

# Thai Tourists Perceived Value of an Authenticity Management of Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand: A Proposed Model of an Authenticity Management of Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand

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## Abstract

This research aimed to 1) measure Thai tourists' levels of the perceived value of authenticity management at Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand, and 2) construct a model of authenticity management at Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand. The sample was 400 Thai tourists at Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand. They were selected by purposive sampling. The instrument for collecting data was a self-administered questionnaire—analysis of data by Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Statistics. The research results were found as follows; 1) Thai tourists with demographic differences had different levels of perceived value of airport attributes displaying Thai Lanna art and culture reference at Chiang Mai International Airport and 2) A model of an authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand, comprised of 5 levels of perceived value: (1) Functional value; (2) Social value; (3) Emotional value; (4) Epistemic value and (5) Conditional value.

**Keywords:** Thai tourists' perceived value; authenticity management: Chiang Mai International Airport: Airport of Thailand Public Company Limited (AOT)

## Introduction

The airport is a point of entry as well as exit for air travelers and tourists alike. It is a gateway to the destination of the host country, a transitory place for airport operators to provide an imprinting traveling experience (Appold & Kasarda, 2006; Vowles & Mertens, 2005; Hansen & Kanafani, 1990). Previously, an airport was considered to be a non-place or a placelessness for air travelers embarking and disembarking on a journey with less connection to locale, place and sense of place (Arefi, 1999). With a recent transformation of social, economic and technological development, airports are no longer providing a functional role of passenger processing service. It gradually provides the representative role and the first impression of the city itself (Patil, 2019). Under such circumstances the airport has a role in conveying a perceived value of the city image to the residents and tourists by stimulating the authentic airport environment as well as a revenue generation agency of the country.

Authenticity management of the international airport is a construct of displaying airport ambiance and airport attributes concerning the national identity and cultural heritage to capture tourists' perceived value and implicate post-visit behavior. Airports of Thailand Public Company Limited (AOT) has a practice of implementing authenticity management of the 6 international airports through displaying Thai art and culture at various airport attributes as part of AOT corporate strategy of Thailand gateway policy. In the case of Chiang Mai International Airport, Thai-Lanna art and cultural attributes are put on display inside the airport terminal to create a sense of place for tourists. In addition, Thai-Lanna festive decoration and cultural performances are regularly showcased during the festive seasons and the international inaugural flight of other foreign airlines to Chiang Mai International Airport. (Airports of Thailand Public Company Limited, 2018). Similar practices have been identified in other AOT international airports.

Chiang Mai International Airport is the third largest international airport operated by AOT as illustrated in Figure 1. It is the important strategic aviation hub of local and international flights to Northern Thailand. Especially, Chiang Mai has a cultural tourism significant to Thailand and is the gateway to the tentative UNESCO World Heritage Site (Chiang Mai World Heritage Initiative Project, 2019). AOT has implemented a strategy of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport by displaying Thai-Lanna art and culture identity through various airport soft and hard attributes such as airport architecture, airport interior decoration, airport art, airport shops & restaurants, music and culture performance and airport hospitality. This airport strategy

has the objective of creating a perceived value of an authentic Thai-Lanna airport ambiance for tourists.

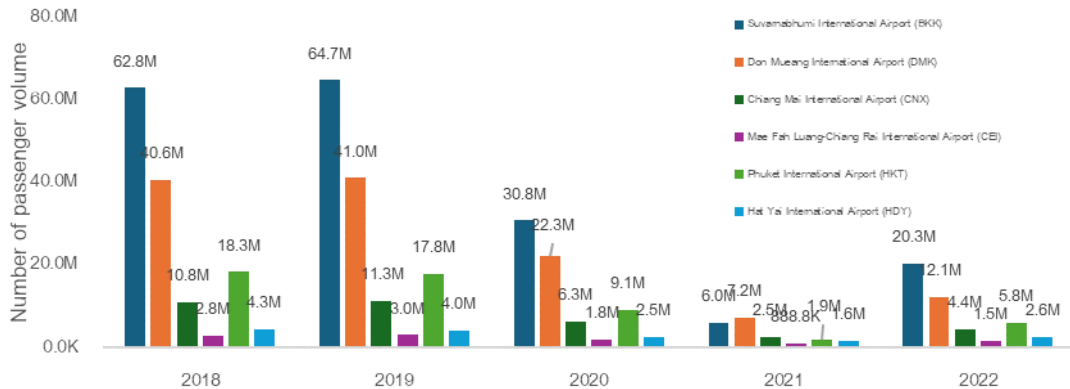


Fig.1 Number of passenger volume of Airports of Thailand's international Airport between 2018–2022

From: Airports of Thailand (2022)

With this problem identification, the researcher aims to explore the in-depth study of Thai tourists' perceived value of authenticity management at Chiang Mai International Airport. The component of perceived value derives from the theory of consumption value. There are 5 consumption values functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value. The reference of an authenticity management of the international airport drawing from 7 categories of airport attributes at Chiang Mai International Airport consisting of (1) airport terminal exterior; (2) airport terminal; (3) airport scent; (4) airport art; (5) airport music and cultural performance and (7) airport service and hospitality. The measurement scale of a 5-point scale of perceived value is constructed to validate Thai tourists' perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport.

## Objectives

1. To measure Thai tourists' levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of a Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand.
2. To construct a model of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand.

## Scope of Research

The scope of the content of this research study covered the concepts of the airport environment at Chiang Mai International Airport, Thai tourists' perceived value, and the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport.

Scope of Demography Thai tourists at Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand.

Scope of Area The scope of the study was Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand.

Scope of Time The duration of the research study covered the years 2019 – 2022.

## Literature Reviews

### Airport environment

The airport also serves as a point of entry and exit for the destination. It is irrefutable that the airport harmonizes the tourists' preconceived notions and post-conceived notions and recreates the memorable traveling experience. In this regard, the airport environment plays a crucial role in exhibiting the destination image and promoting goodwill through a seamless airport product and service. Many researchers identified the positive relationship between air travelers and airport experience. (Jiang & Zhang, 2016; Moon et al., 2015; Bogicevic, 2014; Hackett & Foxall, 1997), airport service quality and airport design (van Oel & van den Berkhof, 2013; Hackett & Foxall, 1997). An amiable airport physical environment in spatiality, amenities, aesthetics, and entertainment also enhances air travelers' experience. (Bogicevic et al., 2016; Jiang & Zhang, 2016; Bogicevic, 2014; van Oel & van den Berkhof, 2013). The above finding significantly identifies a contribution of the airport's physical environment toward air travelers' psychological interpretation and sociological interaction.

### Airport attributes

Airport attributes are the components of the airport terminal by international standards of the International Air Transport Association consisting of airside and landside dividing into 4 key airport attributes consisting of (1) airside infrastructure; (2) passenger terminal; (3) cargo terminal and (4) airport support elements (IATA, 2016). In addition, the airport attributes also extends to decorative and finishing of the airport terminal such as (1) Building envelope façade & Roof; (2) Material and Finish; (3) Furnishing, Fixtures and Equipment; (4) Signage, Wayfinding and Advertising; (5) Lighting and (6) Public Art & Design; (Fort Lauderdale–Hollywood International

Airport, 2017). The aesthetic element of airport passenger layout and material specification for airport terminal design was found to enhance the sense of authenticity and destination image of the airport. The attributes such as airport public art could be found in major international airports in Europe and North America, (Geiling, 2014). Airport art was found to rejuvenate air travelers from disembarking the long-haul flights, alleviate the stress and anxiety from the air security control and enhance air travelers' experience of spending time at shops and restaurants in the airport terminal. Tourists demographic and impact on the airport environment Demographic difference correlates with the perceived value of tourism destination image. Beerli and Marti'n (2004) studied the tourist character and the perceived image of the tourism destination and found demographic factors to the attributes influencing the perceived value of the tourism destination image. The component of the demographic factors consisted of gender, age, nationality, religion and purpose of traveling (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989; Um & Crompton, 1990; Stabler, 1995). The comprising variables of gender, age, education, residency, annual income, and traveling experience were found to be significant in the study of affluent female Chinese tourists traveling to exotic locations than the other demographic groups. (Zhang & Peng, 2014). Whereas Tourists with frequent traveling experiences were found to have a more positive traveling experience than the less frequent tourists. Tourists with more travel experience and high disposable income contribute to the local economy. They were found to have impulse buying behavior under time scarcity (Li et al., 2021). The familiarization of the international airport, especially the airport information, was found to be a significant factor in passenger satisfaction. The advantage of knowing the demographic of nationality could provide the push factor for promoting the destination.

### **Tourists' Perceived Value**

Human was found to have a cognitive capability of sensing the surrounding environment through physical contact (Raturi, 2018). Cronin et al. (2000) concurred that human cognitive ability created behavioral intentions through the perceived value of the surrounding environment. Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2007) supported that attribute of the perceived value was complex and multi-dimensional. In this regard, Sheth et al. (1991) provided a multidimensional approach to assessing the perceived value of the purchased object or service that consumers made a consumption choice based on five consumption values in a hierarchical order. There were (1) Functional value; (2) Emotional value; (3) Social value; (4) Epistemic value and (5) Conditional value. Functional value was perceived from the product's functional or physical

performance. Emotional value was perceived from the product in arousing a specific feeling. Social value was perceived from the social connection of the product with a similar social group. Epistemic value was perceived from the product to stimulate interest, provide unique quality or give a sense of fulfillment. And Conditional value was perceived from the product's specific. These five levels of perceived value form a component of Thai tourists' perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport in this research study.

### **Hypothesis and Research Framework**

The research study employs the Theory of Consumption value of Shet et al. (1991) to support this research study by proposing a component of five levels of Thai tourists' perceived value of (1) Functional value; (2) Emotional value; (3) Social value; (4) Epistemic value and (5) Conditional value. Providing that tourists have the behavioral responses to tourism destination (Martin et al., 2009); therefore, the tourists have a perceived value of the tourism experience from an interaction with the airport attributes at the airport.

To examine the demographic variables affecting Thai tourists' perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport and to validate the perceived value of functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value are the components of the perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport, several hypotheses of the research are proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 1 Thai tourists with different demographic profiles have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport, which is divided into twelve sub-hypotheses: (H1.1) Gender; (H1.2) Age; (H1.3); Residency; (H1.4) Education; (H1.5) Profession; (H1.6) Income; (H1.7) Travel objective; (H1.8) Frequency of traveling to Chiang Mai International and (H1.9) Frequency of traveling to other overseas international airports.

Hypothesis 2 Functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value are the components of the perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport.

## **Methodology**

### **Population and sampling design**

This research study employed a quantitative approach. The population of the study were

Thai nationals who used Chiang Mai International Airport. The purposive sampling approach was employed in the study. The research study covered the year 2019 – 2022. A total of 500 self-administered questionnaires were given out and 400 were used for analysis. The sample size was calculated by using the sample size of Yamane at a 95% significance level. It derived a sample size of 400 in this research study.

### **Measures and data collection**

A self-administered questionnaire was employed as a research tool, which consisted of Part 1: Demographic of the respondents; Part 2: Levels of the perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport, consisting of fifty questions inquiring level of opinions of perceived value of seven airport attributes. Each level of opinion consisted of an interval scale with a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate self-opinions. The research tools were assessed to ensure their validity and reliability. The questionnaire was assessed by the Item-Objective-Congruence Index (IOC) by five experts with an IOC result of 0.903. A pilot test was conducted as a tryout process of 30 respondents to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. The result of the pilot test was evaluated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient with a result of 0.946 to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the demographic profile and traveling pattern and mean and standard deviation of the respondents' perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport. The Inferential Statistics were used to analyze the respondents' opinions and the hypothesis testing for the t-test of two different groups, which was the difference of opinions between male and female respondents. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to compare the mean difference between two or more groups of independent variables on several dependent variables.

## **Result**

### **Part 1: Descriptive statistical results of Thai tourists' demographic profile**

The majority of the respondents were 70.5% female and aged between 31–40 years old. 34.5% were from the South, while the smaller group of 5.3% was from Greater Bangkok. 42.5% of the respondents had bachelor's degrees, while 13.3% had a Doctoral Degree. The professional

background was mainly civil servants of 26.0%. 30.3% had a monthly income between 15,000–30,000 baht. With regards to the traveling pattern, the majority of the respondents 42.8% traveled for leisure purposes. About 67.5% traveled to Chiang Mai International Airport between 1–6 times per year and to other overseas international airports between 1–6 times per year.

**Part 2:** Descriptive statistical results of Thai tourists' levels of perceived value of authenticity management at Chiang Mai International Airport

A total of 400 Thai tourists at Chiang Mai International Airport had a high perceived value of functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value and conditional value of all 50 airport attributes at Chiang Mai International Airport as illustrated in figure 2–5.

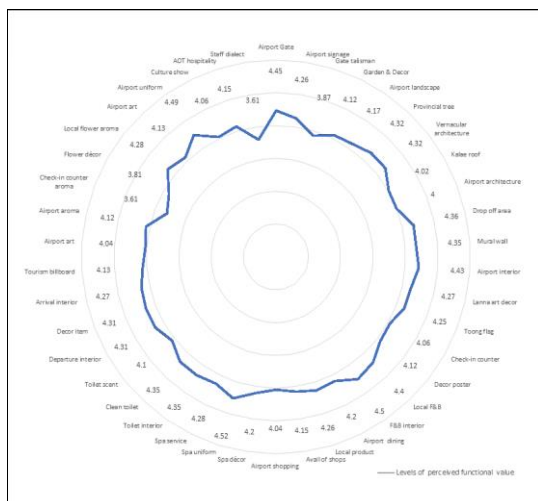


Fig. 2 Summary of the mean result of the perceived functional value of airport attributes.

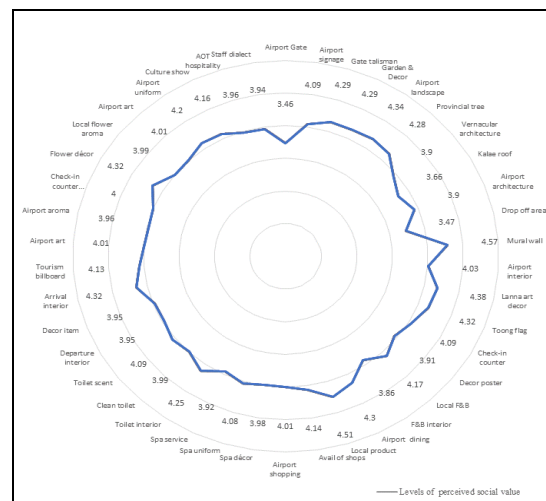


Fig. 3 Summary of the mean result of the perceived social value of airport attributes.

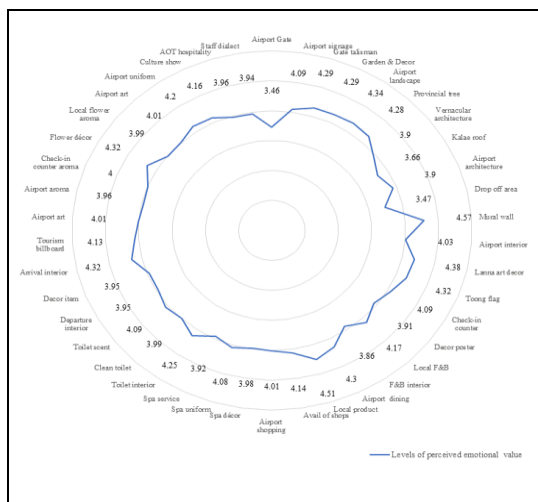


Fig.4 Summary of the mean result of the perceived emotional value of airport attributes.

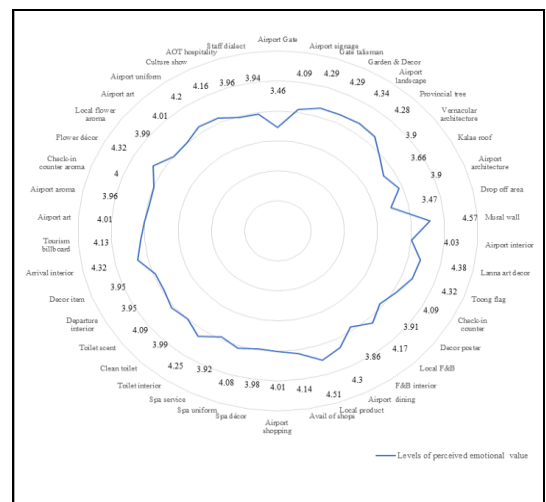


Fig.5 Summary of the mean result of the perceived emotional value of airport attributes.

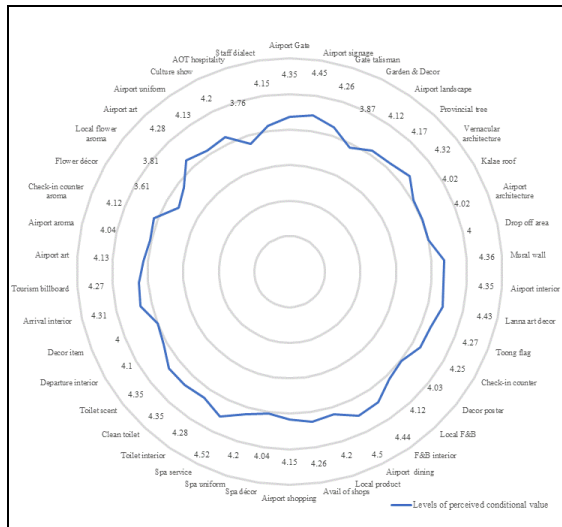


Fig.6 Summary of the mean result of perceived epistemic value of airport attributes.

Summary of mean Result of Thai tourists' Levels of perceived of the airport attributes. The quantitative result confirmed that Thai tourists had a multi-level perceived value of all airport attributes at Chiang Mai International Airport according to the Theory of Consumption Value. Overall Thai tourists' level of perceived value was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 4.12$ , S.D. = .545). However, Thai tourists were found to have the highest epistemic value ( $\bar{x} = 4.26$ , S.D. = .560) of all airport attributes, a perceived utility of all airport attributes providing the knowledge of Thai-Lanna art and culture. It is also followed by emotional value, ( $\bar{x} = 4.19$ , S.D. = .606), a perceived utility of all airport attributes arouses feeling and affection, and conditional value ( $\bar{x} = 4.06$ , S.D. = .588), a perceived utility acquired from Airports of Thailand practice in implementing an authenticity management of international airports. The summary of the descriptive statistical results is shown in Figure 8.

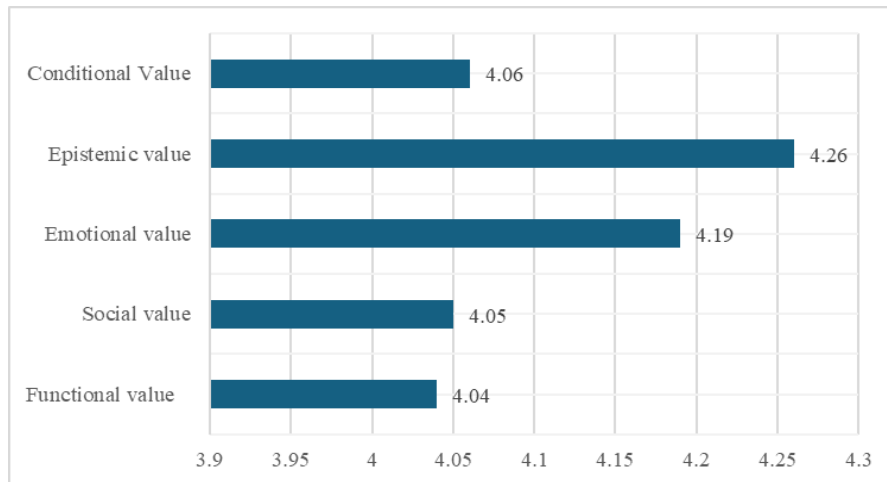


Fig.7 Summary of mean Result of Thai tourists' Levels of perceived of the airport attributes.

### *Part 2 Inferential statistical results of hypothesis testing result.*

The result of hypothesis 1 identified that Thai tourists of different genders had different perceived values of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport, while Thai tourists with other demographic factors had an indifferent perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport. The summary is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1** Summary of hypothesis testing of Thai tourists' perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport.

| Hypothesis No | Hypotheses                                                                                                                                                   | Significant value | Result        |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| H1            | Thai tourists of different demographic profiles have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport. |                   |               |
| H1.1          | Thai tourists of different genders have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport               | 0.00.             | Supported     |
| H1.2          | Thai tourists of different ages have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport                  | 0.481             | Not Supported |
| H1.3          | Thai tourists with different residency have different levels of the perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport       | 0.781             | Not Supported |
| H1.4          | Thai tourists with different education have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport           | 0.871             | Not Supported |
| H1.5          | Thai tourists with different professions have different perceived values of authenticity management of Chiang Mai                                            | 0.081             | Not Supported |

| Hypothesis No | Hypotheses                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Significant value | Result        |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
|               | International Airport                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |               |
| H1.6          | Thai tourists with different monthly salaries have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport                                                  | 0.890             | Not Supported |
| H1.7          | Thai tourists with different travel objectives have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport                                                 | 0.124.            | Not Supported |
| H1.8          | Thai tourists with different frequencies of traveling to Chiang Mai International Airport have different levels of perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport          | 0.519             | Not Supported |
| H1.9          | Thai tourists with different frequencies of traveling to other overseas international airports have different levels of perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport | 0.740             | Not Supported |

Hypothesis 2 Functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value are the components of the perceived value of authenticity management at Chiang Mai International Airport.

1) Hypothesis 3.1 The statistical test result of the confirmatory factor analysis of a model of the perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport According to the descriptive statistic test result as shown in figure 8, indicated that the perceived value factor (PERCIEVED) had the mean result in the high level and consisted of five perceived values. Functional value (PER1) was the least distributed and had the highest mean score, followed by social value (PER2), conditional value (PER5), emotional value (PER3), and epistemic value (PER). The statistical result of the correlation efficiency among the variables indicated that every variable was statistically significant ( $P < 0.01$ ). The Pearson Correlation value ranged from 0.686 to 0.997, which was the positive correlation value. A pair of conditional values (PER5) and functional values (PER1) were significantly highly correlated. In contrast, emotional value (PER3) and social value (PER2) were the least correlated. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity of 3777.477 ( $P < 0.000$ ) indicated that the matrix correlation among the variables differed significantly. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy equaled .776, which was closer to, indicated the feasible indication, which was suitable to provide the component analysis as provided in table 2 and 3

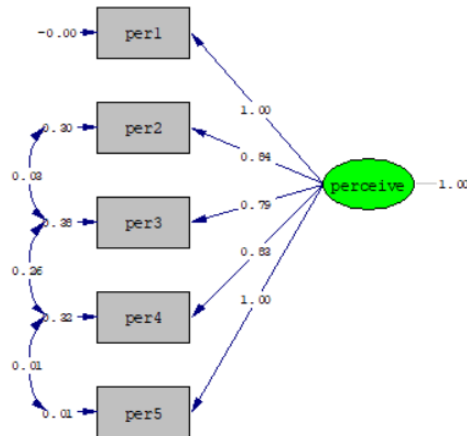


**Fig. 8** The Statistical test result of the confirmatory factor analysis of model of perceived value of an authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport

Chi-square = 0.56, df. =2, P = 0.76, GFI = 1.00, AGFI = 1.00, RMR = .001, RMSEA = 0.000

**Table 2** Descriptive statistics of Indicators of a model of perceived value of an authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport.

| Indicator                | Mean   | S.D.   | Max  | Min  | SK     | KU    |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|------|------|--------|-------|
| Functional value (PER1)  | 4.0429 | .58950 | 5.00 | 2.01 | -.566  | .107  |
| Social value (PER2)      | 4.0457 | .60419 | 5.00 | 1.60 | -.754  | .996  |
| Emotional value (PER3)   | 4.1896 | .60558 | 5.00 | 1.32 | -1.381 | 3.726 |
| Epistemic value (PER4)   | 4.2611 | .56013 | 5.00 | 2.14 | -.850  | .759  |
| Conditional value (PER5) | 4.0630 | .58807 | 5.00 | 2.10 | -.564  | .107  |

**Table 3** Mean, Standard Deviation and Pearson Correlation of Indicator of a model of perceived value of an authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport.

| Indicator | PER1   | PER2   | PER3   | PER4   | PER5   |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| PER1      | 1.000  |        |        |        |        |
| PER2      | .839** | 1.000  |        |        |        |
| PER3      | .788** | .686** | 1.000  |        |        |
| PER4      | .826** | .691** | .911** | 1.000  |        |
| PER5      | .997** | .836** | .783** | .831** | 1.000  |
| Mean      | 4.0429 | 4.0457 | 4.1896 | 4.2611 | 4.0630 |
| S.D.      | .58950 | .60419 | .60558 | .56013 | .58807 |

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 3777.477 P = 0.000

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.776

Remarks \*\*P<0.01

The analysis of the correlation coefficient of a model indicated the subjectivity of the perceived value of authenticity management at Chiang Mai International Airport. The model was coherent with empirical data by considering Chi-square at 0.56 which had a probable value close to 1 (P= 0.76) with degrees of freedom to 2. The chi-square value was greater than 0 indicating the acceptance of the null hypothesis. The research model was coherent with the empirical data test and Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) at 1.00. Subsequently, the result of GFI equaled 1.00 and AGFI equaled 1.00. The Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) equaled to .100, which was closer to 0 indicating the coherence of the empirical data.

Table 4 provided a model analytical tool of the correlation between the perceived value of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport. The observed variables identified the positive factor loading of the five levels of the perceived values. The value ranged from 0.79 to 1.00 and was statistically significant at 0.01. Following are the three high-loading factor values (1) function value (PER1) and conditional value (PER5), (2) social value (PER2), and (3) epistemic value (PER4). The lowest loading factor value was emotional value (PER3).

**Table 4** Statistical Test Result of the Second Confirmatory Factor Analysis of a Model of Perceived Value of An Authenticity Management of Chiang Mai International Airport.

| Indicator                | Factor Loading | T     | R2   |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|------|
|                          | b(SE)          |       |      |
| Functional value (PER1)  | 1.00           | 12.19 | 0.99 |
| Social value (PER2)      | 0.84           | 14.12 | 0.70 |
| Emotional value (PER3)   | 0.79           | 14.18 | 0.62 |
| Epistemic value (PER4)   | 0.83           | 14.46 | 0.68 |
| Conditional value (PER5) | 1.00           | 3.77  | 0.99 |

Chi-square = 0.56, df. =2, P = 0.76, GFI = 1.00, AGFI = 1.00, RMR = .001, RMSEA = 0.000

## Discussions

The result of the first research objective identifies that Thai tourists had a multidimensional perceived value of the authenticity management of Chiang Mai International according to a Theory of Consumption Values proposed by Shet et al. (1991). Despite male and female tourists being found to have different perceived values, they were equally found to have the highest epistemic value, a perceived utility of all airport attributes providing the knowledge of Thai-Lanna art and culture, of all airport attributes.

Results from the second research objective confirm a model of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport according to a Theory of Consumption Values proposed by Shet et al. (1991). It consists of the following five perceived values: (1) Functional value; (2) Social value; (3) Emotional value; (4) Epistemic value and (5) Conditional value.

## Conclusion

The finding identifies that Thai tourists have a multidimensional perceived value of airport attributes of functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and condition value. It indicates that they are aware of the surrounding airport environment. It significantly confirms that an airport's role has extended beyond a transportation hub and serves as a cultural gateway that reflects and promotes local heritage. Chiang Mai International Airport has effectively enhanced the travel experience and aligns with AOT Thailand Gateway strategy.

Thai tourists particularly value the epistemic and emotional dimensions of the airport environment, suggesting that Thai-Lanna art and culture displays engage Thai tourists' sensory experiences. The high perceived epistemic value of Thai-Lanna art and cultural elements of folk art, vernacular architecture, and cultural performances significantly enhance the airport's sense of place. Given the importance of gender differences in perceived value, AOT should consider targeted strategies to accommodate different demographic groups. For instance, AOT should consider providing airport attributes such as airport lounges, airport shops and restaurants, and airport spas to further engage female travelers, who formed the majority of the respondents.

## Suggestions

1. Service Improvement: It is recommended that AOT elevates the levels of service at the airport such as enhancing passenger comfort through modern and efficient airport facilities, improving baggage handling systems, or providing clear and prompt information service and airport signage.

2. Promotion of local art and culture: It is suggested that AOT should organize activities or performances that reflect local culture to create memorable experiences for both Thai and foreign tourists.

## New Knowledge

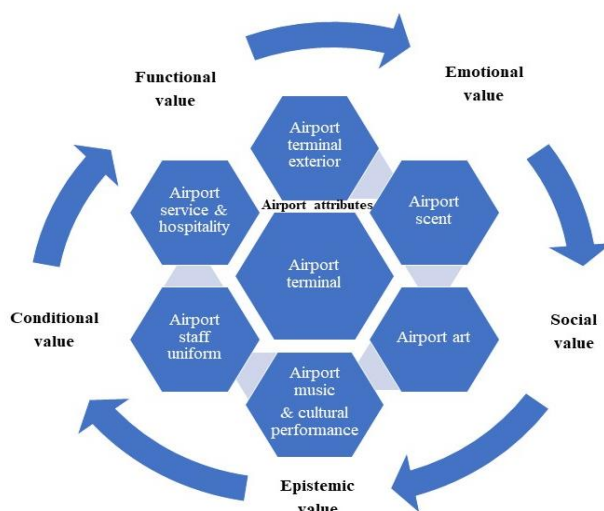


Fig.9 A proposed model of authenticity management of Chiang Mai International Airport, Thailand.

Based on Figure 9 the findings of the research study provide insightful knowledge of Thai tourists' multidimensional perceived value of the airport environment at Chiang Mai International Airport consisting of functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value triggered by the seven categories of airport attributes with local art and culture references. Air travelers with demographic differences also have a different level of the perceived value of the airport environment. The study also highlights the impact of the authentic airport environment of the destination airport on airport satisfaction and behavior visits.

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