



E-ISSN:
2721-13988

Tourist Attraction Strategy in Cultural and Historical Tourism Destination: A Case Study of Phnom Preah Reach Troap in Kandal Province, Cambodia

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Abstract.

The tourism sector is a vital industry that supports the global economy and is recognized by nations like Cambodia as a primary engine of national economic development. This research investigates the effectiveness of tourist attraction strategies at Phnom Preah Reach Troap (Oudong Mountain), a significant cultural and historical heritage site in Kandal Province. The primary objective is to identify key factors influencing tourist attractions and provide strategic recommendations for sustainable growth. Utilizing a quantitative research approach, data were collected through purposive sampling from 120 participants, including tourists, local entrepreneurs, and authorities. Data analysis was performed using SPSS 26, focusing on descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis. The study examined six independent variables: infrastructure, safety and security, service quality, environmental factors, marketing, and event creation. Findings revealed significant positive correlations between all independent variables and the overall attraction strategy. Safety and security emerged as the most influential factor ($r = .775$), followed by marketing ($r = .733$) and event creation ($r = .722$). The research concludes that a holistic strategy integrating safety, infrastructure, and digital promotion is essential for enhancing the site's competitiveness. Recommendations include prioritizing safety measures, improving physical infrastructure, and expanding digital marketing efforts.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage Tourism; Tourist Attraction Strategy; Destination Marketing; Safety and Security; Sustainable Tourism Development.

1 Introduction

The tourism sector is a vital industry that supports the global economy (UNWTO, 2018) and is recognized by numerous nations, including Cambodia, as a key engine of national economic development (Ministry of Tourism Cambodia, 2012). It contributes significantly to job creation, income growth, and poverty reduction within communities, while also supporting national trade stability (Yehia, 2019; Ministry of Tourism Cambodia, 2012). Moreover, tourism is essential for enhancing national prestige by supporting the preservation of cultural heritage, traditions, and customs, as well as territorial integrity and the development of social infrastructure (Ministry of Tourism Cambodia, 2012).

In Cambodia, cultural and historical sites are major attractions for both domestic and international visitors (Ministry of Tourism Cambodia, 2012). The focus of this study is Phnom Preah Reach Troap (Oudong Mountain) in Kandal Province, a popular destination near Phnom Penh (Yun, 2020). This mountain is situated in the former capital of Oudong and houses the stupas of former kings of the royal dynasty, featuring beautifully crafted architecture, temples, and pagodas built decades ago (Buddhist Institute & Khmer Electronic Library, n.d.). Key attractions include the Sakyamuni Stupa, which enshrines sacred relics of the Buddha at the mountain's summit, and another stupa containing the remains of villagers killed by the Khmer Rouge in the Oudong Mountain area (Buddhist Institute & Khmer Electronic Library, n.d.). The



area also offers relaxing spaces, local food sold by nearby residents, souvenir shops, and numerous Buddhist worship places, all set within fresh air, quiet scenery, and green nature (Heng, n.d.; Yun, 2020).

The constant changes in the tourism industry, driven by economic shifts, natural disasters, and pandemics, require clear strategic planning for effective development. Creating strategies to attract tourists actively generates revenue, ensuring financial stability and sustainability. Observations and interviews conducted on March 15, 2025, with Kandal Provincial Tourism Department officers and tourists revealed challenges at the site, including poor infrastructure, insufficient digital marketing, and low service quality.

What Strategies should tourism site managers and relevant authorities adopt to further increase tourism growth?

The main objective focuses on strategies to enhance development and strengthen the effectiveness of tourism attractions, and the specific objectives include exploring the characteristics of attraction strategies in cultural sites and assessing tourists' perceptions of the services provided. Meanwhile, this research also provides benefits for multiple stakeholders. For local entrepreneurs, it increases awareness of safety, environment, and service quality. For policymakers, it serves as a resource for strategic plans and regulations regarding hygiene and order. Finally, it serves as a foundation for future academic research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Tourism Vision and Concepts

Tourism is a service activity that generates significant economic momentum and contributes to national growth (UNWTO, 2018). According to the Ministry of Tourism of Cambodia, tourism refers to the activities of individuals traveling to places outside their usual environment for less than one consecutive year for leisure, business, or recreation (Tourism Law, 2009), and Walton (2025) further notes that tourism involves the processes of spending time away from home to seek enjoyment while utilizing specific services.

2.2 Tourism Products and Their Importance

A tourism product is a package of activities that provides experiences and services, encompassing both tangible elements, such as accommodation and transportation, and intangible elements, such as leisure activities (Yadav, 2023). Well-designed tourism products are crucial for the global market as they introduce innovation to attract visitors (Favetta, 2024). These products stimulate local businesses and highlight cultural heritage, cuisine, and handicrafts (Richards, 2007).

2.3 Factors Influencing Tourist Attraction Strategies

A tourist attraction is a place of interest that visitors generally go to see, including locations, people, and events (Hayley, 2023). To attract more visitors, effective marketing strategies, such as social media engagement and partnerships with local influencers, are essential (Town Web, 2024). The research model for this study identifies six key components of an attraction strategy. Infrastructure: Includes transportation systems, accommodation, and communication networks that enhance visitors' convenience (Hulatt & Freitas, 2024). Safety and Security that it



represents the stability of the tourism system, encompassing risk management and visitor protection (Zou & Zheng, 2014). Service quality refers to tourists' experiences and satisfaction, based on reliability and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In addition, the environmental factor emphasizes a clean, well-preserved environment, which is a key dimension for sustaining the growth of the tourism industry (UNWTO, 2018). The marketing factor cannot be absent, as it involves the extended marketing mix (7Ps: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence) to connect with potential customers (Dörnyei, 2020). And event creation that organizing festivals and cultural ceremonies attracts millions of people and provides rich cultural experiences (Akhundova & Aytakin, 2024).

3 Method

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design to evaluate the relationships between the identified strategic factors and the effectiveness of tourist attractions. This approach allows for the collection of empirical numerical data, facilitating a rigorous, objective analysis and the testing of pre-defined hypotheses.

3.2 Research Setting and Sampling Strategy

The study was conducted at Phnom Preah Reach Troap (Oudong Mountain) in Kandal Province, Cambodia. The target population included domestic and international tourists, local entrepreneurs, administrative authorities, and residents. The research used a purposive sampling method, selecting participants based on specific criteria, such as tourists who visited the site for recreation within the last three months and stakeholders who refer to local authorities and business owners directly involved in site management. A total of 120 participants were surveyed, a sample size deemed sufficient to generate statistically significant quantitative data.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected through a structured, closed-ended questionnaire. The instrument was divided into sections corresponding to the six independent variables (IVs) and the dependent variable (DV), utilizing a Likert-scale format to measure perceptions and satisfaction. Questionnaires were administered via both on-site surveys (100 participants) and digital platforms (20 participants) to ensure a diverse response pool.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 26. The analysis followed a multi-step process. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation, and Pearson Correlation were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent variables and the overall attraction strategy, testing the hypothesis. Cronbach's Alpha was employed to assess measurement reliability, with a benchmark of > 0.70 for acceptability.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Participants were informed of the research objectives and provided their consent prior to data collection. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained, ensuring that



individual responses could not be traced to specific participants and thereby upholding academic integrity and ethical standards.

4 Result and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants

The research collected data from 120 participants through both on-site surveys and digital platforms. The demographic characteristics, including gender, age, occupation, and travel behavior, are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Participants (N = 120)

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gender</i>	Male	38	31.7
	Female	82	68.3
<i>Age</i>	Under 18	10	8.3
	18 – 24	68	56.7
	25 – 34	33	27.5
	35 – 44	8	6.7
	45 and above	1	0.8
<i>Occupation</i>	Student	60	50.0
	Teacher	7	5.8
	Government Officer	12	10.0
	Businessperson	16	13.3
	Private Employee	11	9.2
	Others	14	11.7
<i>Type of Visit</i>	Family	33	27.5
	Friends	60	50.0
	Partner	11	9.2
	Team / Group	4	3.3
	Individual / Solo	5	4.2
	School / University	4	3.3
	Others	3	2.5
<i>Purpose of Trip</i>	Religious Event	20	16.7
	Research	5	4.2
	Study Tour	10	8.3
	Leisure / Recreation	80	66.7
	Others	5	4.2

The data indicates that the majority of visitors to Phnom Preah Reach Troap are female (68.3%) and belong to the 18–24 age group (56.7%). This suggests that the site is highly popular among young adults and university-aged individuals, as 50% of respondents are students. Regarding travel patterns, most visitors prefer traveling with friends (50%) and visit primarily for leisure and recreation (66.7%). This profile highlights a significant opportunity for digital marketing strategies targeted at youth demographics.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Mean

The study assessed six independent variables using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations for the items comprising these variables.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Independent Variable Items (N = 120)



E-ISSN:
2721-13988

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF GRADUATE SCHOOL ON SUSTAINABILITY (ICGSS)

10th International Conference on Sustainability (ICoS10)
University of Merdeka Malang, November 15, 2025
<https://jurnal.unmer.ac.id/index.php/icgss>

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Item Description</i>	<i>Mean (M)</i>	<i>Std. Dev. (SD)</i>
Infrastructure	Ease of travel to the resort	4.17	.47
	Sufficient street lighting at night	4.06	.70
	Sufficient parking for guests	4.11	.58
	Clean and sufficient public toilets	4.08	.70
	Adequate Wi-Fi and internet service	3.77	.80
	Easy stairs/pedestrian paths to the summit	4.17	.71
Safety and Security	Prevention of social disorder (beggars, theft)	4.18	.73
	Responsible vehicle security/parking staff	4.19	.69
	Presence of first aid stations	4.02	.62
	Installation of security cameras (CCTV)	3.86	.81
	Safe access roads for driving or walking	4.19	.52
	Conservation/development of architecture	4.09	.64
Service Quality	Community interaction with politeness/joy	4.34	.60
	Fast and responsible service delivery	4.16	.61
	Food hygiene and safety standards	4.30	.66
	Use of foreign languages for communication	3.91	.64
	Quality tour guides with full historical knowledge	4.16	.59
Marketing and Promotion	Detailed website information on site/services	3.96	.56
	Bilingual promotion (Khmer and International)	4.07	.62
	Ease of finding the location online/GPS	3.98	.74
	Use of social media (YouTube, FB, TikTok, IG)	4.14	.66
	Collaboration with content creators/influencers	4.03	.69
	Production of films or ads about the resort	4.03	.69
<i>Environmental Factor</i>	Public education on waste management	4.33	.65
	Tree planting movements	4.13	.64
	Sufficient trash bins (solid/liquid waste)	4.18	.59
	Reduction of pollution (air, noise, odor)	4.13	.65
<i>Event Creation</i>	Cultural/traditional art performances	4.23	.66
	Religious events (Khmer New Year, Visak Bochea)	4.31	.65
	Exhibitions of Khmer handicrafts and food	4.38	.64
<i>Visitor Attraction</i>	Providing overall safety to guests	4.19	.64
	Having sufficient infrastructure	4.16	.55
	Development and conservation of the environment	4.34	.59
	Marketing and promotion efforts	4.02	.53
	Quality products/services meeting guest needs	4.14	.63
	Creation of diverse events (Religion/Culture)	4.24	.62

The descriptive analysis shows that the majority of respondents "Agree" with the strategic importance of all items ($M > 3.7$). The highest Scoring Factor, such as "Exhibitions of Khmer handicrafts, food, and agricultural products" (Q36), achieved the highest mean of 4.38. This indicates that tourists strongly associate attractions with local cultural and economic displays.



The two strongest service aspects participants highly valued were polite community interaction (Q19) and environmental conservation (Q30), both scoring 4.34 or higher. But the lowest-scoring aspect was "Adequate Wi-Fi and internet service" (Q11), with a mean score of 3.77, followed by "Installation of security cameras" (Q16) at 3.86. This identifies a perceived gap in the site's technological infrastructure and perceived digital surveillance.

Moreover, the results for the dependent variable indicate strong agreement that these strategies collectively constitute the "Attraction Strategy" for Phnom Preah Reach Troop. "Development and conservation of the environment" (Q39) is viewed as the most critical outcome of the strategy ($M = 4.34$), that aligning with consistency with The standard deviations across the DV items are relatively low (ranging from .53 to .64), indicating that the 120 participants had a high level of consensus regarding what constitutes an effective attraction strategy suggesting that the site's appeal is fundamentally tied to its status as a "green" and preserved heritage area that it regards as dominant strategy.

4.3 Reliability Analysis

To ensure the internal consistency of the research instrument, a reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha for all variables. As illustrated in Table 3, all variables exceeded the 0.700 threshold, widely accepted in social science research as an indication of "good" to "acceptable" reliability.

Table 3. Reliability Check

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha (α)</i>	<i>No. of Items</i>
Infrastructure (IV1)	120	0.725	6
Safety and Security (IV2)	120	0.849	6
Service Quality (IV3)	120	0.758	5
Marketing (IV4)	120	0.752	6
Environmental Factors (IV5)	120	0.776	4
Event Creation (IV6)	120	0.700	3
Attraction Strategy (DV)	120	0.743	6

4.4 Hypothesis Testing and Correlation Analysis

The study employed Pearson Correlation to evaluate the strength of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, Attraction Strategy. The analysis revealed a significant positive correlation for all six hypotheses at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlation analysis and hypothesis result

<i>Research Hypothesis</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient (r)</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Result</i>
H1: Infrastructure has a positive and significant relationship with visitor attraction	0.619	.000	Supported
H2: Safety has a positive and significant relationship with visitor attraction	0.775	.000	Supported
H3: Service Quality has a positive and significant relationship with visitor attraction	0.692	.000	Supported



<i>Research Hypothesis</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient (r)</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Result</i>
H4: Environment has a positive and significant relationship with visitor attraction	0.622	.000	Supported
H5: Marketing has a positive and significant relationship with visitor attraction	0.733	.000	Supported
H6: Event Creation has a positive and significant relationship with visitor attraction	0.722	.000	Supported

4.5 Discussion of Key Findings

The empirical results prioritize Safety and Security (IV2) as the most critical determinant of attraction strategy ($r = .775$). This finding corroborates the theoretical assertions of Pizam and Mansfeld (2006), who argue that a secure environment is the bedrock of destination reputation and repeat visitation. In the context of Phnom Preah Reach Troap, visitors prioritize their psychological and physical well-being above aesthetic or historical value. Marketing (IV4) ($r = .733$) and Event Creation (IV6) ($r = .722$) were identified as the second- and third-most-influential factors. These results highlight a shift in tourist behavior toward digital engagement and experiential consumption. With 86% of millennials booking travel via digital platforms, the strong correlation in marketing confirms that a destination's digital footprint, particularly on platforms like TikTok and Instagram, is vital for competitive positioning. While Infrastructure (IV1) and Environmental Factors (IV5) showed slightly lower correlations (.619 and .622, respectively), they remain foundational. Infrastructure serves as the physical enabler of the tourist experience, ensuring that historical sites remain accessible and convenient. Furthermore, the support for H4 emphasizes that environmental conservation is not merely an ethical obligation but a strategic asset that drives destination development.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

This research investigated the multi-dimensional nature of tourist attraction strategies at Phnom Preah Reach Troap in Kandal province. The findings confirm that attraction is not the result of a single factor but an integrated outcome of physical infrastructure, service excellence, and strategic outreach. The study successfully validated all six hypotheses, demonstrating that safety, marketing, and event creation are the primary drivers of visitor interest in Cambodia's cultural heritage destinations. Furthermore, the involvement of the government, private sector, and local communities is identified as a prerequisite for the sustainable success of these strategies.

5.2 Strategic Recommendations

To optimize the growth of tourism at Phnom Preah Reach Troap destination, the following evidence-based recommendations are proposed. As a measure to strengthen security, the management mechanism should prioritize the deployment of trained security personnel and the integration of surveillance technology to mitigate perceived risks to crime and safety. Meanwhile, infrastructure modernization was concerned on. Rapid improvements to access



E-ISSN:
2721-13988

roads, standardized restrooms, and disability-inclusive signage are required to align the site with the standards. To pursue aggressive digital marketing, the authorities should develop a cohesive brand identity for Oudong Mountain, leveraging high-quality video content and influencer partnerships to reach a global audience. However, cultural Programming cannot be absent; consider regular food festivals, traditional performing arts, and historical re-enactments to create a vibrant atmosphere that encourages longer stays and higher expenditure. Moreover, capacity building for local communities should also focus on this. Formal training programs for tour guides and vendors should focus on service efficiency, historical accuracy, and proficiency in foreign languages to enhance the intangible value of the tourism product.

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E-ISSN:
2721-13988

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF GRADUATE
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10th International Conference on Sustainability (ICoS10)

University of Merdeka Malang, November 15, 2025

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