July 2016.

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 1 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in ASEAN + 6 countries except China from 2000 to 2015

From the figures presented in the above graphic, an analysis of the comparative advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries except China, it is observed that Vietnam's RCA was the highest with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries except China. This was followed by Korea, Laos, Japan, Thailand, Australia, Singapore, Cambodia, New Zealand, The Philippines, Myanmar, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, and India from the years 2000 to 2015. The result of the study is explained in the next paragraph.
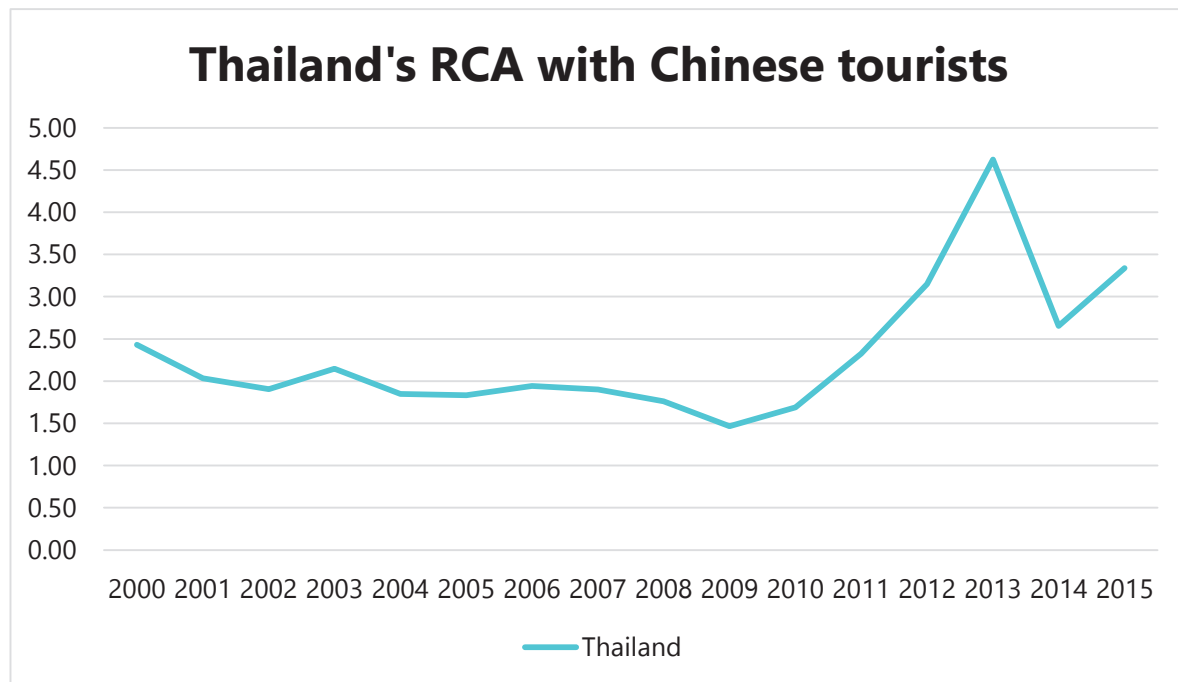
Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 2 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Thailand from 2000 to 2015

It is observed that Thailand ranks number 5 after Vietnam, Korea, Laos, and Japan of tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries. Thailand's RCA ratio is consistently higher than 1 throughout the whole period of study. Thailand's RCA was quite good from 2000 to 2015. It was 2.43, 2.03, 1.91, 2.15, 1.85, 1.83, 1.94, 1.90, 1.76, 1.47, 1.69, 2.32, 3.15, 4.62, 2.65, and 3.34respectively. It means that Thailand had tourism competitiveness with Chinese tourists. The largest RCA for Thailand was 4.62 in 2013. It means that Thailand had strong tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourist in 2013. Although, Thailand had a political coup in this year but it did not affect Thailand's RCA with the Chinese tourist at that time. It is because of the increase in the number of flights from China to Thailand. For example, Juneyao Airlines opened new flights from Shanghai to Bangkok to 7 flights per week. Likewise, China Southern Airlines increased the number of flights from Kwang Zhou to Bangkok from 21 to 35flights per week. Moreover, it is because of the popularity of a Chinese movie called "Lost in Thailand" that influenced Chinese tourists visiting Thailand in 2013. Furthermore, it is because of China-Japan conflict about the Senkaku islands. This resulted in some Chinese tourists shifting travel from Japan to Thailand in 2013. It can be stated that Chinese tourists are the largest market for Thai tourism in 2013 (TAT Review Journal, 2013).

The second-most predominant figures were 3.34, 3.15, and 2.43 in 2015, 2014, and 2000 respectively. Thailand's RCA started to decrease from2.15 to 1.58 in 2003 to 2004. It is because of the SARS virus in ASEAN countries. Furthermore, the tsunami disaster in the south of Thailand in 2005 affected Thai tourism overall. In spite of the tsunami, Thailand's RCA quite less compared to other period. It was 1.83, 1.94, 1.90, and 1.78 in 2005 to 2008 respectively. However, Thailand's RCA was higher than 1 at that time. It means that Thailand had tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists event it faced the SARS virus in ASEAN countries and the tsunami disaster. The least of Thailand's RCA was 1.47 in 2009. It is because of the political problems in Thailand, the international airport in Bangkok was closed for a while. This had negative effects on the image of Thailand and the income spent by tourists in Thailand.Many flights to Bangkok were canceled and many countries around the world told their population not travel to Thailand during that time. It is not only Chinese tourists that did not come to Thailand in 2009 but also tourists from other countries as well. Thailand's RCA

decreased sharply from 4.62 to 2.65 in 2013 to 2014. This is because the political problems, the Thai government declared a state of emergency for the tense capital of Bangkok. Many countries advised their population to take extra care for traveling to Thailand at that time. Most of the tourists arrived in other city of Thailand such as Phuket, Samui island, and Chang Mai respectively in 2014.

On the other hand, Chinese economy was slowing down in 2015.However, the number of Chinese tourists traveling to Thailand was 7,934,791 million in 2015 (Ministry of Tourism& Sports, 2017). Furthermore, the trend of Chinese tourists travelling to Thailand has increased as presented by Kasikron Research Center (2016). It indicated that Thailand is one of the most interesting tourist destinations for Chinese tourists. Firstly, there are beautiful natural resources and cultural resources which attract Chinese tourists. These include beaches, food, festivals, and night life activities. Secondly, the Thai government has been successful in promoting Thai tourism to Chinese tourists. They supported and promoted Thai tourism by using many tools to tap into the Chinese market. For example: they had promoted the application "We Chat" to directly contact Chinese tourists. Thirdly, the Thai government fixed the problem of tour zero- dollars which has negatively affected the number of Chinese tourists visiting Thailand in a short-run. However, it will benefit the revenue of Thai tourism from Chinese tourists in the long-run. Moreover, it will be a positive impact on the quality and standard of Thai tourism in the long-run as well. Similarly, the study of the International Institute for Trade and Development (2017) reported that the trend of tourism competitive advantage of Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia will increase in the future.

The results of the study found that the main competitors of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists were Laos, Japan, and Singapore. There was a negative relationship between Laos's RCA and Thailand's RCA, when Laos's RCA was large then Thailand's RCA was small. For example, Thailand's RCA was 2.32, 3.15, 4.62, 2.65, and 3.34 while, Laos's RCA was 2.02, 2.22, 2.42, 1.90, and 1.82 in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 respectively. Likely, Japan's RCA and Thailand's RCA were a negative relationship. For instance, Japan's RCA was 2.43, 2.35, 2.98, 2.79, 2.70, 2.87, 3.07, 3.28, 3.77, 3.39, 4.26, and 4.35 while, Thailand's RCA was 2.03, 1.91, 2.15, 1.85, 1.83, 1.94, 1.90, 1.76, 1.47, 1.69, 2.32, and 3.15 respectively. Similarly, Singapore's RCA and Thailand's RCA were a negative relationship. It means that when Thailand's RCA was higher than 1, the number of Singapore's RCA was lower throughout the whole period of study. Vietnam's RCA was larger than Thailand's RCA almost every year of study, but Thailand's RCA was larger than Vietnam's in last year of the study. Thailand's RCA was 3.19 in 2015 while Vietnam's RCA was 2.82 in 2015. It can be stated that the trend of Thailand's RCA with Chinese tourists will be larger than Vietnam's in the future.
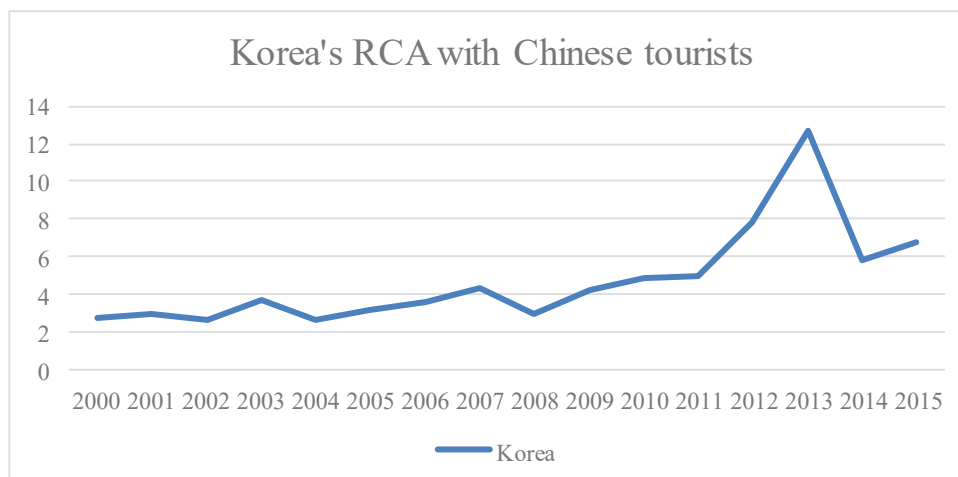

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 3 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Vietnam from 2000 to 2015

Vietnam's RCA ratio is the best compared to other ASEAN+6 countries with Chinese tourists. This is because of Vietnam and China are neighboring countries. So, Chinese tourists travel to Vietnam easily. This study reported that Vietnam's RCA ratio was higher than 1 throughout the whole period of study. It means that Vietnam had a strong tourism competitive advantage with the Chinese tourists. It peaked at 9.68 in 2000. The second-most predominant figures were 9.12, 8.57, 7.49, and 7.39 in 2003, 2001, 2000, and 2004 respectively. Then, the trend of Vietnam RCA's continually decreased from 2005 to 2012. After that it increased again to 6.72 in 2013 Itis because of the success of the Vietnamese government in promoting tourism in the Chinese market. For instance,

the Vietnamese government works together with local travel agencies in China to increase more Chinese tourists.Vietnam welcomed Chinese 2.7 million tourists in 2016. It had increased by 51% from 2015 (The Vietnam National Administration of tourist, 2016). Moreover, as stated before, Vietnam has a geographical advantage in that it is very close to China. Short flights from China to Vietnam have increased. The flights from China are low cost and there are many choices. Moreover, Chinese visitors have shifted away from South Korea and are going to Vietnam instead (South China Morning, 2017). However, The RCA of Vietnam sharply decreased by 6.72 to 3.52 in 2013 to 2014. Moreover, they were less at 2.82 in 2015.

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 4 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Korea from 2000 to 2015

Korea is one of the countries that it success in tourism industry. South Korea is rich with historic places and heritage, and architectural building. Korea is very famous in cultural tourism and their cultural tourism is fast growing in Asia. From the figure presents Korea tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourist from 2000 to 2015. Korea had tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists throughout the whole period of study. This study reported that South Korea's RCA ratio was fluctuated between 2000 to 2004. It was 2.78, 2.99, 2.61, 3.67, and 2.65 respectively. Then, it stated to increase by 3.18, 3.59, and 4.29in 2005, 2006, and 2007 respectively. After that there was double decreased to 2.89 in 2008. Then, South Korea's RCA continually increased from 2009 to 2011. It was 4.18, 4.88, and 4.94 respectively. South Korea's RCA sharply increased by 7.79 in 2012and it peaked at 12.69 in 2013. After that it dropped to 5.83 in 2014 and it started to increase a gain by 6.81 in 2015.Chinese tourists were teeming in South Korea in 2013.Chinese ranks number one of international tourists in South Korea.They main objectives were shopping at duty-free stores for skin care and cosmetic, doing plastic surgery, and sightseeing respectively (Incitez, 2015). South Korea has transport system advantage for serving the demands of tourists. It connects from the city to tourist place. Moreover, South Korea is very successful in entertainment industry which attract multitudes of international tourists to South Korea. Furthermore, the increase of Chinese tourists in South Korea was because Chinese tourists were opting from Japan to Korea during the Senkaku Island disputes between China and Japan.

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.
Figure 5 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Laos from 2000 to 2015

Laos is one of the developing countries which focuses on the tourism sector of their economy. Laos has competitiveness with cheap labor more than other countries in ASEAN + 6, which is a main factor in providing tourists services. On the other hand, Laos' laborers have little skill in providing some tourism services such as command of the English and Chinese language in communicating with Chinese tourists. Because their population is smaller, Laos has fewer laborers to provide services. They also have fewer hotels and tour companies to provide services to Chinese tourists. Laos' RCA was higher than 1every year of the study. It means that Laos had tourism competitiveness with Chinese tourists. The trend of Laos's RCA presented was quite good. It was 4.89, 6.97, 2.74, 3.75, 2.26, 1.62, 1.55, 1.32, 2.24, 2.63, 2.32, 2.02, 2.22, 2.42, 1.90, and 1.82 from 2000 to 2015 respectively. According to result of the study showed that the trend of Laos's RCA has continuously decreased from 2000 to 2015. Laos's RCA peaked to 6.97 in 2001.After that they decreased sharply to 2.74 in 2000. This is because the SARSvirus in ASEAN countries. After that it went up to 3.75 in 2003. It fluctuated between 1 to 1.32 to 2.63. However, Laos's RCA was higher than 1. It can be predicted that the trend of Chinese tourists travelling to Laos will increase and Chinese travelers will become the number one group of international tourists in Laos.It is because of Laos developed tourism by improving facilities and tourism products for meeting the demands of tourists. Laos and China are neighboring countries. Laos connects with the south of China. Laos and China border one another, a large number of Chinese tourists travel to Laos by road trip.Chinese tourists are interested in the beautiful natural resources and cultural resources in Laos, especially Lang Prabang which is a world heritage city. (Wongdara, 2015). That is why Laos has a tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists. According to the number of international tourists visiting Laos, it reported that Thai and Chinese tourists were the top international tourists visiting Laos. However, to increase the number of Chinese tourists traveling to Laos, there needs to be improvement in development of infrastructure and facilities to serve the demands of tourists. Moreover, Laos needs to train more employees who will work in the tourism industry to meet the demands of tourists (AEC News, 2015).
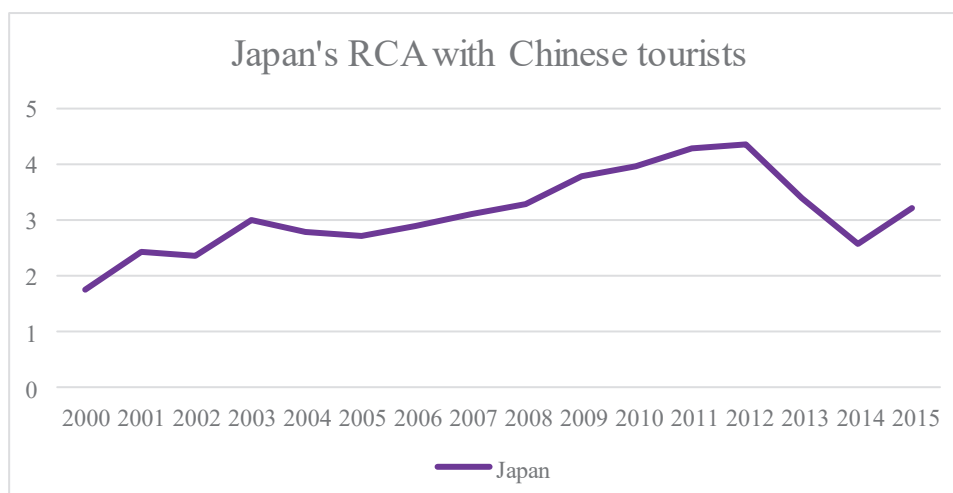
Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 6 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Japan from 2000 to 2015

The figures presented the tourism competitive advantage of Japan tourism with Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries from 2000 to 2005. It is observed that Japan's RCA was higher than 1 throughout the whole period of study. The lowest of Japan's RCA was 1.75 in 2000. The trend of Japan's RCA had continually increased in 2001 to 2011. It was 2.43, 2.35, 2.98, 2.79, 2.70, 2.87, 3.09, 3.28, 3.77, 3.93, and 4.29 in 2001 to 2011 respectively. The largest of Japan's RCA with Chinese tourist was 4.35 in 2012. Then, it sharply decreased by 3.38 and 2.56 in 2013 and 2014 respectively. The decreases of Chinese tourists in 2013 and 2014 were because the Senkaku island disputes between China and Japan that made Chinese tourists shift from Japan to travel to other counties in Asia. However, Japan's RCA with Chinese tourists went up to 3.19 in 2015. One of the reasons is because the relaxation of visa rules by Japan for foreign tourists which helps international tourism increase in Japan (Kyodo, 2016).

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 7 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Australia from 2000 to 2015

The figures in above presented the tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists in Australia Chinese tourists were the second of international tourists visiting Australia after tourists from United Kingdom in 2010 and 2012. Chinese tourists grow 12% over the past ten years. Australia was the first Western countries that approved destination state from China policy on traveling to abroad in 1999. The most popular tourist destinations in Australia for Chinese tourist were Sydney and Melbourne respectively (Jundan, Zang, & BricIt, 2015). It is observed that Australia's RCA ratio is consistently higher than 1 throughout the whole of study except in 2000. In that year, the number of Australia's RCA was less than 1. It was 0.84. It means that Australia
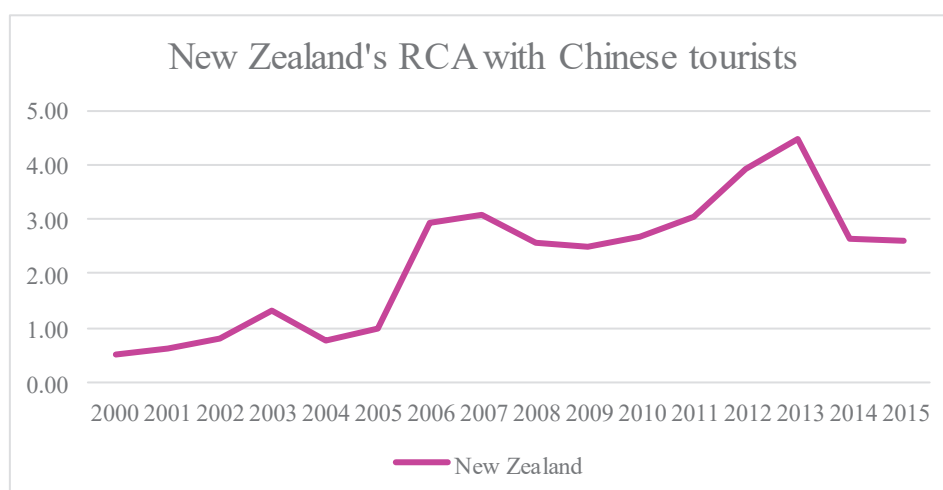
had no competitiveness with Chinese tourists in 2009. However, the trend of Australia's RCA was quite good from 2001 to 2015.It has continually increased by 1.14, 1.49, 2.34, 2.30, 2.83, 2.75, 3.08, 3.35, 3.46, 3.70, 4.21, 4.30, and, 4.71 in 2001 to 2012respectively. Australia's RCA peaked at 4.71 in 2013. It means that Australia was very strong tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourist in 2013. After that it decreased sharply to 2.66 and 2.56 in 2014 and 2015 respectively.

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 8 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Singapore from 2000 to 2015

Singapore is the only developed country in ASEAN+6. However, it also is focused on developing the tourism sector of their economy as well. An analysis of the tourism comparative advantage with Chinese tourists in Singapore found that Singapore's RCA fluctuated in 2000 to2015in Singapore's RCA ratio was higher than 1 almost the whole period of study except in 2007.An exception was in 2007 when the RCA was lower than 1. It was 0.39. It means that Singapore had no competitiveness with Chinese tourists in 2007. It is not only Chinese tourists decrease but also international tourists decrease in Singapore in 2007 as well. In that year, tourist expenditure in Singapore was lowest for the first time in six years. However, the trend of Singapore's RCA increased from 2000 to 2003. It was 2.37, 2.52, 3.11, and 4.19 respectively. Then, it sharply decreased by 3.74, 3.37, 3.55, and 0.39 in 2004 to 2007 respectively. Though, it was sharp increase to 3.80 in the year. Then, it dropped again by 3.18 and 3.08 in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Singapore's RCA had continually increased to4.67 in 2013. Then, it double decreased to 2.66 and 2.56 in 2014 and 2015 respectively. However, it can be stated that Singapore has tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists. Historically, it is because Singapore was one of five countries which were on the list of permitted travel countries regulated by the Chinese government (Kau & Pei , 2005). Moreover, the rise of China's middle class has resulted in an increase in the number of tourists travelling to Singapore as well.
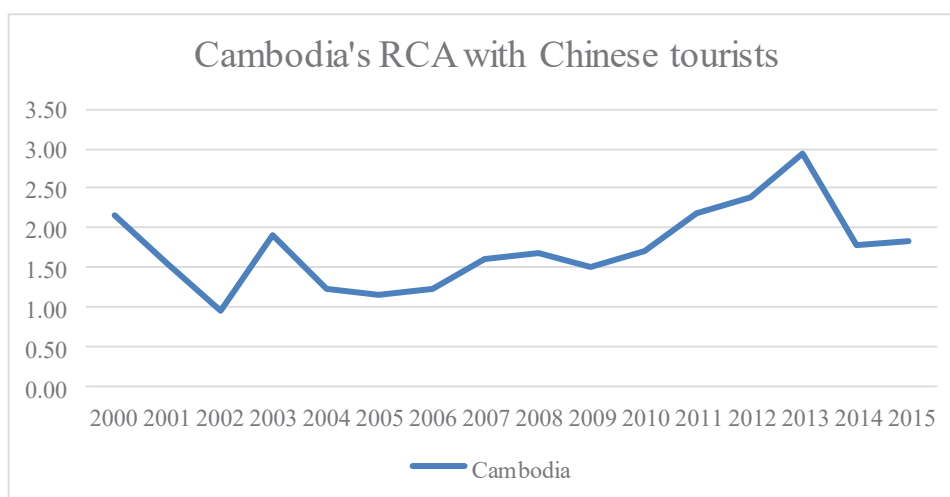

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 9 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in

New Zealand from 2000 to 2015

An analysis of New Zealand tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists from 2000 to 2015 presented that New Zealand had no tourism competitiveness in some year of study. It is because their RCA index was less than 1. It was 0.50, 0.61, 0.80, and 0.77 in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2004 respectively. However, the largest New Zealand's RCA was 4.49 in 2013. It means that they had strong tourism comparative advantage with Chinese in 2013. It is because of increasing of the number of flight. It is increases to 36 flight per week from China to New Zealand. Moreover, it is because of the Premium Kiwi Partner program between China and New Zealand in 2013. The program increased importance of online travel agency. Most of Chinese tourists traveled to New Zealand on Chinese New Year holiday and they bought tourism product such as airline and hotel by online sale from agency such as Ctrip and Alitrp. It is very success of marketing strategy of New Zealand to tap Chinese tourists in 2013 (New Zealand Tourism, 2017). The trend of New Zealand' RCA was an increase. It was 1.33, 1.00, 2.92, 3.06, 2.56, 2.48, 2.67, 3.05, 3.94, 2.63, and 2.62 in 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2015 respectively. However, the trend of Chinese tourist traveled to New Zealand decreased double from 4.49 to 2.63 and 2.62 in 2013 to 2014 and 2015 respectively. It is because of a new Chinese travel law with New Zealand had singed. This low was control tour operation in New Zealand included; tour price, tour safety, unfair competition, and forced shopping trip. (Courtney, D. 2017).

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 10 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in Cambodia from 2000 to 2015

Cambodia is an interesting country with a variety of cultural attractions. Cambodia had tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourist almost every of the study time except in 2002. There had no competitive advantage in 2002 because its RCA was less than 1. It was 0.95. The largest RCA of Cambodia was 2.93 in 2013.It had strong competitive advantage at 2.17 in 2000. Then, it sharp decreased by 1.57 in 2001.However, the trend of Cambodia's RCA increased from 2003 to 2012. It was 1.91, 1.22, 1.16, 1.23, 1.61, 1.67, 1.51, 1.70, 2.18, and 2.38 respectively. Cambodia had tourism competitiveness with Chinese from 2003 to 2015. It is because the Cambodian government used aggressive strategies to influence Chinese tourists traveling to their country. For example, there was an increase of direct flights from China to Cambodia. However, Cambodia's RCA was double decreased from 2.93 in 2013 to 1.77 and 1.83 in 2014 and 2015 respectively. This is related to Post Today News reported in 2017 that many Chinese tourists travel to Thailand or Vietnam before going to Cambodia. While in Thailand and Vietnam they spent money on shopping, hotels, restaurants, spas, recreational activities, night markets, and cultural attractions. Then when they arrive in Cambodia, they do not spend as much money there. It causes the expenditure of Chinese tourists in Cambodia to decrease. Moreover, even when the number of Chinese tourists increased, the income from Chinese tourists did not increase because most of the tourism business in Cambodia is operated by Chinese companies (Ah Keng Kau & Pei, 2017). It is similar to the situation of tour zero dollars in Thailand. However, Cambodia had a tourism competitive advantage with Chinese almost the whole period of study.

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.
Figure 11 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in
The Philippines from 2000 to 2015

The Philippines is a country in which tourism plays a major role in their economy. International tourists visit the Philippines with huge numbers every year. According to the analysis of the competitiveness of Chinese tourists in the Philippines, the study indicated that the Philippines had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists from 2000 to 2004. The Philippines RCA was lower than 1 from 2000 to 2004. It was 0.24, 0.31, 0.39, 0.58, and 0.48 respectively. This is because the situation of dispute between Philippine and China case to economic and tourism of Philippine directly (The voice TV reports, 2012). However, the Philippine had tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists from 2005 to 2015. It was 1.14, 1.22, 1.40, 1.43, 1.31, 1.28, 1.58, 1.50, 2.41, 1.16, and 1.15 respectively. The largest of the Philippines was 2.41 in 2013. This is because the growth of international tourists in the Philippines. For example, the success of tourism strategies of the Philippine government. This includes: the development of public transportation; tourism facilities; improvement of the business environment for new investments in tourism; development of a tourism product, such as a tour package; expansion of a new tourism market; development of a standard of tourism and service; support of small and medium businesses in the tourism industry; and improvement of the standard of employee skills in the tourism sector. Moreover, tourism growth is because of a competitive advantage of labor in Philippines. There are strong labor skills and language skills that are very important in the tourism industry. Furthermore, the Philippines and China have signed a contract to exchange more tourists in both countries (Jirapirom,2017).
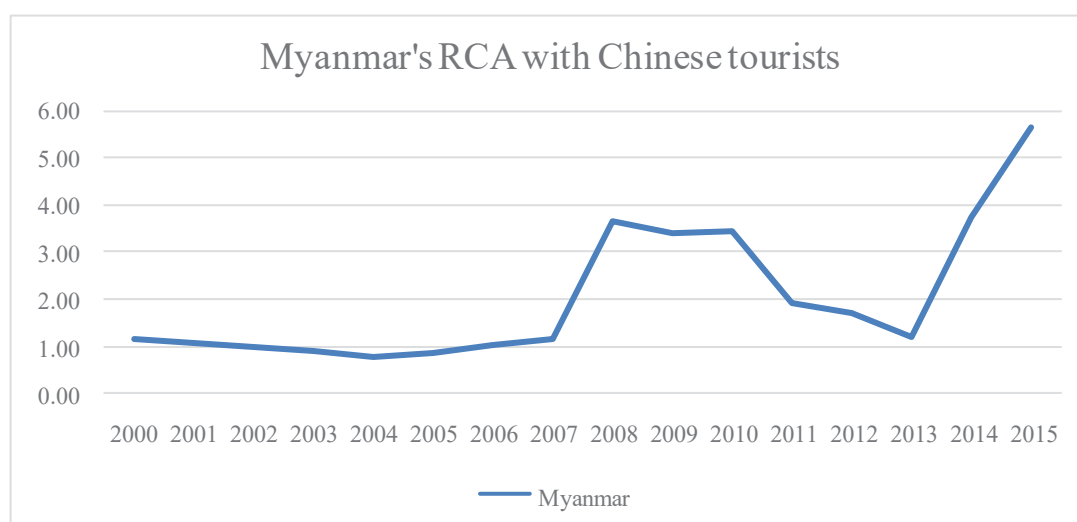
Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.
Figure 12 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in
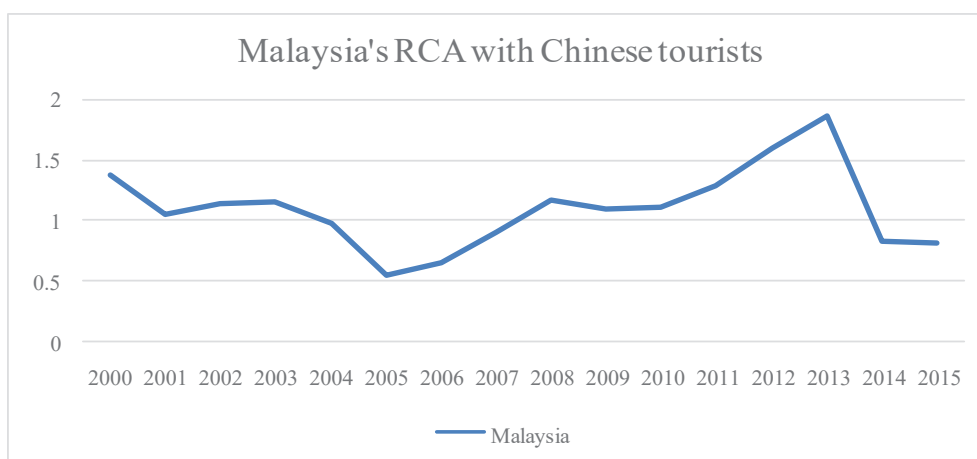Myanmar from 2000 to 2015

Myanmar is a developing country which plays a major role in the tourism industry since they opened their country to tourists in 1987. According to the analysis of tourism comparative advantage with the Chinese tourists in Myanmar, the data indicated that Myanmar had no competitive advantage with Chinese tourists from 2002 to 2005. It reported that Myanmar's RCA was less than 1. It was 0.99, 0.90, 0.69, 0.76, and 0.83 respectively from 2002 to 2005. Factors which affected Myanmar's RCA include poor infrastructure and facilities for serving tourists. However, Myanmar's RCA was larger than 1. It was 1.14, 1.05, 1.03, 1.31, 3.66, 3.40, 3.44, 1.93, 1.71, 1.18, and 3.74 in 2000, 2001, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 respectively. Myanmar's largest RCA was 5.66 in 2015. It means Myanmar had tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists at that time. Myanmar is one of the countries that has seen a growth of Chinese tourists as reported in 2014. The number of Chinese tourists increased sharply by 5.43% to 9.48% in 2014 to 2015. Chinese tourists were ranked number two after Thai tourists of all international tourists in Myanmar. The increase of tourists in Myanmar is because of the support and promotion of tourism by the Myanmar government. Moreover, it is because of natural, historical and cultural resources which pull tourists to travel to Myanmar. They have a World Heritage site in Myanmar. Furthermore, Wanderlust magazine of England stated that Myanmar is a top emerging destination. Luxury Travel magazine called Myanmar wide open for tourism in 2014 (Research Department of Export-Import Bank of Thailand, 2014). According to that description by the magazines, the Myanmar government expects that the number of tourists visiting Myanmar will increase, especially Chinese tourists.
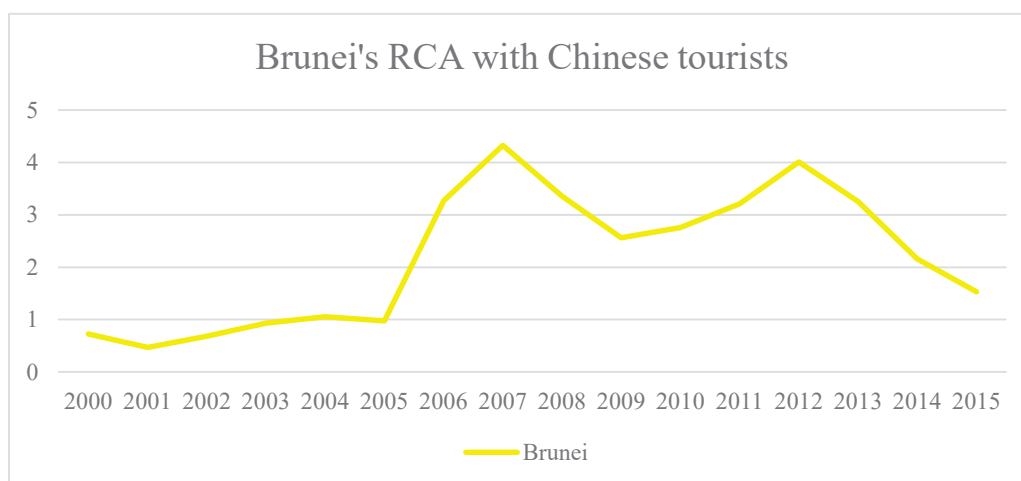
Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.
Figure 13 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in

Brunei from 2000 to 2015

Brunei is a country which exports oil as a main economic activity. However, Brunei has focused more and more on the tourism industry to support their economic system so It does not rely only on its oil industry. The number of tourists in Brunei has increased every year, especially Chinese tourists. It is because of natural attractions in the tourist destination. An analysis of tourism competitive advantage of Brunei with Chinese tourists indicated that Brunei had no competitive advantage in the first period of the study. Brunei's RCA with Chinese tourists was lower than 1 in 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2005. It was 0.72, 0.47, 0.68, and 0.94 respectively. However, Brunei did have tourism competitive advantage with Chinese touristsfrom2004 to 2015. Brunei's RCA was larger than 1. It was 3.27, 4.32, 3.35, 2.56, 2.75, 3.21,4.01, 3.26, 2.16 and 1.53 in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 respectively. The largest of Brunei's RCA was 4.01 in 2012. The result of the study indicated that the trend of Chinese tourists visiting Brunei will increase in the future. This is because there is an increase of Chinese tourists who travels to Brunei by charter flight. Most of the tourists visiting Brunei are from South Korea, China, and Malaysia respectively. Brunei is country which is rich in natural resources such as beautiful beaches and islands. The number of Chinese tourists who travel to Brunei has increased by 7% every year. The main focus of Chinese who visit Brunei is for relaxation for long vacations. Moreover, the Chinese perceive Brunei as a destination for a peaceful holiday. The Brunei government supports the tourism industry in several ways. This includes an increase in the number of flights from Brunei to the Chinese mainland such as in Kunming, for serving the demands of Chinese tourists. It not only benefits the tourism business, but also contributes to international trade between Brunei and China as well (Salleh, 2015).

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.
Figure 14 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in
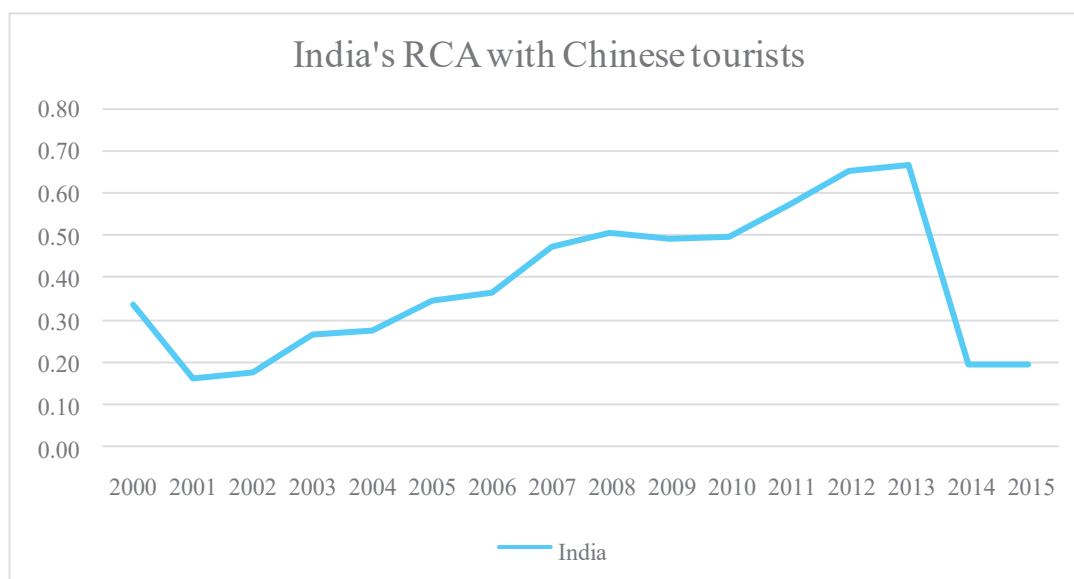Malaysia from 2000 to 2015

Malaysia's RCA indicated that Malaysia had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2014, and 2015 because Malaysia's RCA was less than 1. It was 0.97, 0.55, 0.65,0.90, 0.84, and 0.82 respectively. However, Malaysia's RCA was larger than 1 during other years of the study. It was 1.38, 1.05, 1.14, 1.15, 1.17, 1.10,1.10, 1.28, 1.59, and 1.86 respectively from 2000 to 2003 and 2008 to 2013 respectively. It is related to the cultural experience of Malaysia and China. For example, the cultural background of Malaysia and China were very similar because of their historical migration between the two countries. However, Chinese tourists desire a different cultural experience. After the loss of a Malaysian airline flight, which was full of Chinese passengers, and have been presumed dead, the Malaysian government did not explain or assist the families of the lost at that time. Even now, they do not know why the plane was lost and the Chinese people continue to be upset about that. It has negatively affected Malaysia's image with the Chinese people.That is presented by Malaysian's RCA in 2014 and 2015. This showed Malaysia had no competitiveness with Chinese tourists in that period. It was 0.84 and 0.82 respectively. However, the Malaysian government is attempting to increase more Chinese tourism in the future. For instance, there is a memorandum of understanding with Alibaba Company in Beijing which is called "The Alitrip Malaysia Tourism Platform". It provides an online database about Malaysian tourism, including promotion of Malaysian tourism, information about flights from China to Malaysia, tour packages, gift vouchers for shopping, dinner, and airline tickets as well. Moreover, there was an increase in new flights connecting China to Malaysia such as flights from Kuala Lumpur to Chongqing, Chengdu, Wuhan, Nanjing, Haikou, and Fuzhou in 2017. Furthermore, Chinese tourists do not need visa to go to travel to Malaysia. It is clear that the trend of Chinese travelling to Malaysia will increase more and more in the future.

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.
Figure 15 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in

Indonesia from 2000 to 2015

An analysis of Indonesian tourism competitive advantage with the Chinese tourists demonstrated that Indonesia had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists from 2000 to 2007 because Indonesia had a ratio of RCA lower than 1. It was 0.19, 0.10, 0.11, 0.32, 0.27, 0.29, 0.97, and 0.90 from2000 to 2007 respectively. It is because Indonesia was not successful in promoting tourism. However, Indonesia had a tourism competitive advantage from 2008 to 2015. Its RCA was larger than 1 as presented at 1.48, 1.50, 1.44, 1.90, 1.96, 2.45, 1.40 and 1.53 respectively. The largest Indonesia's RCA was 2.45 in 2013. Currently, the Indonesian government is promoting tourism very strongly to increase their share of the Chinese tourism market. They promoted Indonesian tourism by signing the agreement with Alibaba Enterprise to promote e-tourism with Chinese tourists. According to that agreement, Indonesia expects that Chinese tourists will increase by 10 million in 2019. Moreover, the Indonesian government developed 10 other tourist destinations to attract tourists. Although Bali is the primary destination, the Indonesian government wanted to increase tourist travel to other areas in Indonesia (Indonesia's Investment Coordinating Board, 2016). Furthermore, the Indonesian government has liberalized visa requirements for international tourists. It resulted in the increase of Chinese tourists as the number one group of international tourists to visit Indonesia (South China Morning Post, 2017)

Source: It was calculated by the author on July 1 2016.

Figure 16 The number of tourism competitive advantage index of Chinese tourists in India from 2000 to 2015

An analysis of India tourism comparative advantage with Chinese tourists presented that India had no tourism competitiveness with Chinese tourists all year of study. This was presented by RCA radio index. It was less than 1 throughout the whole period. It was 0.34, 0.16, 0.18, 0.27, 0.27, 0.35, 0.36, 0.48, 0.51, 0.49, 0.50, 0.57, 0.66, 0.67, 0.20, and 0.20 in 2000 to 2015 respectively. Disadvantage of India tourism was the tourism infrastructure, transport system, information dissemination, and security system. For example, the quality of accommodation needs more improvement. India still has poor transportation, India had only air and rail to connect with tourist destination. They had no other transport such as metro to connect between airport and rail. Moreover, India tourism had less information dissemination. For example, they had no website that provides all document about India tourism for visitor. Furthermore, India had negative image about security system for foreign tourists especially for women tourists. They need more extra care when traveling to India (Ministry of tourism Government India, n.d.)

5. Conclusion

Thailand had tourism competitive advantage with the Chinese tourists compared to other ASEAN + 6 countries. The largest RCA for Thailand was 4.46 in 2013. According to the result of the study found that Laos, Japan, and Singapore were competitors of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists. There was a negative relationship between RCA of Laos, Japan, and Singapore with Thailand's RCA. It means that when Thailand's RCA was large, then Singapore's RCA and Japan's RCA were lower. On the other hand, Vietnam's RCA was larger than Thailand's RCA for almost a whole year of study. However, Thailand's RCA was larger than Vietnam's in the last year of the study. Thailand's RCA was 3.34 in 2015 while Vietnam's RCA was 2.82 in 2015. It can be stated that the trend of Thailand's RCA with Chinese tourists will be larger than Vietnam's in the future.

Secondly, Australia, Singapore and Cambodia had tourism competitive advantage almost every year of study except, in 2000. Australia had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists in 2000. It was 0.84. Likely, Singapore had no tourism competitiveness with Chinese tourists in 2007. It was 0.39. Similarly, Cambodia had no tourism competitiveness with Chinese tourists in 2002. It was 0.95. The largest RCA for Cambodia was 2.93 in 2013. The result of the analysis supports the report of the International Institute for Trade and Development (2017) performed a study of the total tourism competitive advantage of countries in ASEAN from 2005 to 2014. It indicated that the trend of RCA o in tourism of Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam will increase. It means Thailand will have more tourism competitiveness as well.

Thirdly, New Zealand, the Philippine, Myanmar, Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourists in some period. For example, New Zealand's RCA less than 1 in 2000 to 2002 and 2004. It was 0.50, 0.61, 0.80, and 0.77 respectively. The Philippine, Brunei, and Indonesia had no competitiveness in the first period of the study because their RCA was less than 1. However, the largest RCA's for The Philippine, Brunei, and Indonesia were 2.41, 4.32, and 2.45, in 2013, 2007, and 2013 respectively. It can be stated that those countries had tourism competitive advantage in the last period of the study.

Lastly, India had no tourism competitive advantage with Chinese tourist throughout the whole year of study. This is because India had poor tourism facility, transportation and quality of service for servicing tourists. Moreover, it is because of the tourism image of India is not safety.

5.1 Suggestions

An Analysis of the Comparative Advantage of Thai tourism with Chinese Tourists Compared to other ASEAN + 6 Countries except suggests that Thailand has to potential to improve Chinese tourism and has the potential to earn more revenue. However, Thailand needs to fix some problems and obstacles. The research has provided suggestions as follows.

This study found that only some countries in ASEAN + 6 had tourism comparative advantage with Chinese tourists from 2000 to 2015. However, every country attempts to improve Chinese tourism to their country. The growth of the Chinese economy has resulted in an increase of Chinese tourists with power to consume tourism products and services. The growth of middle-class Chinese tourists has increased Chinese tourism in the world market. Thailand is one of the most beautiful tourist destinations in the world with a variety of natural resources, culture, festivals, and food which attract Chinese tourists. To attract its share of the Chinese market, it is very important to understand potential tourism and tourism competitiveness with the Chinese tourist market.

Thai tourism needs to improve more facilities to service the demand of Chinese tourists, provide training in language skills for the employees who work in the tourism industry, improve the security system, improve transportation related to China, and resolve political problems which impact the image of Thailand. Moreover, Thai tourism should provide more aggressive strategies to capture a large share of the Chinese market.

Moreover, to improve tourism competitiveness within ASEAN + 6 countries, Thailand should cooperate, like the European Union, in issuing one visa. For instance, the European Union issues a visa which allows travel to 26 countries. That may help tourism competitiveness within ASEAN + 6 countries.

This paper analyzed the tourism competitive advantage by using RCA as a methodology. Another suggestion for future research should add SWOT (Straight Weakness Opportunity Threat) analysis of Thai tourism with Chinese tourists as well. Moreover, there are limitations in obtaining data for analysis because it is not easy to get statistics from other organizations that are related to the topic over a long period of time.

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