

## Influences of Cultural Tourism on Value Perception and Travel Motivation of Nakhon Phanom Tourists in Thailand

Prompassorn Chunhabunyatip<sup>1\*</sup>

Received: April 4, 2023

Revised: May 29, 2023

Accepted: May 30, 2023

### Abstract

Cultural tourism is the largest and most rapidly growing tourism segment in the global tourism market. The objective of this study is to investigate the influences of cultural tourism on value perception and travel motivation of Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand. In addition, tourism promotion is hypothesized to become a moderating variable of this research relationships. 400 Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand are the samples of the study. Both structural equation model analysis and multiple regression analysis are applied to test the influences. The results indicate that cultural tourism has a significant positive influence on value perception and travel motivation. Moreover, value perception has a significant positive influence on travel motivation. It is also a mediator of the research relationships. In addition, tourism promotion is a moderator of the research relationships. Thus, sustainable cultural tourism is important and is becoming a major source of business and employment in today's economy. It could increase competitiveness, create employment opportunities, curb rural migration, generate income for investment in cultural preservation, and nurture a sense of pride and self-esteem of cultural communities.

**Keywords:** Cultural tourism, Value perception, Tourism promotion, Travel motivation  
Nakhon Phanom Tourists

---

<sup>1\*</sup> Lecturer of Tourism and Service Industry College, Nakhon Phanom University

\* Corresponding author Email: prompassorn@npu.ac.th

## อิทธิพลของการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมที่มีต่อการรับรู้คุณค่าและ แรงจูงใจในการเดินทางของนักท่องเที่ยวจังหวัดนครพนมในประเทศไทย

พรหมภัสสร ชุณหบุญญทิพย์<sup>1\*</sup>

### บทคัดย่อ

การท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมมีส่วนแบ่งการท่องเที่ยวที่มีขนาดใหญ่ที่สุดและมีการเจริญเติบโตอย่างรวดเร็วสูงสุดในตลาดการท่องเที่ยวโลก การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อทดสอบอิทธิพลของการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมที่มีต่อการรับรู้คุณค่าและแรงจูงใจในการเดินทางของนักท่องเที่ยวจังหวัดนครพนมในประเทศไทย นอกจากนี้ การส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวก็ยังคงถูกตั้งสมมติฐานว่าเป็นตัวแปรแทรกของความสัมพันธ์ในการวิจัย ซึ่งนักท่องเที่ยวจังหวัดนครพนมในประเทศไทย จำนวน 400 คนเป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการวิจัย และใช้การวิเคราะห์โมเดลสมการโครงสร้างและการวิเคราะห์การถดถอยแบบพหุคูณในการทดสอบอิทธิพล ผลลัพธ์การวิจัย พบว่า การท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมมีอิทธิพลที่สำคัญเชิงบวกต่อการรับรู้คุณค่าและแรงจูงใจในการเดินทาง และการรับรู้คุณค่ามีอิทธิพลที่สำคัญเชิงบวกต่อแรงจูงใจในการเดินทางและเป็นตัวแปรกลางของความสัมพันธ์ในการวิจัยนี้ด้วย นอกจากนี้ การส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวเป็นตัวแปรแทรกของความสัมพันธ์ในการวิจัย ดังนั้น การท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมอย่างยั่งยืนจึงมีความสำคัญและกลายเป็นแหล่งสาเหตุหลักของธุรกิจและการจ้างงานในเศรษฐกิจวันนี้ ซึ่งสามารถเพิ่มศักยภาพทางการแข่งขัน สร้างสรรค์โอกาสในการจ้างงาน ควบคุมการอพยพจากชนบท ก่อให้เกิดรายได้จากการลงทุนในการรักษาวัฒนธรรมไว้ และทะนุบำรุงความภาคภูมิใจและความหยิ่งในศักดิ์ศรีของตนเองของชุมชนวัฒนธรรม

**คำสำคัญ:** การท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม การรับรู้คุณค่า การส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยว แรงจูงใจในการเดินทางนักท่องเที่ยวจังหวัดนครพนม

<sup>1</sup> อาจารย์, วิทยาลัยการท่องเที่ยวและอุตสาหกรรมบริการ, มหาวิทยาลัยนครพนม

## Introduction

Recently, tourism has become a successful and powerful tool for economic development and particularly for economic growth, by generating value chains in various sectors, with major implications for producing and enhancing business benefits and national revenues globally (Anderson, 2015). It also creates jobs, strengthens the local economy, contributes to local infrastructure development, conserves the natural environment and cultural assets and traditions, reduces poverty and inequality, and promotes international connections. It can offer great opportunities for emerging economies and developing countries through creation of clear opportunities for local and self-employment, supporting collaboration amongst public and private sectors, including local actors and non-profit organizations, improving socio-cultural impacts of tourism, allowing local access to services and infrastructure being provided for tourists, enabling local population participation, and fostering continuous institutional capacity-building to support locals' active participation (Nkwanyana et al., 2016). Accordingly, tourism is the world's largest industry and the one significant peacetime factor moving around the world. Therefore, sustainable tourism development has become a key driver for supporting, promoting and encouraging the nation's economic advantages, the business's financial and non-financial benefits, the destination's image, reputation and branding, and the people's qualities of lives.

Interestingly, cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism sectors (Woyo & Woyo, 2019). It is a new trend among tourists that has grown to become a global phenomenon. It is a generator of the resources necessary to preserve, conserve and enhance cultural heritage. Then, cultural tourism has become one of the major future growth activities of global tourism demand. Indeed, cultural tourism is the largest and most rapidly growing tourism segment in the global tourism market. It is a major generator of economic wealth and a source of funding for heritage conservation (Kherbouche & Djedid, 2019). It offers new opportunities and prospects for the economic revival of historic cities. It is associated with cultural attraction and consumption and a desire for authentic immersive experiences. Next, cultural tourism has a direct impact on standardized improvements of living and pride creation to the people. It has increased competitiveness, created employment opportunities, curbed rural migration, generated income for investment in cultural preservation, and nurtured a sense of pride and self-

esteem of cultural communities (Liasidou, 2018). Accordingly, cultural tourism is considered to be an important component which helps enhance value perception and it is also the main motivation for tourists. Cultural tourists are attracted for travelling primarily for pleasure of cultural assets through consuming a variety of culture-related services and experiences. Therefore, cultural tourism become a main determinant of tourists' value perception and travel motivation.

Moreover, value perception refers to the consumer's assessment of the net worth of products or services by comparing the overall benefits received versus the perceived sacrifices made, including objective cost-benefit analysis and subjective consumption experience analysis (Lee & Phau, 2018). It has a significant influence on customer satisfaction with, and intention to revisit and recommend, an experience or destination with a focal product and service. In the context of tourism, tourists' perceived values focus on overall assessment of the utility of services based on perceptions of what are received and what are given and an interactive relativistic consumption preference experience (Hennigs et al., 2015). Accordingly, value perception is a major outcome of potential cultural tourism and it plays an important role in enhancing travel motivation. Similarly, travel motivation is defined as a state of mind that disposes one to travel while adequately providing a valid explanation for this decision to travel (Adams et al., 2015). It reflects perceived needs that direct decision processes. It is an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a tourist's behavior. Furthermore, travel motivation is also a main determining factor for tourists to travel the world and come to a conclusion that they want to fulfill their needs and wants (Allaberganov & Preko, 2022). It is a principal antecedent in tourist decision making. It represents the intrinsic or extrinsic drivers which helps explain why tourists engage in tourism and where they ultimately choose to consume tourism offerings. Then, travel motivation is the integrating network of biological and cultural forces that gives value and direction to travel choices, behavior and experience about a particular tourism activity or travel opportunity.

To strengthen the research relationships, tourism promotion is a moderator of the relationships. It is defined as a practical strategy that attracts outside interest in a region and it has the potential to generate added value within the tourism industry (Huang et al., 2017). It is a valuable strategy that helps improve a position of tourism in each area and enhances economic advantages through the destination's sustainable competitive

advantage and future tourism economy. It derives its positive impact from the stimulating effects of tourism marketing, tourist destination image, above-average value added, employment, and growth effects in general and the relative locational security enjoyed by tourism. In addition, tourism promotion has identified and utilized mix tools, including branding, sales channels, publicity, advertisement, social media, digital and mobile marketing, and among many others (Florido-Benitez, 2022). It aims at enhancing tourism activities in various aspects, extending length of stay, motivating the consumption of diverse products, influencing perceptions, and developing strategic partnerships with demand generators. Accordingly, tourism promotion has a moderating effect on the relationships among cultural tourism, value perception and travel motivation.

In this study, Nakhon Phanom in Thailand is a specific valuable destination for tourists' visits because it is a quiet, relaxing and friendly town located in the Northeast of Thailand. Nakhon Phanom borders Laos and running along the Mekong river. It is a melting pot of diverse ethnic cultures and traditions, particularly represented by the Laos, who have lent a strong influence to the architectures, customs and cuisine of Nakhon Phanom. In addition, the charm of Nakhon Phanom lies in the diverse culture of Tai tribe, which has its own way of life. Moreover, It has good weather, beautiful scenery and classical architecture with a long history, as well as tasty foods, which is worth visiting. There are many popular attractions there, including Phra That Phanom, Paya Sri Satta Nakarat, Thai-Vietnamese Friendship Village, Mekong River, Former Governor Residence Museum, Saint Anna Nong Saeng Church, Ho Chi Minh's House (Uncle Ho's House), Wat Phra That Renu Nakhon, Nakhon Phanom Walking Street, and Third Thai Nakhon Panom-Lao Friendship Bridge, making it well worth a visit. Throughout the history of Nakhon Phanom, Laotians and people from smaller ethnic minority groups migrated across the Mekong River making Nakhon Phanom a modern province filled with a distinctive cultural fusion that is apparent in the local language, customs and cuisine. Furthermore, every year, Nakhon Phanom entices and motivates thousands of people who wish to visit and join its own ways of living, ethnic cultures and traditions, and interesting attractions. These make the tourists who come to visit Nakhon Phanom as the appropriate samples of the study.

This study attempts to examine the influences of cultural tourism on value perception and travel motivation of Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand through a moderating effect of tourism promotion. The key research question is how cultural tourism

influences travel motivation. The specific research questions are: (1) How cultural tourism influences value perception, (2) How value perception influences travel motivation, (3) How value perception mediates the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships, and (4) How tourism promotion moderates the relationships among cultural tourism, value perception and travel motivation.

The remainder of this study is structured as follows. First, a short review of cultural tourism, value perception, tourism motivation, and travel motivation gaps serves as the study' conceptual model and context. Next follows a description of the research methodology with regards to the study population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, a research report, and discussion of the results is described. The next section includes the value dimensions identified in the factor analysis, establishing and ranking the identified factors in relation to the predictions of the aforementioned variables. In addition, a conclusion, contributions and limitations of the study are suggested. Finally, suggestions for further research are provided

### **Important Literature Review of Cultural Tourism and Hypotheses Development**

Behavioral reasoning theory is applied to describe the influences of cultural tourism on value perception and travel motivation through tourism promotion as the moderator. It is a broad theory of behavior that can be used to explain the motives underlying human behaviors (Westaby, 2005). It serves as important linkages between people's beliefs, global motives (attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control), intentions, and behavior. In this study, cultural tourism becomes an important determinant of travel motivation of Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand through attitudes, subjective norms and perceived control. To link cultural tourism to travel motivation, value perception plays a significant role in mediating these relationships. In addition, tourism promotion is a critical moderator of the relationships among cultural tourism, value perception and travel motivation. Accordingly, cultural tourism is an independent variable, value perception is a mediating variable, tourism promotion is a moderating variable, and travel motivation is a dependent variable of the study.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of the research relationships among cultural tourism, value perception, tourism promotion, and travel motivation.

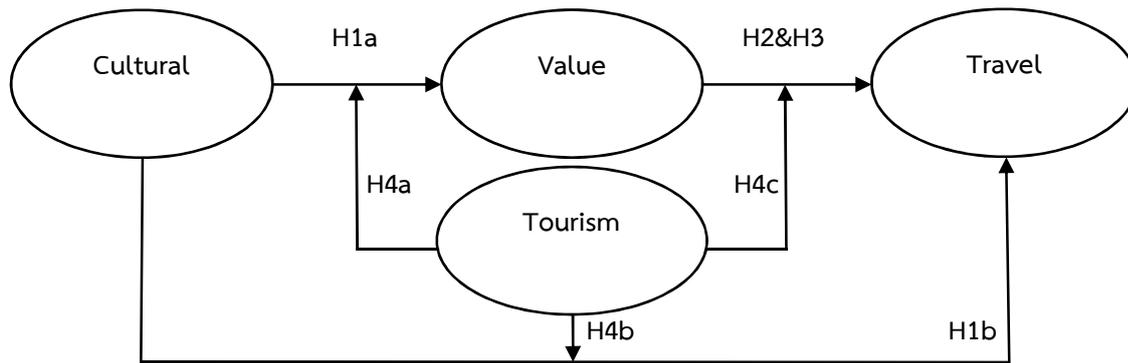


Figure 1 A conceptual model of the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships

### 1. Travel motivation

Interestingly, tourists' travel motivations have become a valuable outcome of successful cultural tourism. They are related to tourism activities and practices. Travel motivation is defined as a mental or psychological drive and underlying intrinsic motive that forces a tourist to look for leisure engagement (Seyitoğlu & Davras, 2022). It is crucial in identifying tourists' expectations and needs which pave the way to provide the right attributes or activities. It is associated with tourist preferences towards destinations and tourism products. Moreover, travel motivation is a state of mind that disposes one to travel while adequately providing a valid explanation for this decision and pattern to travel (Adams et al., 2015). It refers to touristic travel in general, or to a specific choice in particular and seeks to explain why a tourist has behaved or is about to behave in a certain way, rather than how the event has happened or will take place (Mehmetoglu & Normann, 2013). It reflects the perceived needs that direct decision processes. It is an internal factor that arouses, directs and integrates a tourist's behavior for potential satisfaction. Then, travel motivation is the integrating network of biological and cultural forces that gives value and direction to travel choices, behavior and experience about a particular tourism activity or travel opportunity.

Moreover, travel motivation is a main determining factor for tourists to travel the world and come to a conclusion that they want to fulfill their needs and wants (Allaberganov & Preko, 2022). It is derived from and influenced by tourists' internal personalities and psychographic characteristics as well as external social-cultural forces. It is a principal antecedent in tourist decision making. It represents the intrinsic or extrinsic

drivers for why tourists engage in tourism and where they ultimately choose to consume tourism offerings. Next, the most common motivations for travel include knowledge enhancement, sensation seeking, socializing, pleasure seeking, escape, and self-fulfillment (Wong & Tang, 2016). Cultural tourists are pushed to engage in travel and tourism activity through intrinsic psychological forces (knowledge and prestige; enhancement of social relationships; rest and relaxation; and adventure and excitement) and are pulled to visit specific destinations through extrinsic factors of the specific attractions, features and attributes (modern image; natural environment and attractions; safety and cleanliness; ease of tour arrangement; and shopping) (Song et al., 2016). Furthermore, travel motivation is a critical factor and a driving force behind tourist behavior (Huang & Hsu, 2009). It enhances an awareness of customer needs, offers more customized services, creates more memorable customer experiences, and obtains more repeat business. Therefore, travel motivation is a valuable result of prosperous cultural tourism.

## 2. Cultural tourism

Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism sectors (Woyo & Woyo, 2019). It is a new trend among tourists that has grown to become a global phenomenon. It is a new style of tourism that has in recent times become an aspect influencing the performance of tourism industry. It is a generator of the resources necessary to preserve, conserve and enhance cultural heritage. Then, cultural tourism has become one of the major future growth activities of global tourism demand. Moreover, cultural tourism is defined as visits by people from outside the host community, motivated either entirely or to a certain degree by the cultural offerings and values of a particular destination (Hausmann, 2007). It consists of (a) a form of special-interest tourism, (b) the use of heritage sites and their offerings and value to visitors, (c) a various consumption of culture-related services and experiences, (d) the preferences of the tourists themselves, and (e) a motivation of tourists' visits with cultural-focused learning, experiential or self-exploration reasons. Indeed, cultural tourism is the largest and most rapidly growing tourism segment in the global tourism market. It is a major generator of economic wealth and a source of funding for heritage conservation (Kherbouche & Djedid, 2019). It offers new opportunities and prospects for the economic revival of historic cities. It focuses on an intangible asset important for generating unique tourism products and adds symbolic

value to tourism destinations. It is associated with cultural attraction and consumption and a desire for authentic immersive experiences.

In addition, cultural tourism refers to an activity that gives visitors the experience to get a first-hand exposure to customs, traditions, physical environment or ideas, and accesses to places of architectural, historical, archaeological or other types of cultural value (Galí-Espelt, 2012). It is the movement of people towards cultural attractions, motivations and activities of the destination such as study tours, performing arts and other cultural tours, somewhere other than their habitual place of residence, in order to obtain information and knowledge to fulfill their own cultural demands (Bunghez & Stefanescu, 2017). It has an important role in maintaining and promoting the specific values through travelling to festivals and other cultural events, visiting to sites and monuments and travelling to study nature, folklore, art or pilgrimages. It has utilized heritage sites and their offerings and value to visitors. Cultural tourists are attracted for travelling primarily for pleasure of cultural assets through consuming a variety of culture-related services and experiences. Next, cultural tourism has a direct impact on standardized improvements of living and pride creation to the people. It also markets cultural products to visitors as cultural experiences. It increases competitiveness, creates employment opportunities, curbs rural migration, generates income for investment in cultural preservation, and nurtures a sense of pride and self-esteem of cultural communities (Liasidou, 2018). Accordingly cultural tourism is a new and growing market that reflects a changing demand on tourism style. It is considered an important element which enhances value perception, and it is also the main motivation for tourists. It becomes a main determinant of tourists' value perception and travel motivation. Therefore,

H1: Cultural tourism positively influences (a) value perception and (b) travel motivation.

### 3. Value perception

Value perception is defined as the consumer's assessment of the net worth of products or services by comparing the overall benefits received versus the perceived sacrifices made, including objective cost-benefit analysis and subjective consumption experience analysis (Lee & Phau, 2018). It has a significant influence on customer satisfaction with, and intention to revisit and recommend, and an experience or destination with a focal product and service. It provides the best summary evaluation of the

experience. Similarly, value perception refers to a subjective perception of the trade-off between multiple benefits gained and sacrifices made relative to competition at the exchange and outcome level (Komulainen et al., 2007). It consists of conspicuousness (an ability of a product or service to display wealth and power), uniqueness (the scarcity and exclusiveness of a product or service), social value (a desire to possess prestigious brands to conform to a desired reference group and to distance oneself from less desirable groups), hedonism (the emotional benefits of a product or service consumption such as delight, satisfaction and pleasure), and quality value (the utility generated from the superior performance of a product or service's brand) (Yang & Mattila, 2016). It also precedes attitudinal reactions like customer satisfaction. It focuses on increasing the consumer perceived benefits and reducing the customer perceived sacrifices.

In the context of tourism, tourists' perceived values focus on overall assessment of the utility of services based on perceptions of what are received and what are given and an interactive relativistic consumption preference experience (Hennigs et al., 2015). Value perception is a foundation of tourism provision in today's highly competitive and dynamic markets. It represents tourists' perceived preferences for an evaluation of those cultural attractions and attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from achieving cultural assets through their cultural offerings and values. The perceived value of cultural assets can increase when tourists think subjectively that this culture owns major significant culture attributes. It is formed as a result of the comparison of overall cultural offerings and values and overall costs, times and other-related inputs (Rahikka et al., 2011). Accordingly, value perception has an important effect on tourists' travel style and personality, and behaviors. It is a major outcome of potential cultural tourism which plays a significant role in driving tourists' travel motivation. It is intermediate in the causal sequence relating to cultural tourism to travel motivation. Therefore,

H2: Value perception positively influences travel motivation.

H3: Value perception mediates the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships.

#### **4. Tourism promotion**

Tourism promotion has a significant effect on the strength and direction of the relationships among cultural tourism, value perception and travel motivation. It positively moderates the research relationships. In this study, tourism promotion is defined as a

valuable strategy that helps improve the position of each destination and thus attracts more tourism flows and enhances economic advantages (Pantano & Servidio, 2011). It has become an important element in the development of the tourism industry, which in itself is becoming a significant driver contributing to economic growth. It aims at enhancing tourism activities in various aspects, extending length of stay, motivating the consumption of diverse products, influencing perceptions, and developing strategic partnerships with demand generators. Next, tourism promotion is of great importance to the image and reputation of all tourist destinations (Mele et al., 2021). It is a basis for recommendations disseminated to future visitor. A potential tourism promotion can become more beneficial branding and create the image and reputation of a tourist destination. Tourist destination with successful tourism promotion can create a unique and customized product and service, enhance visitors' experience and track their behaviors.

Similarly, tourism promotion refers to a practical strategy that attracts outside interest in a region and it has the potential to generate added value within the tourism industry (Huang et al., 2017). It is a valuable strategy that helps improve a position of tourism in each area and enhances economic advantages through the destination's sustainable competitive advantage and future tourism economy. It is instrumental in attracting tourists and boosting regional economies through the adequacy of tourism resources and the integrity of the tourism supply chain at a destination. It derives its positive impact from the stimulating effects of tourism marketing, tourist destination image, above-average value added, employment, and growth effects in general and the relative locational security enjoyed by tourism. Then, an effective tourism promotion can establish a region's positive reputation and brand recognition which are helpful in obtaining more business opportunities and foreign direct investment. In addition, tourism promotion is a global phenomenon in hospitality and tourism marketing. It has identified and utilized mix tools, including branding, sales channels, publicity, advertisement, social media, digital and mobile marketing, and among many others (Florido-Benitez, 2022). It is the systematic, coherent and consistent effort that help develop, formulate and implement a tourism strategy through a strategic plan, general and specific objectives and an economical budget. In addition, it helps manage the resources of destinations efficiently. Accordingly, tourism promotion has a moderating effect on the relationships among cultural tourism, value perception and travel motivation. Therefore,

H4: Tourism promotion positively moderates (a) the cultural tourism-value perception relationships, (b) the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships and (c) the value perception-travel motivation relationships.

## Research Methodology

### 1. Study population, sampling and data collection

Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand are the samples of the study. A convenience sampling was used to select participants. According to Yamane (1967), 400 Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand were contacted to answer a questionnaire because the population of this study could not be counted. The minimum acceptable sample size of 200 was also required for structural equation model analysis (Xu, 2020). This study used the questionnaire with dichotomous scales to collect data during January-February, 2023. The questionnaire was distributed to these participants who come to visit and worship Paya Sri Satta Nakarat as the Naga statue (mythical serpent-like being) that was situated near the river bank of Mekong in Nakhon Phanom, Thailand. The Naga statue was the attraction that draws millions of Thais to come to visit this city of Thailand. Moreover, the participants with different characteristics such as gender, age and salary were the research targets. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and return to the researcher. After checking the accuracy and completeness of the returned questionnaires, all information was ready to be used for verifying and proving the research hypotheses. This information was presented as an overall opinion and result, but did not show each view of these participants.

### 2. Measurements

The self-developed measurements of the constructs from existing literature were employed as using a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree), except for control variables. Multiple items were for measuring each construct. Despite their carefully defined constructs, the measurement was impossible for one to directly manifest or observe the scale due to the abstract nature of the construct. The variables were estimated scales derived from their definitions and were applied from important literature reviews of cultural tourism, value perception, tourism promotion, and travel motivation. Firstly, a thirteen-item scale was developed to gauge “cultural tourism” as how tourists worthily and truly visit beautiful sceneries, classical architectures and popular attractions

with a long history, as well as tasty foods. Secondly, a five-item scale was created to assess “value perception” as how tourists perceive preferences for an evaluation of the cultural attractions and attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from achieving cultural assets through their cultural offerings and values. Thirdly, a five-item scale was developed to evaluate “tourism promotion” as how tourists gain information and tourist enhancement of tourism activities and events from tourism channels, publicity, advertisement, social media, and digital and mobile marketing. Finally, a five-item scale was introduced to measure “travel motivation” as how tourists furnished direct decision and pattern processes that aroused, directed and integrated their travel choices, behavior and experience for potential satisfaction. Thus, all variable measurements previously mentioned were used in this study. Next, gender, age and salary are control variables of the study. Gender was measured using a dummy variable suggesting that male = 0 and female = 1. In addition, age was measured using a dummy variable indicating that below 35 years old = 0 and equal to or above 35 years old = 1. Next, salary was measured using a dummy variable indicating that below 30,000 baht = 0 and equal to or above 30,000 baht = 1.

### 3. Tests of research instrument quality

For verifying and proving factorability, validity and reliability, all factor loadings, item-total correlations and Cronbach alpha coefficients were tested (Hair et al., 2010). Firstly, the factor loadings of all items were greater than 0.60. Secondly, the item-total correlations were greater than 0.30 indicating the achievement of the convergent validity. Lastly, the Cronbach alpha coefficients as well as the composite reliability were achieved with scoring greater than 0.70. Accordingly, all the indices could be accepted. Table 1 presents the results of measure validation through factorability, validity and reliability for multiple-item scales used in this study

**Table 1** Results of measure validation

Items	Factor Loadings	Item-total Correlation	Cronbach Alpha
Cultural tourism (CT)	0.62-0.75	0.60-0.73	0.89
Value perception (VP)	0.65-0.81	0.66-0.80	0.81
Tourism promotion (TP)	0.71-0.77	0.70-0.76	0.78
Travel motivation (TM)	0.62-0.74	0.63-0.74	0.74

#### 4. Measurement model

The maximum likelihood estimation was used to assess the model fit in this study (Awang, 2014). It consists of a method and the most important indices, such as comparative fit index (CFI), the goodness of fit index (GFI), the incremental fit index (IFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The measurement model was performed with all constructs included. The model for indices is achieved (CFI=0.91, GFI=0.95, IFI=0.94, and RMSEA=0.05). According to Hair et al. (2010), this study could continue further when at least three of the indices met the threshold requirement. Thus, the initial test of the measurement model results in the good fit to the data.

#### 5. Statistical method for hypotheses testing and verifying

To investigate the direct and mediating influences of the study, structural equation model analysis is applied to test (a) the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships, (b) the cultural tourism-value perception relationships and (c) the value perception-travel motivation relationships (Quratulain et al., 2021). It is also utilized to examine the mediating influences of value perception on the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships. In addition, multiple regression analysis is utilized to investigate the moderating influences of tourism promotion on the relationships among cultural tourism, value perception and travel motivation. The results of this study are presented in the next section.

### Results and Discussion

The descriptive statistics and correlation matrix for all variables are presented in Table 2. Multicollinearity problem might occur when inter-correlation in each predict variable is more than 0.80, which suggests a strong relationship (Hair et al., 2010). The correlations range from 0.45 to 0.75 at the  $p < 0.05$  level, which suggests that the possible relationships of the variables in the conceptual model could be tested. Thus, there are no substantial multicollinearity problems encountered in this study.

**Table 2** Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

Variables	TM	CT	VP	TP
Mean	4.55	4.66	4.56	4.51
s.d.	0.42	0.35	0.43	0.43
TM				
CT	0.63***			
VP	0.69***	0.54***		
TP	0.57***	0.59***	0.63***	

Note.\*\*\* $p < .01$

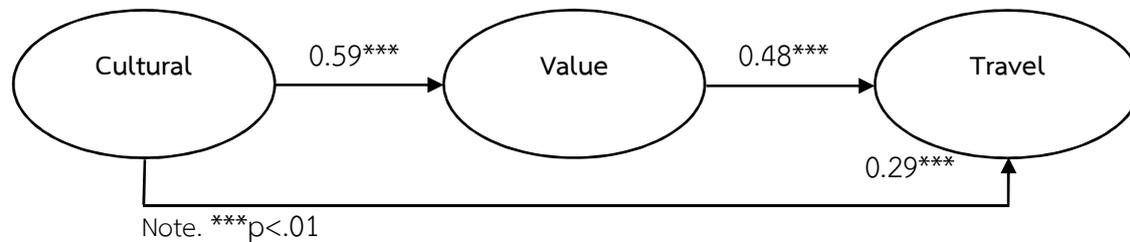
**Table 3** Results of path coefficients and hypotheses testing

Hypotheses	Relationships	Coefficients	t-value	Results
H1a	CT → VP	0.59***	8.82	Supported
H1b	CT → TM	0.29***	5.77	Supported
H2	VP → TM	0.48***	7.38	Supported
H3	CT → VP	0.59***	8.82	Supported
	VP → TM	0.48***	7.38	

Note.\*\*\* $p < .01$ , CFI = 0.91; GFI = 0.95; IFI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.05

Table 3 presents the results of path coefficients and hypotheses testing of the direct and mediating relationships. Figure 2 shows a summary of the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships. Interestingly, cultural tourism has a significant positive influence on value perception ( $b=0.59$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and travel motivation ( $b=0.29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In existing literature, cultural tourism is an activity that provides visitors with the experience of discovering other people's ways of living and gives them the opportunity to get first-hand exposure to customs, traditions, physical environment or ideas, and accesses to places of architectural, historical, archaeological or other types of cultural value (Galí-Espelt, 2012). It enhances visits by tourists from outside the host community, motivated either entirely or to a certain degree by the cultural offerings and values of a particular destination (Hausmann, 2007). It encourages, nurtures and maintains the specific values through travelling to festivals and other cultural events, visiting to sites and monuments and travelling to study nature, folklore, art or pilgrimages. It also utilizes heritage sites and their

offerings and value to visitors. Accordingly, Cultural tourists are attracted for travelling primarily for pleasure of cultural assets through consuming a variety of culture-related services and experiences. *Therefore, Hypotheses 1a-1b are supported.*



**Figure 2** A summary of the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships

Indeed, value perception significantly and positively influences travel motivation ( $b=0.48, p<0.01$ ). It is formed as a result of the comparison of overall cultural offerings and values and overall costs, times and other-related inputs (Rahikka et al., 2011). It represents tourists' perceived preferences for an evaluation of those cultural attractions and attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from achieving cultural assets through their cultural offerings and values. It can increase when tourists think subjectively that this culture owns major significant culture attributes. Accordingly, value perception plays an important role in critically driving, explaining and determining cultural tourists' travel motivation. *Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported.* Similarly, value perception as mentioned earlier is a main determinant of travel motivation. At the same time, it is also a key outcome of cultural tourism. It is a go-between for cultural tourism and travel motivation. It is intermediate in the causal sequence relating to cultural tourism to travel motivation. Then, value perception can significantly mediate the influences of cultural tourism on travel motivation. *Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported.*

**Table 4** Results of multiple regression analysis and hypotheses testing<sup>a</sup>

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables		
	VP	TM	TM
CT	0.28*** (0.06)	0.44*** (0.05)	
VP			0.50*** (0.05)
TP	0.49*** (0.05)	0.30*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.05)
CT*TP	0.08* (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	
VP*TP			0.08** (0.03)
Gender	-0.07 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.07)
Age	0.03 (0.05)	0.07 (0.05)	0.04 (0.05)
Salary	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.04)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.44	0.47	0.51

Note. \* $p < .10$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .01$ , <sup>a</sup> Beta coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis.

Table 4 presents the results of multiple regression analysis and hypotheses testing for the moderating influences. Tourism promotion positively moderates the cultural tourism-value perception relationships ( $b=0.08$ ,  $p < 0.10$ ) and the value perception-travel motivation relationships ( $b=0.08$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), but does not moderate the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships ( $b=0.01$ ,  $p < 0.82$ ). It is a valuable strategy that improves the position of each destination and thus attracts more tourism flows and enhances economic advantages (Pantano & Servidio, 2011). It improves a position of tourism in each area and enhances economic advantages through the destination's sustainable competitive advantage and future tourism economy. It is instrumental in attracting tourists and boosting regional economies through the adequacy of tourism resources and the integrity of the

tourism supply chain at a destination. In addition, tourism promotion can utilize mix tools, including branding, sales channels, publicity, advertisement, social media, digital and mobile marketing, and among many others (Florido-Benitez, 2022). In contrast, tourism promotion is not a moderator of the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships because cultural tourism has a significant effect on value perception more than travel motivation. As mentioned earlier, tourism promotion already moderates the cultural tourism-value perception relationships. Thus, tourism promotion may moderate the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships less or may not moderate them. Accordingly, tourism promotion is a partial moderator of the research relationships. *Therefore, Hypotheses 4a and 4c are supported, but Hypothesis 4b is not.*

## Conclusion

Cultural tourism is the largest and most rapidly growing tourism segment in the global tourism market. It is one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism sectors. This study aims at examining the influences of cultural tourism on value perception and travel motivation of Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand. Both value perception and tourism promotion mediate and moderate the research relationships respectively. 400 Nakhon Phanom tourists in Thailand are the samples of the study. Structural equation model analysis is utilized to test the direct and mediating influences. Multiple regression analysis is applied to test the moderating influences of the research relationships. The results of this are as follows. Firstly, cultural tourism significantly and positively influences value perception and travel motivation. Secondly, value perception has a significant positive influence on travel motivation and it is a critical mediator of the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships. Finally, tourism promotion is an important positive moderator of the cultural tourism-value perception relationships and the value perception-travel motivation relationships, but does not moderate the cultural tourism-travel motivation relationships. To verify and expand the current study, future research may need to create and identify other dimensions and components of cultural tourism, put more mediators of the research relationships, find a final consequence of cultural tourists' behaviors, attention, patterns, and decisions, reconceptualize understandings, definitions and components of tourism promotion, and collect data from different areas and regions to verify the generalizability of the study. In summary, government agencies

and other related agencies of Nakhon Phanom in Thailand need to identify, create, develop, and utilize significant valuable strategies, policies and techniques of cultural tourism in order to promote, expand and improve the performance, success, growth, survival, and sustainability of cultural tourist destination.

## Contributions and Directions for Further Research

### 1. Theoretical contribution and directions for further research

This study verifies and confirms that behavioral reasoning theory is important and it can be utilized to explain how cultural tourism influences value perception and travel motivation. Cultural tourists' reasonable motives from beliefs, attitudes, subjective norms, perceived control, intentions, and behaviors through cultural offerings and values of a particular destination attract and motivate them to visit Nakhon Phanom in Thailand. To extend the current study of the relationships among cultural tourism, value perception, tourism promotion, and travel motivation, future research may need to create and identify other dimensions and components of cultural tourism in order to add beneficial outcomes and enhance advantageous applications. Next, future research may need to put more mediators of the research relationships according to existing literature with regard to cultural tourism and other related aspects in order to increase the capability of linking cultural tourism to travel motivation. In addition, future research may need to find a final consequence of cultural tourists' behaviors, attention, patterns, and decisions. Moreover, tourism promotion has a tendency to play a significant role in moderating the research relationships. Future research may need to reconceptualize understandings, definitions and components of tourism promotion in order to obtain a strong support of the research results. Furthermore, cultural tourists in Thailand from different areas and regions are also important because there are several important cultural sites and attractions in Thailand. Future research may need to collect data from different areas and regions by using a comparative study in order to strengthen the generalizability of the study.

### 2. Managerial contribution

Cultural tourism is a new trend among tourists that has grown to become a global phenomenon. It is one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism sectors and a new style of tourism that has in recent times become an aspect influencing the performance of tourism industry. Cultural tourist destination can generate the resources necessary to

preserve, conserve and enhance cultural heritage. Accordingly, cultural tourism has become one of the major future growth activities of global tourism demand. Therefore, cultural tourism becomes valuable activities that attract and motivate tourists to visit and discover other people's ways of life. Moreover, it gives them the opportunity to get first-hand exposure to customs, traditions, physical environment or ideas, and access to places of architectural, historical, archaeological or other types of cultural assets through cultural attractions, attributes and values. To enhance and encourage sustainable cultural tourism in a long-term aspect, government agencies and other related agencies need to identify, create, develop, and utilize significant valuable strategies, policies and techniques to promote, expand and improve the performance, success, growth, survival, and sustainability of cultural tourist destination. These valuable strategies, policies and techniques consist of clear short-term, middle-term and long-term planning, appropriate and ample budgeting assignment and allocation, and reasonable and valuable preservation, conservation and maintenance of cultural assets through cultural heritages, sites and attractions and people's ways of lives. Successful cultural tourism management can definitely generate economic wealth, provide a source of funding for heritage conservation, offer new opportunities and prospects for the economic revival of historic cities, create unique tourism products, and add symbolic value to tourism destinations.

## References

- Adams, K., Snyder, J., Crooks, V., & Johnston, R. (2015). Tourism discourse and medical tourists' motivations to travel. *Tourism Review*, 70(2), 85-96.
- Allaberganov, A. & Preko, A. (2022). Inbound international tourists' demographics and travel motives: Views from Uzbekistan. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 5(1), 99-115.
- Anderson, J. C. & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommend two-step approach. *Psychology Bulletin*, 103(3), 411-423.
- Anderson, W. (2015). Cultural tourism and poverty alleviation in rural Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 13(3), 208-224.
- Awang, Z. (2014). *A Handbook on Structural Equation Modeling for Academicians and Practitioner* (1st ed.), MPWA Rich Resources.

- Bunghuez, C. L. & Stefanescu, V. (2017). Cultural tourism. *Revista Economica*, 69(1), 29-41.
- Florido-Benitez, L. (2022). The impact of tourism promotion in tourist destinations: A bibliometric study. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 8(4), 844-882.
- Gali-Espelt, N. (2012). Identifying cultural tourism: A theoretical methodological approach. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 7(1), 45-58.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis: A Global Perspective* (7th ed.), Person Prentice Hall.
- Hausmann, A. (2007). Cultural tourism: Marketing challenges and opportunities for German cultural heritage. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 13(2), 170-184.
- Hennigs, N., Wiedmann, K., Klarmann, C., & Behrens, S. (2015). The complexity of Value in the luxury industry: From consumers' individual value perception to luxury consumption. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 43(10/11), 922-939.
- Huang, C., Chen, H. & Ting, C. (2017). Using a network data envelopment analysis model to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of cultural tourism promotion in Taiwan. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 34(9), 1274-1284.
- Huang, S. & Hsu, C. H. C. (2009). Travel motivation: Linking theory to practice. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3(4), 297-295.
- Kherbouche, S. & Djedid, A. (2019). Promoting the image of historic city for sustainable cultural tourism: The case of Tlemcen Capital of Islamic Culture 2011. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 5(3), 412-428.
- Komulainen, H., Mainela, T., Tähtinen, J., & Ulkuniemi, P. (2007). Retailers' different value perceptions of mobile advertising service. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 18(4), 368-393.
- Liasidou, S. (2018). Representation of cultural tourism on the Web: Critical discourse analysis of tourism websites. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 12(3), 327-347.
- Lee, S. & Phau, I. (2018). Young tourists' perceptions of authenticity, perceived value and satisfaction: The case of Little India, Singapore. *Young Consumers*, 19(1), 70-86.

- Mehmetoglu, M. & Normann, Ø. (2013). The link between travel motives and activities in nature-based tourism. *Tourism Review*, 68(2), 3-13.
- Mele, E., Kerkhof, P. & Cantoni, L. (2021). Analyzing cultural tourism promotion on Instagram: A cross-cultural perspective. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 38(3), 326-340.
- Nkwanyana, M. S., Ezeuduji, I. O., & Nzama, A. T. (2016). Cultural heritage tourism in South Africa: Perceived a Panacea for rural development. *Acta Universitatis Danubius*, 12(6), 160-167.
- Pantano, E. & Servidio, R. (2011). An exploratory study of the role of pervasive Environments for promotion of tourism destinations. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 2(1), 50-65.
- Quratulain, S., Al-Hawari, M. A. & Bani-Melhem, S. (2021). Perceived organizational customer orientation and frontline employees' innovative behaviors: Exploring the role of empowerment and supervisory fairness. *European Journal of Innovative Management*, 24(2), 533-552.
- Rahikka, E., Ulkuniemi, P. & Pekkarinen, S. (2011). Developing the value perception of the business customer through servicer modularity. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 26(5), 357-367.
- Seyitoğlu, F. & Davras, Ö. (2022). Determinants and implications of travel motivations: International travellers visiting Cappadocia. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 8(2), 311-326.
- Song, H., Liu, K. & Huang, Y. (2016). Understanding mainland Chinese tourists' motivation and constraints of visiting Taiwan. *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 12(3/4), 394-413.
- Westaby, J. D. (2005). Behavioral reasoning theory: identifying new linkages underlying intentions and behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 98, 97-120.
- Wong, I. A. & Tang, S. L. W. (2016). Linking travel motivation and loyalty in sporting events: The mediating roles of event involvement and experience, and the moderating role of spectator type. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 33, 63-84.

- Woyo, E. & Woyo. E. (2019). Towards the development of cultural tourism as an alternative for tourism growth in Northern Zimbabwe. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 89(1), 74-92.
- Xu, B. (2020). A competitive resource: Consumer-perceived new-product creativity. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 29(7), 999-1010.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis*, (2nd ed.), Harper and Row.
- Yang, W. & Mattila, A. S. (2016). Why do we buy luxury experiences? Measuring value perceptions of luxury hospitality services. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28(9), 1848-1867.

