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THE ORIGINALITY IMAGE OF THAILAND'S CULTURE AFFECTING ON QUALITY AND VALUE PERCEPTION BASED ON THAI SENIOR TOURIST

Pharatt Run[1]* Surachai Traiwannakij[2], Marlon Rael Astillero[3], Ada Marie Mascarinas[4], Guiyu Su[5]
The Management Department, Institute of Science Innovation and Culture (ISIC),
Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep, Thailand[1,2,3,4,5]
Email: pharatt.r@mail.rmutk.ac.th

Abstract: The research aimed to study the causal relationship between the originality image of Thailand's culture, quality perception, and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists. The questionnaires were constructed as a research tool for collecting data from 787 samples of Thai Senior Tourists who visited Thai cultural tourism. The data were analyzed by using second-order confirmatory factor analysis. The research findings indicated that the confirmatory factor model of the original image of Thailand's culture affecting quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists had validity, and the developed causal relationship model was confirmed with the empirical data (Chi-square = 21.013, df = 19, P = 0.336, CMIN/DF = 1.106, GFI =0.994, AGFI=0.986, NFI= 0.995, IFI= 0.999, CFI=0.999, RMSEA =0.012) and the developed causal relationship model between the originality image of Thailand's culture, quality perception, and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists had predicting ability at a reasonable and acceptable level at 64.8 % with its acceptance more than 40%

Keywords: *Originality image of Thailand's culture; Perception of quality; Perception of value*

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1. Introduction

Background

Cultural tourism refers to tourism in which tourists can travel to a variety of cultural indications such as castles, palaces, temples, antiquities, archaeological sites, all arts, lifestyles, traditions, as well as things that indicate prosperity that has been developed in accordance with the environment and life of the people of each era. Tourists can know the history, beliefs, faith, viewpoints, and past people's popularity, transmitted from the past to the present generation through lifestyle, identity, history, language, and performing arts. The activities are driven through engagement, product management, and architecture, as well as offering synergy between the public, private, and community sectors (Krutwaysho et al., 2012).

The temple has been the spiritual center of Thai society from the past to the present. As a result, Buddhism influences the way of life in Thai society. In particular, the temple is a source of many fields of arts, science, and Buddhist arts, as well as a valuable source of fine

arts (Masanthia, 2015), such as archaeological sites, antiquities, and murals. These works are considered a valuable cultural heritage (Dungsrikaew, 1999) and are unique to Thailand. In addition, the temple has become an important religious tourist attraction (Jiratasanakul, 2000). In particular, the Phra Aram Luang will contain arts and culture reflecting the civilization and prosperity of the nation and can also be studied in history, architecture, painting, and sculpture (Nasing et al., 2013).

Currently, Thailand is going to be an aging society due to the medical boom and the post of World War II birth rate. In 2022, the total number of elderly people will be 12,116,199. There are 5,339,610 men and 6,776,589 women, representing 18.3% of the total population (Department of Older Persons, 2022).

Significance of the Problem

Due to the aforementioned reasons, the researcher was interested in studying the Originality Image of Thailand's Culture Affecting Quality and Value Perception Based on Thai Senior Tourists due to the relatively few studies on cultural tourism (Masanthia, 2015) and a study had not yet appeared in this view. Therefore, the research results could be used as a guideline for improving and developing the image of original image of Thailand's cultural tourism to attract more Thai Senior Tourists, both Thai and other nationals, to visit more cultural tourism in Thailand.

Objective of the Research

To study the causal relationship model between the originality image of Thailand's culture, quality perception, and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists

2. Literature Review

In the past four decades, the originality image of Thailand's cultural concept has rapidly grown into one of the most studied problems in marketing worldwide (Kabadayi & Lerman, 2011). To date, a large amount of research has found correlations between consumer behavior and Originality image (Miranda & Parkvithee, 2013). The literature showed that originality image plays an essential role in the traveler's decision-making process and influences how tourists view and evaluate the feature of an attraction. Chotiyanaphon & Laksitamas (2015) studied the identity of Thai temples in Buddhism, opinions, and satisfaction of tourists affecting repeat tourism of foreign tourists. This is based on the identity elements of Thai Buddhist temples in 7 aspects of Buddhism: (1) architecture, (2) painting, (3) sculpture, (4) historical (5) traditions and religious activities, (6) environmental aspects and (7) aspects affecting motivation.

In terms of the quality perception concept, the quality perception of service was determined by the customer's perception. Chen (2008) described the perception of quality as "a traveler's assessment of the service process standards related to the travel experience". Several researchers who had studied the relationship between quality and satisfaction with products and services suggested that perceptions of quality and satisfaction were structured as differentiated. This was because the perception of quality depends on the long term and the assessment of the knowledge of the organization's services. At the same time, customer satisfaction was a short-term emotional reaction to a specific experience (Tian-Cole et al., 2002). As for previous studies, it was found that quality perception and value perceptions affect satisfaction, and satisfaction also influences loyalty and behavior Chen (2008). In keeping with the Thai senior tourists, the researcher compiled a three-dimensional summary

of quality perceptions: (1) Cultural tourism in Thailand had a good introduction process (Cervova & Pavlu, 2018). (2) Cultural tourism in Thailand conveyed ancient and modern beauty (Chantara & Wattanakamolchai, 2015), and (3) cultural tourism in Thailand was safe.

The value perception concept defines value as an assessment of the benefits gained from purchasing a product or using a service compared to the consumer's expense (Ha-Brookshire & Yoon, 2012). This meant that value reflected the difference between a consumer's overall benefit and the total expenditures a consumer spends on a product or service (Walsh et al., 2014). Therefore, the value could be considered a key factor in consumer purchase intentions (Cronin et al., 2000). However, according to a study by Petrick (2002), the five-dimensional value structure did not include the significant experiential and social values in destination branding, and the two-dimensional model deals with the price. Considering the social preferences of the tourism experience, the researcher, therefore, compiled five dimensions of value perception to correspond with Thai Senior Tourists as follows: (1) functional values, (2) emotional values, (3) social values, (4) monetary value and (5) epistemic value.

3. Research Method

3.1. Scope of the Research

In this article, the researchers chose three famous temples to study: Wat Phra Chettuphon Wimon Mangkhalaram Ratchaworamahawihan or Wat Pho, Wat Arun Ratchawararam, and Wat Saket Ratchaworamahawihan (Phu Khao Thong). The data collection started from 6 - 14 August 2022 with Thai Senior Tourists with experience in Thai cultural tourism.

3.2. Population and Sample

The population was Thai Senior Tourists who have experience in Thai cultural tourism with 16 Buddhist temples in Bangkok as follows: (1) Temple of the Emerald Buddha (2) Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonkalaram, Ratchaworamahawihan or Wat Pho (3) Wat Arun Ratchawararam (4) Wat Pavaranivesh Vihara Ratchawarawihan (5) Wat Suthat Thepwararam (6) Wat Ratchapradit Sathit Mahasimaram (7) Wat Ratchabophit Sathit Mahasimaram (8) Wat Saket Ratchaworamahawihan (9) Wat Ratchanatdaram Worawihan (10) Wat Benchamabophit Dusitwanara (11) Wat Yannawa (12) Wat Traimit Wittayaram Worawihan (13) Wat Kalayanamitr Woramahawihan (14) Wat Rakang Khositaram Woramahawihan (15) Wat Chana Songkhram Ratchaworamahawihan and (16) Wat Mahathat Yuwararangsarit Ratchaworamahawihan. This population is infinity because it cannot be counted.

The statistical techniques to analyze the structural equation model (SEM) with a multivariate method are applied to determine the sample size. The sample size is 20 times the observed variables used for the sample determination in the AMOS program (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). In this research, 39 were observed variables with a confidence level of 95 percent. The sample size, therefore, was equal to 39x20 = 780 samples.

The multi-stage non-probability sampling method is then introduced. The purposive method is used as the first stage by selecting three famous temples: Wat Phra Chettuphon Wimon Mangkhalaram Ratchaworamahawihan or Wat Pho, Wat Arun Ratchawararam, and Wat Saket Ratchaworamahawihan (Phu Khao Thong). These three temples are selected because of the following reasons. The first reason is that the Tourismthailand website surveyed that these three temples are popular with Thai tourists. Second, due to the epidemic situation of COVID-19, it must be studied in Bangkok. Third, the Thai Senior Tourists preferred a merit-making trip with convenient transportation.

The second stage of the Multi-stage sampling method is based on the proportion of the number of Thai Senior Tourists traveling to Thai cultural tourism in each temple at 260 people.

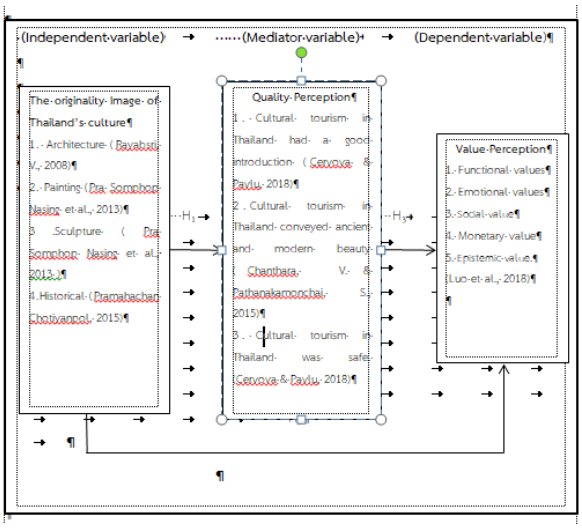
The last stage is accidental sampling or convenience sampling to collect the data from each temple. The data collection started from 6 - 14 August 2022 because these periods covered the long holiday in Thailand, including the important Buddha day.

The research tool closed-ended questionnaires were used as the research tool in this study. About 810 questionnaires were distributed, but only 801 responses were acquired. After examining the validity of the questionnaires, 787 complete questionnaires were registered and used for data analysis.

In creating and testing of research Tools, the content validity is checked by five experts and scholars, including (1) The Head of the Department of Tourism Industry and Hospitality, Hotel and Tourism Major, Siam University, (2) The Staff of the National Buddhism Office (3) The Officer of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (4) The Tourist officer of Wat Arun Ratchawararam Temple and (5) the Tourist officer of Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimonkalaram Ratchaworamahawihan. The results showed that the question in the questionnaire had an index of item objective congruence (IOC) value between 0.67-1.00. Therefore, these questions that pass the criteria of 0.50 or more can be used for data collection (Wanichbancha, 2013).

Concerning the reliability testing, 30 Thai Senior Tourists who had already traveled to Wat Pavaranivesh Vihara Ratchawarawihan were examined. The reliability analysis of these 30 questionnaires showed an alpha coefficient between 0.731 and 0.931, which were higher than the criteria of 0.70 under the formula for the coefficient Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 2003). This result suggested that the questionnaire questions were appropriate for further data collection.

3.3. Conceptual Framework



3.4. Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: The originality image of Thailand's culture correlated with quality perception

H_0: The originality image of Thailand's culture did not correlate with quality perception.

H_1: The originality image of Thailand's culture correlated with quality perception

Hypothesis 2: The originality image of Thailand's culture correlated with value perception

H_0: The originality image of Thailand's culture did not correlate with value perception

H_1: The originality image of Thailand's culture is correlated with value perception

Hypothesis 3: quality perception correlated with value perception

H_0: quality perception did not correlate with value perception

H_1: quality perception correlated with value perception

3.5. Statistics

A statistical package for analyzing mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis and confirmatory factor analysis using P-Value> 0.05, GFI ≥ 0.90, AGFI ≥ 0.90, CFI ≥ 0.90, and RMSEA <0.05, CMIN / DF <3 (Kline, 2005) was used.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

The Descriptive Statistics

Table 1:
The mean and standard deviation of sample groups classified by the originality image level of Thai Senior Tourists
(n= 787)

IC	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Results
IC1	4.46	0.496	Highest
IC2	4.42	0.546	Highest
IC3	4.37	0.541	Highest
IC4	4.47	0.539	Highest
Total	**4.43**	**0.53**	**Highest**

Table 2:
The mean and standard deviation of sample groups classified by the quality perception of Thai Senior Tourists
(n= 787)

QP	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Results
QP1	3.83	0.762	High
QP2	3.97	0.741	High
QP3	4.01	0.721	High
Total	**3.94**	**0.647**	**High**

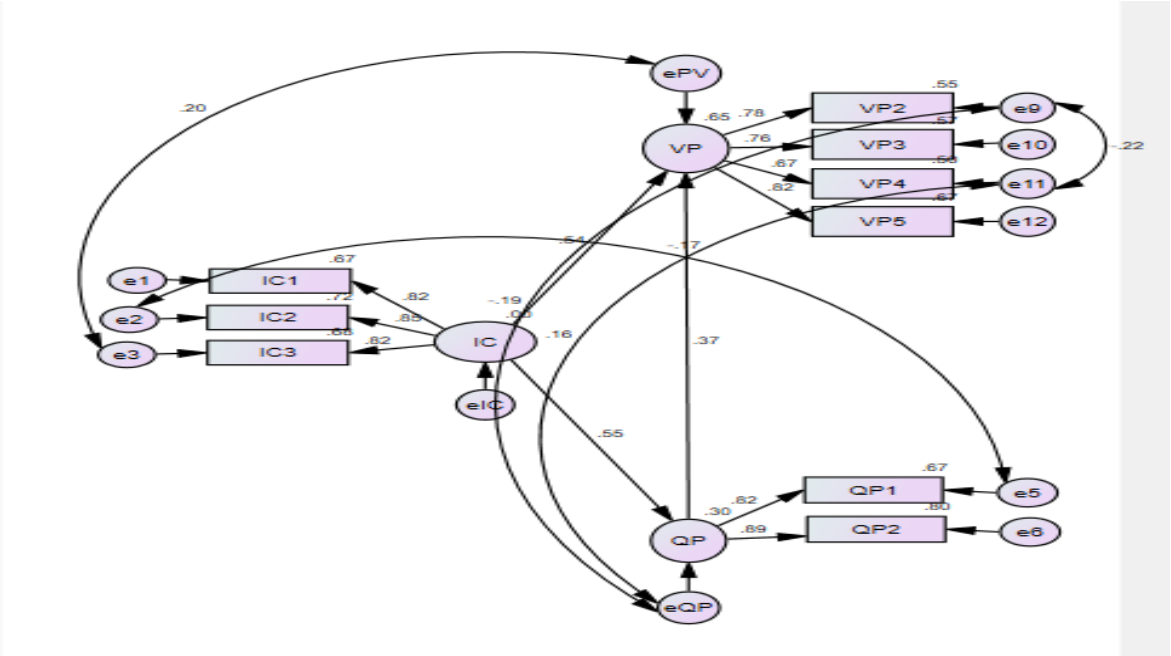
Table 3:
The mean and standard deviation of sample groups classified by the value perception of Thai Senior Tourists
(n= 787)

VP	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Results
VP1	3.93	0.687	High
VP2	4.42	0.593	Highest
VP3	4.26	0.618	Highest
VP4	4.02	0.707	High
VP5	4.24	0.649	Highest
Total	**3.94**	**0.647**	**Highest**

The Inferential Statistics

A causal relationship model between the originality image of Thailand's culture affecting quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists developed with the Secondary Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis technique was harmonized with empirical data, thus accepting the research hypothesis. This was because the Overall Model Fit Measure found that the proportion of the chi-square statistic/degree of freedom (x^2/df) was equal to 1.106, which passed the specified criteria, that is, less than 3, all index were GFI, AGFI, CFI, NFI, IFI and passed the criteria greater than or equal to 0.90. The index set at a level less than 0.05 was found that RMSEA also met the required criteria. Also, each component of the model had validity since factor loading was 0.30 or more (absolute value) and was statistically significant (Kline, 1994). As the developed model, it also could predict the originality image of Thailand's culture affecting quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists and able to predict it at a reasonable and acceptable level at 64.8 %, which is acceptance of more than 40%.

For the developed model, it was found that observable variables were found to measure the originality image of Thailand's culture affecting quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists were only 9 out of 12 variables. Three variables that were cut off consisted of (1) originality image of history, (2) cultural tourism in Thailand was safe, and (3) functional values. Therefore, the model originality image of Thailand's culture affecting quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists that has been developed consists of factor 1: originality image of Thailand's culture (IC) found that observable variables were architecture (IC1), painting (IC2) and sculpture (IC3). All three aspects were consistent with the originality image of Thailand's culture (IC). It was a latent variable (loading factor ranging from 0.30 up (absolute value)) and was statistically significant at 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). In this case, factor loading was 0.820, 0.846, and 0.823, respectively. However, factor loading values were 0.804, 0.815, and 0.862, respectively. Each factor explained the variation in the originality image of Thailand's culture (IC) at 67.30, 71.60, and 67.80, respectively. Factor 2: Quality Perception (QP) found that observable variables consisted of cultural tourism in Thailand having a good introduction process (QP1) and cultural tourism in Thailand conveying ancient and modern beauty (QP2). Both of these were consistent with Quality Perception (QP), which was a latent variable (loading factor ranging from 0.30 up (absolute value)) and was statistically significant at 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). Factor Loading was 0.820 and 0.893, respectively. Each factor could explain the variations in Quality Perception (QP) of 67.20 and 79.80, respectively. Factor 3: Value Perception (VP) found that observable variables consist of emotional values (VP2), social value (VP3), monetary value (VP4), and epistemic value (VP5). All four were consistent with Value Perception (VP), loading factor ranging from 0.30 up (absolute value)) and statistically significant at 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). Factor Loading was 0.784, 0.756, 0.674, and 0.820, respectively. Each factor can explain the variation in Value Perception (VP) of 55.20, 57.20, 50.00, and 67.20, respectively. The model developed as a conceptual research framework can be presented in Figure 1.



Chi-square = 21.013, df = 19, P = 0.336, CMIN/DF = 1.106, GFI =0.994, AGFI=0.986, NFI= 0.995, IFI= 0.999, CFI=0.999, RMSEA =0.012

4.2. Discussion

The results obtained from this research can be discussed as follows.

The level of opinion on originality image of Thailand's culture found that a sample of Thai Senior Tourists agreed on originality image of Thai cultural tourism at the highest level, with the highest in all respects: (1) originality image of architecture (2) originality image of painting (3) originality image of sculpture and (4) originality image of history. This was consistent with research by Chotiyanphon & Laksitamas (2015): Buddhist temples' identity consisted of (1) architecture, (2) painting, (3) sculpture, and (4) history.

The level of opinion on quality perception of Thai Senior Tourists found that a sample of Thai Senior Tourists agreed on quality perception at a high level, with the high in all aspects: (1) Cultural tourism in Thailand had a good introduction process (2) Cultural tourism in Thailand conveyed ancient and modern beauty and (3) cultural tourism in Thailand was safe. This was consistent with research by Cervova & Pavlu (2018): quality perception consists of (1) tourist safety and (2) a good advice process.

The level of opinion on value perception of Thai Senior Tourists found that a sample of Thai Senior Tourists agreed on value perception at the highest level, with the highest in all respects: emotional values, social value, and epistemic value, and agreed at a very high level, including monetary value and functional values. This was consistent with research by Luo et al. (2018) that value perception consisted of (1) functional values, (2) emotional values, (3) social values, (4) monetary values, and (5) epistemic values.

Hypothesis 1: originality image of Thailand's culture correlated with quality perception in the view of Thai Senior Tourists. The results showed that the originality image of Thailand's culture positively correlates with quality perception in the view of Thai Senior Tourists, consistent with Davood et al. (2019). The results also showed that originality image

influenced the quality perception, consistent with the research by Susilowati & Sugandini (2018). Finally, the research found that destination image directly influenced quality perception.

Hypothesis 2: originality image of Thailand's culture correlated with value perception in the view of Thai Senior Tourists. The results showed that the originality image of Thailand's culture was directly and indirectly correlated with the quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists, with research by Khuong & Phuong (2017). Furthermore, the study found that destination image was significantly associated with value perception and was also consistent with Duyen and Khuong (2017) research. Finally, the results showed that the destination image was associated considerably with value perception.

Hypothesis 3: quality perception related to the value perception of Thai Senior Tourists. The results showed that the quality perception was directly correlated to the value perception of Thai Senior Tourists, consistent with the research by Aliman et al. (2014). Furthermore, the regression analysis results indicated that quality perception was significantly and positively correlated with value perception, consistent with the research by Chen and Chen (2009). Finally, the study's results showed that quality perception was directly correlated to value perception.

Recommendation

From the results of this study, the government agencies should take this information to improve and develop a strategic plan for the originality image of Thailand's culture. This can be done by enhancing the original image of the sculpture and improving the introduction process for better service. The result of these improvements is to solve the needs of Thai Senior Tourists and to promote the originality image of Thailand's culture for Thai Senior Tourists to be more aware.

Future Research: To develop a strategic plan and respond to foreign tourists' needs, especially Chinese tourists, the originality image of Thailand's culture affecting the quality and value perception based on foreign tourists after COVID-19 should be investigated.

5. Conclusion

This research aimed to study the causal relationship models between the originality image of Thailand's culture affecting quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists. The research findings showed that the quality and value perception based on Thai Senior Tourists were valid and consistent with the empirical data: 1) the originality image of Thailand's culture had a positive correlation with the quality perception in the view of Thai Senior Tourists, 2) the originality image of Thailand's culture were found out to be correlated directly and indirectly with the quality and value perception of Thai Senior Tourists and 3) the quality perception was directly correlated to the value perception of Thai Senior Tourists based on the developed model presentation in Figure 2.

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