

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The research program is multi-stage and involved three separate components. Since the overall purpose of the project is to examine the potential for NBT development between potentially constituent tourist attractions in the regions (Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat) and accommodations in each area, the methodology is designed to investigate the potential areas where influences tourism development in various activities in the regions by developing questions and analysis formats. The research process is therefore undertaken through the research direction as follows:

- 3.1) Desk research
- 3.2) Modes of selecting
- 3.3) Research tools
- 3.4) Data collection
- 3.5) Data analysis

3.1 Desk research

The information sources used to review the tourism initiative were primarily the NBT development in Muang, Suratthani and Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat, as well as the cooperative tourism development of new products and activities involvement themselves. The researcher also examined the secondary data sources from other documentary sources such as from tourism reports, journals, books, relevant researches and Internet.

3.2 Modes of selecting

3.2.1 Selection of field survey for study

The area selected for the field research focused mainly on Muang, Suratthani and Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat. The reasons are as follows:

1.)The significant growth of tourism

Suratthani is considered as a nature-stage destination in its tourism development as tourism revenue by 12,391.76 million baht in 2003 (TAT, region5, 2004). Most tourists mainly traveled to spend their vacation on Samui Island and took a ferry at Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat. It can be regarded as significant new tourism products and activities that have enjoyed recent substantial growth in number of tourist arrivals.

2.)Potential to develop tourism in the natural environment

Since Suratthani is covered with the diversity in geographical and physical characteristics, especially, there are many tourist attractions on the way from Muang, Suratthani through Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat such as: Weepawadee waterfall, farm stay, natural areas and many beaches with peaceful atmosphere (in Nakhon Srithammarat). Related to geographical location above, these areas are very interesting as a basis for a pilot study in terms of new tourism products development and tourism as a single destination.

3.2.2 Selection of data collection periods for study

This study was considered as occurring in a single period of time during January 2006 to May 2006. This period was selected because of the diversity of the information from any tourists of those who traveled during both tourism season and non-tourism season. In order to completely analyze information, it is, of course, necessary to investigate the variety types of tourists as data sources.

3.2.3 Selection of respondents

The research aimed to examine the current circumstances, the perceptions and perspectives from the tourism industry on both privates and publics' views of the NBT development, as well as problems and barriers to tourism business. To get in-depth and precise information, the key informants were then defined in the process of data collection as follows:

Table 3.1 The description of respondents

Respondents	Description
1. Domestic and International Tourists	Tourists are defined as domestic and international tourists who travel to Suratthani for spending their time with and without staying overnight. They are expected to involve with visitors and excursionists as well.
2. Resort Entrepreneurs and Farm Stay Owners	Entrepreneurs are defined as persons who run their own accommodation business as resorts, hotels and farm stays in Muang, Suratthani through Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat.
3. Related Officer Groups	The groups of these respondents are defined as those who act as representatives from the Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO), the Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), region 5, the Land Department and the expert or the professional.

In order to reach the sample population, the sample size of each group of respondents separately needed the procedures of the selection process for deciding whom to study. The identification of these three groups of respondents was clarified by the criteria to use in making the selection of samples. The key informants therefore are considered the characterization to make the research project achievable.

1.) Domestic and international tourists

Based on the scope of time above, the number of domestic and international tourists came up with those who separately visited in Muang, Suratthani during February and March 2006. According to the tourist arrival statistics accumulated by TAT in 2004 (see appendix A), the **population** was **114,483 tourists**. Since the purpose of this research was followed with tourists' perspective and perception on NBT development toward domestic and international tourists, the research methodology is therefore complied by Yamane formula (1967).

With regard to the Yamane formula (1967), to find the sample size group from the statistical population formulary is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n = Sample size
 e = Confidence interval at 95% therefore,
 $e = 0.05$
 N = Number of population

The population was the number of both domestic and international tourists who traveled to Muang, Suratthani in 2004. The **sampling** was determined by using the above formula:

$$n = \frac{114.483}{1 + 114,483 (0.05)^2}$$

Thus the **sample size** was **399.99 \approx 400**.

2.)Resort entrepreneurs and farm stay owners

With a respect to a scope of area, the total number of accommodations in Muang, Suratthani was 51 (see appendix B), 2 farm stays and 18 hotel resorts in Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat (see appendix C). The **population** of accommodations was 71 enterprises.

The key informants (see appendix D) were selected from resort entrepreneurs and farm stay owners in Muang, Suratthani and Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat with following characteristics:

Premium A: the accommodation where has the approximate room rate at 1,001 baht up and higher outstanding space. It may be located in tourist destination by serving tourism products and activities. The two farm stays in Suratthani are considered to set in Premium A as their products and activities served.

Premium B: the accommodation where has the approximate room rate at 401-1,000 baht.

Premium C: the accommodation where has the approximate room rate at 400 baht down.

Rather, the groups of population were clearly defined to select certain-sized subsamples; **quota sampling** then generally began by setting up a matrix of the characteristics desired above. Consequently, the 35 key informants shared between groups of tourism-related enterprises in ratio of 50:50 as follows.

Table 3.2 Matrix for a quota sample of enterprises in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat

Characteristics of Key Informants			53 Enterprises in Suratthani (50% : N = 26.50)		18 Enterprises in Nakhon Srithammarat (50% : N = 9)		Total N
1. Premium (35%)	A	9.27	(9) ^a	3.15	(3)	12	
2. Premium (35%)	B	9.27	(9)	3.15	(3)	12	
3. Premium (30%)	C	7.95	(8)	2.70	(3)	11	
Total 100%	N	50	26	50	9	35	

^a Rounded numbers in parentheses designate the actual number to be sampled. They must sometimes be rounded up or down to produce the needed row and column totals.

PPS was considered to be a sampling method to select clusters proportionate to size and then give the strata within the clusters a chance of selection proportionate to their number. The determination of required size in ratio of 50:50 for key informants could be equally distributed to both clusters with respect to the proportion of raw data distribution.

The percentages of the strata were found out that Premium A and B were set by 35 percent and Premium C was respectively done to 30 percent. The percentage setting came up with the study for this research. 35 percent was selected to Premium A and B as their higher outstanding spaces and 30 percent was normally drawn up with the lower potentiality for Premium C. The percentages proportionate to each premium, however, were not different from each stratum because the surveyed data was expected to regularly receive among them.

Hence, the proportion of key informants conducted in interviews in each region was shared between two groups of tourism-related enterprises by 26 enterprises in Suratthani and 9

enterprises in Nakhon Srithammarat. A total of **quota sample size** was **35**.

3.) Related officer groups

The key informants were selected from related officer groups were those who acted as representatives from the Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO), the Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), region 5, the Land Department and the expert or the professional. Each group of key informant must have the characteristics:

1.) Have had at least three years experience in the tourism field;

2.) Have regularly participated in regional collaboration development and planning;

3.) Have had experience and participation in launching guidelines, policies and activities for tourism development and planning;

4.) Have had experience and published research related to tourism management and development and/or any tourism-related topics.

Key informants of each group of representatives followed by the characteristics above can be regarded as the Headman of Department in the process of **purposive or judgment sampling**. Hence, the **sample size** became **5 key informants**.

3.3 Research tools

According to the information from desk research reviewed and studied, the framework of research objectives was designed and described in tabular presentation. The research tools were designed as follows:

3.3.1 The researcher was responsible for conducting interviews, providing questionnaire, collecting information and analyzing all data, both primary and secondary data sources. During the process of collecting questionnaires and interviewing key informants, no theoretical concepts were used to oblige or to convince the key informants. The questionnaires focused on perspective and perception on NBT development, and the interviews did the discussion and exchange of opinions with the respondents of research and institutional elements.

3.3.2 Structured interviews and questionnaires were used as the quantitative and qualitative research tools to collect the primary data (see appendix D). Structured interviews were comprised of a mix of questions both open and closed. Questionnaires were compiled by close-ended questions. Both of them designed by using the following procedures:

1.) Information studied from review and analysis of literature was applied to construct the first draft of questions for interviews and questionnaires.

2.) Experts and professionals with anyone of the following qualifications piloted the first draft of interview and questionnaire questions.

- Specialize in tourism and/or tourism related field of knowledge
- Specialize in research methodology
- Have done research related to tourism management and development and/or any tourism-related topic
- Have at least three years of experiences in tourism business, tourism planning and development, and tourism destination marketing

3.) Comments on the pilot of the first draft were applied to improve the secondary one of interview and questionnaire questions.

4.) The second draft was approved and edited by the same group of experts and professionals.

5.) All comments and recommendations were carefully reviewed in order to establish the final sets of interview and questionnaire questions that were used for the survey instruments.

6.) The final sets of questions were established were designed differently details in three sets of each group of key informants as follows:

First set was designed for investigating domestic and international tourists' perspective and perception. The questions were comprised of three parts as follows:

(i). The **first** part was composed of 5 closed questions about key informant's experiences on traveling to the regions.

(ii). The **second** part was composed of 1 main closed question with 10 sub-questions about key informant's opinions of current circumstances of tourism in the regions. A Likert scale was used for assessing the level of thinking.

(iii). The **third** part was composed of 2 main closed questions with 13 sub-questions about factors influencing in key informant's decision making in traveling to the regions. A Likert scale was used for assessing the level of thinking.

(iv). The **forth** part was composed of 5 closed questions with 6 sub-questions about key informant's opinions of NBT development in the regions. A Likert scale was used for assessing the level of thinking.

(v). The **fifth** part was composed of 5 closed questions about key informant's personal attributes, such as gender, age, occupation, etc.

Second set was designed for interviewing the tourism-related entrepreneurs as resort hotel entrepreneurs and farm stay owners. The interviews were comprised of 4 parts as follows:

(i). The **first** part was composed of 10 closed questions and 4 open-ended questions about the key informant's tourism business.

(ii). The **second** part was composed of 2 main closed questions with 18 sub-questions about opinions of the tourism development and management in the regions. A Likert scale was used to assess the level of thinking.

(iii). The **third** part was composed of 3 open-ended questions and 1 closed question about opinions of the regional tourism development in the regions. Additionally, a spaced line is offered for recommendation. The closed question used a Likert scale to assess the level of thinking.

(iv). The **forth** part was composed of 4 closed questions about the key informant's attributes, such as gender, age, position and education.

Third set was designed for interviewing the tourism-related officer groups as representatives from the Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO), the Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), region 5, the Tour Operator Club and the expert or the professional. The interviews were comprised of 4 parts as follows:

(i). The **first** part was composed of 2 main closed questions with 16 sub-questions about the key informant's opinions of tourism circumstances in the regions.

(ii). The **second** part was composed of 3 main closed questions with 30 sub-questions and 1 open-ended question about opinions of the tourism development and management in the regions. A Likert scale was used to assess the level of thinking.

(iii). The **third** part was composed of 5 open-ended questions and 2 closed question with 7 sub-questions about

opinions of tourism products development and destination marketing in the regions. Additionally, a spaced line is offered for recommendation. The closed questions used a Likert scale to assess the level of thinking.

(iv). The **forth** part was composed of 3 closed questions about the key informant's attributes, such as position, department and working experience.

In addition to a Likert scale being used to assess the level of thinking in the questionnaires and the interviews, the meaning for each assessed level was determined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{By the interval level} &= \frac{\text{The difference of the}}{\text{highest and the lowest points}} \\ &\quad \text{Number of levels} \\ &= (5-1)/5 \\ &= 0.8 \end{aligned}$$

Assessed Level	Weight of Answer	Meaning
Determine with Weight		
1	1.00 - 1.80	very low/ or strongly disagree
2	1.81 - 2.60	low/ or disagree
3	2.61 - 3.40	a neutral midpoint
4	3.41 - 4.20	high/ or agree
5	4.21 - 5.00	very high/ or strongly agree

Pooled ranking in the Table 4.4-39 was calculated from mean of each accessed level on assigned score as follows; 1st assigned 5 scores, 2nd assigned 4 scores, 3rd assigned 3 scores, 4th assigned 2 scores, and 5th assigned 1 score.

“Indicator” in the Table 4.4-44 was calculated from mean of accessed level by assigned scores as follows; 1.) Yes is

assigned to 100 scores, 2.) No is assigned to 0 score, and 3.) Not sure is assigned to 50 scores.

3.3.3 A note from the primary data was used to write down all primary data gathered from interviews, issues and opinions presented by the key informants.

3.4 Data collection

In summary, data collection procedures could be described as follows:

3.4.1.) **Primary data** sources were collected from personal in-depth interviews and questionnaires. Probability proportionate to size (PPS) was used for targeting the group of key informants needed for questionnaires. Quotas sampling was used for targeting the group of key informants needed for in-depth interviews towards institutional elements. In addition, purposive sampling was used for targeting the group of key informants needed for in-depth interviews towards tourism-related officer groups. Selection criteria and associated quotas were established. Judgment for inclusion was guided by the criteria mentioned above in the context of selection of information sources. 400 questionnaires and 40 individuals provided in-depth interviews for this research imposed limitations in gathering primary data.

3.4.2.) **Secondary data** sources were collected from studies of relevant documents.

3.5 Data analysis

During the study, the analyses were regularly undertaken. Questionnaires and interviews were fully considered the characteristics of questions in encouraging key informants to analyze and express their perceptions and

perspectives in relation to the study issues. Increasingly, the researcher always consulted the Director of thesis, experts and the key informants from the tourism industry. These practices greatly helped the researcher to clearly interpret data so that the conclusions can be drawn which the researcher can establish as valid and convincing.

To achieve the research objectives that aimed to establish effectiveness of process used to expedite NBT development in tourism product development and tourism destination marketing in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat, there were two major methods which the researcher must accomplish as follows:

3.5.1 Categorization of general information

General information was categorized in relation to research objectives and conceptual framework. Its content was comprised of rearrangement potentials and possibilities of plans, issues of NBT, physical aspects, regional sustainability aspects, potential and readiness for tourism product and activity development and tourism destination marketing, particularly in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat. All content was investigated as a means to response for the following research objectives:

- 1.) To study the potential for development of NBT business in Muang, Suratthani and Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat.

- 2.) To study the potential demand and supply for NBT in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat.

- 3.) To propose the approaches for NBT development that could create complementary advantages and sustainability of development to community.

3.5.2 Content analysis

The primary data gathered from questionnaires and interviews were grouped into categories: current circumstances, perceptions and perspectives from three groups of key informants concerning business benefits and barriers in tourism business operation, SWOT of the approaches for NBT development, issues needing urgent improvement and to be addressed by processes used to facilitate NBT development in tourism products and activities including with tourism destination marketing.

Findings were analyzed with the intention to address the supplementary research problems as follows:

1.) Does the potential for NBT development for the region: Muang, Suratthani and Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat emerge in constructing and reconstructing tourism places and spaces?

2.) Is it possible to add the NBT activities to the core tourist attractions?

3.) Could the enhancement of Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat as a nature-based tourist destination potentially increase a higher number of tourists' demand?

4.) Could the development of the smaller-scale tourism business and new niche products boost up opportunities for healthier tourism management?

Particular outcomes of the analysis were required descriptive presentation.

To accomplish the procedure and steps of studying the evaluation of NBT development in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat, the conceptual framework was determined to study and evaluate tourism development plans involved with the investigation of key informants' perception and perspective, SWOT analysis of NBT development, drawing up a proposed model of NBT development (tourism products development and

destination marketing management) and the effective process used to expedite regional tourism development as shown in the following Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Procedure and steps of study - NBT Development in the Regions:

Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat



