ภูมิสถาปัตย์ชายแดนกับการท่องเที่ยว: มิติใหม่ในการพัฒนาเมืองชายแดนโดยวิธีวิเคราะห์ความสำคัญและผลการดำเนินงานของพื้นที่

Casual wear design project From natural color thorns, a case study of sticky rice in the Isan area

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บทคัดย่อ

ปัจจุบันการศึกษาเกี่ยวการเชื่อมโยงและการตีความระหว่างภูมิสถาปัตย์ชายแดนและการท่องเที่ยวได้มีเพิ่ม มากขึ้น แม้จะมีการศึกษาเกี่ยวกับเมืองชายแดน แต่งานวิจัยที่เกี่ยวกับการบูรณาการภูมิสถาปัตย์ชายแดนและการท่อง เที่ยวกลับไม่ปรากฏมากนัก ดังนั้นงานวิจัยฉบับนี้จัดทำขึ้นเพื่อ (1) ทบทวนวรรณกรรมที่เกี่ยวกับภูมิสถาปัตย์ทางการ ท่องเที่ยวชายแดน และ (2) เพื่อสำรวจความคาดหวังของนักเดินทางข้ามพรมแดนโดยใช้วิธีวิเคราะห์ความสำคัญและ ผลการดำเนินงานของเมืองที่ติดชายแดนไทยลาว วิธีที่ใช้ในงานวิจัย ได้แก่ การวิจัยแบบผสม โดยการสัมภาษณ์ 15 คน และเก็บแบบสอบถามจำนวน 384 ชุด จากนักท่องเที่ยวข้ามพรมแดนในประเทศไทย โดยเก็บข้อมูลจาก 3 จังหวัด ได้แก่ หนองคาย มุกดาหาร และนครพนม ผลที่ได้จากการทบทวนวรรณกรรม พบว่า ภูมิสถาปัตย์ทางการท่องเที่ยวระหว่าง ประเทศไทยและสาธารณรัฐประชาธิปไตยประชาชนลาว มี 4 รูปแบบหลัก ได้แก่ แหล่งท่องเที่ยวทั้งสองประเทศอยู่ใกล้ แต่ไม่ติดกัน แหล่งท่องเที่ยวทั้งสองประเทศอยู่ติดกัน แหล่งท่องเที่ยวอยู่ห่างกัน และแหล่งท่องเที่ยวอยู่ฝั่งเดียว นอกจาก นั้นผลการวิเคราะห์โดยวิธีการวิเคราะห์ความสำคัญและผลการดำเนินงานของพื้นที่ (IPA) พบว่า ควรให้ความสำคัญใน การพัฒนาปัจจัยด้านภูมิสถาปัตย์ของพื้นที่และสิ่งแวดล้อม และความคุ้มค่าเงินของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ในทาง กลับกันการต้อนรับของคนท้องถิ่น และความคล้ายคลึงทางภาษาและวัฒนธรรม การเข้าถึงพื้นที่ ความมีชื่อเสียงของ แหล่งท่องเที่ยว และความหลากหลายของร้านอาหารและสถานบันเทิง เป็นปัจจัยที่หน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้องควรส่งเสริมใน การสร้างความสามารถทางการแข่งขันของพื้นที่ต่อไป จะเห็นได้ว่าผลจากการวิจัยด้วยวิธีการวิเคราะห์ความสำคัญและ ผลการดำเนินงานของพื้นที่ (IPA) จะช่วยทำให้หน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้องสามารถนำข้อมูลที่ได้ไปจัดความสำคัญใน การพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวเมืองชายแดนได้อย่างเหมาะสม

คำสำคัญ: ภูมิสถาปัตย์ชายแดน เมืองชายแดน การท่องเที่ยวชายแดน การวิเคราะห์ความสำคัญและผลการดำเนินงานของ พื้นที่

Abstract

C The complexity of the interconnections between border landscapes and tourism has given rise to research with multiple interpretations. Indeed, many studies have investigated about border towns, but little is known about integrating border landscape and tourism. This research are aimed 1) to review literature relating to tourism landscapes, and 2) to investigate cross-border travellers expectation by using the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA). This study employed mixed methods, with 15 interviewees and 384 questionnaires. The sampling was cross-border travellers who visited Thailand. The data were collected from three provinces, Nong Khai, Mukdahan, and Nakhon Phanom. The results indicated that there are four different types of tourism landscapes between Thailand and Lao PDR boundaries; adjacent zones, extended zones, distant zones, and one side tourism zone. Furthermore, the IPA results showed that the authentic landscape and environment and the destination being valued for money need to focus effort for improvement. On the other hands, five out of ten factors were in a 'keep up the good work' quadrant, which are the hospitality of local people, the similarity of the language and culture, accessibility to the areas, famous as a tourist destination, and the variety of places to dine and experience entertainment. These suggest that authorities should maintain these factors as the competitive advantages of the tourism border landscapes. The results from IPA approach are certainly to allow authorities to understand their priorities in order to planning tourism in a border town development appropriately.

1. Introduction

The landscape is a general term attributed to nature, culture, history, city, village, and any objective phenomenon. It is an objective, mental, dynamic, and relative phenomenon stemmed from an interaction between human and nature and society and history (Wozniak, 2018). When referring to the idea of the "landscape," it is not only the natural landscape. Mansouri (2013) stated that a landscape has a meaning beyond 'spectacular view' and consists of different experiences. It can be seen that a landscape is not merely the holistic interrelation of humans with a natural and physical realm, but also seeing the landscape appeared with the discovery of its esthetic value (Rabassa, 2018). This meaning relates to one of the factors that triggered the tourism. Similarly, Prokkola (2010) defined border landscape in form of both physical and mental views. He stated that border landscape refer to a combination of physical land forms, land uses, or to a visual landscape image or a text conveying symbolic meanings within the nation (Prokkola, 2010). Therefore, the study of border landscape and tourism should investigate both perspectives; physical and visual landscapes.

1.1 Bordertown landscape and Tourism development

Bordertown and landscape represent a significant element in tourism studies. Travelling always involves crossing some political or other boundaries, and borderlands are often the first or last areas of a place that travellers see (Prokkola, 2010). Boundaries offer great potential for developing tourism (e.g., Timothy 2002; Kozak and Buhalis, 2019; Mayer et al., 2019; Boonchai and Freathy, 2020). In term of local economic development, the spending of travelers, whether they are visiting or passing through a border town, can generate income for local businesses, inward investment, and infrastructure development (World Tourism Organization, 2021). The local authorities can also increase revenue from tourist expenditures, which may be higher than the income they receive from residents (Ryan, 2006).

In tourism perspectives, the national boundaries generate a desire for something new or different that cannot be provided in the individual's home environment (Timothy, 2002), such as natural scenarios, heritage sites, foods and festivals, culture, and language. For example, Thailand and its nebiourhoods symbolise political and ideological distinction, such as the construction of national identities, the construction of tourism infrastructures and services. This reporesents that although borders constitute spatial barriers for movement, but they often coincide with valuable attractions.

National borders, however, are no longer recognised as barriers to regional development (O'Dowd, 2003). Different regions have demostrated the transformation of a national border landscape. Within European boundaries, such as Finland-Sweden, have gradually been transformed into open landscapes, both physically and symbolically, and some have turned into arenas for co-operative tourism development (Prokkola, 2010). A change in national borderies and the transformation of a border landscape affects the possibilities and strategies of tourism development in border regions. Therefore, it is important to identify the differences in tourism patterns and various sites for the further creation of border landscapes and social images.

1.2 Thailand border landscapes

Geographically, Thailand is situated in the centre of South-east Asia. It borders with Lao PDR and Myanmar to the north, Cambodia and the Gulf of Thailand to the east, Myanmar and the Indian Ocean to the west and Malaysia to the south (National Economic and Social Development Board, 2011). There are three ways to access Thailand from Laos. There are road and railways links joining Thailand and Laos, as well as public transportation networks. Rather than roads and railways, however, the main access points from Laos to Thailand are in the form of water-borne transport across the Mekong River (Regional Operation Center, 2015). All connections are connected with the border checkpoints.

Many of Thaland-Lao PDA border towns in the Northeast of Thailand are in their initial stages but have a great potential for further development (Boonchai, 2018). The understanding of Thai-Laos boundaries have significant implications for bordertown development, especially planning and promotional towns (Timothy, 2009). The differences in tourism patterns and sites across the Thai-Laos boundaries can be identified as;

Type A: Tourist zones exist adjacent to both side of boundary, such as Mukdahan – Savanakhet borders.

Type B: Tourist zones are extended across or meet at the border, such as Chong Mek – Pakse borders.

Type C: A tourist zone exists on one side of the boundary and another tourist area is distant from the boundary, i.e. Nong Khai – Vientiane.

Type D: A tourist zone exists on one side of the border, such as Tha Li District and Chiang Khan District, Lei province

As the definitions of landscape have multiple definitions, landscape not only refer to a combination of physical land forms, but also a visual image or a text expressing symbolic meanings. Next, the perceptions of visitors to the border towns are investigated.
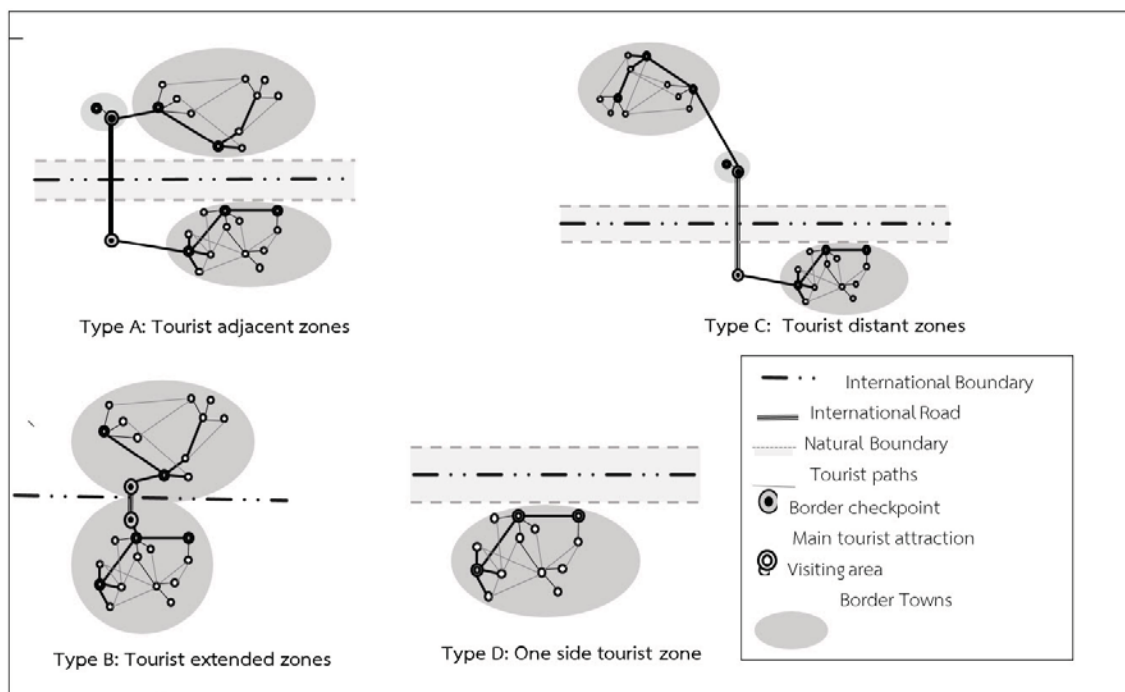

Figure 1 Types of Border Tourism Landscape in Northeast of Thailand.

The objectives of this research are 1) to review literature relating to tourism landscape, and 2) to investigate cross-border travellers perceptions by using the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA).

3. Methodology

This research adopted mixed method approach. As such, fifteen Laotian travellers who were in Thailand were informally interviewed as part of the exploratory phase of the research. Respondents were recruited using a purposive convenience sampling method in Nong Khai Province. Each interview took 15-30 minutes. All the questions were open-ended because the researcher aimed to provide flexibility for the interviewer and the interviewees. Information was gathered on the purpose of the trip, the products purchased, and the places visited. In order to translate the survey into the Lao language, the content validity of the items was translated and screened by two Lao native speakers who were teaching in Thai Universities. The questionnaire was re-checked several times in order to identify potential sources of ambiguity.

Then, a formal pre-test was undertaken by asking 30 cross-border travellers to complete the questionnaire. Respondents were recruited using a purposive convenience sampling method. The pilot test was conducted in a border province (Nong Khai Province), using a street technique over a three-day period (Friday–Sunday).

Next, self-completion questionnaire 450 copies were distributed to Lao travelers due to the desire to reduce the sampling error as the sample size increases, and to allowing an adequate examination of the multivariate techniques, such as chi-square, the number should not fall below 300 respondents (Hair et al., 2010). As a result, 438 were returned. The questionnaires were then screened to reveal 384 usable questionnaires, 337 of which were completed, and 47 were half-finished. 54 questionnaires were determined as unusable. The two main reasons for eliminating data were unanswered and unreliable answers. In summary, the response rate was 85.33% of the total delivered questionnaires, which was considered adequate to ensure an acceptable level of statistical validity for use in the research.

3.1 Data collection

The samples were collected from three cities that share a border with Laos (see map in figure 2). The choice of these three locations was based on a number of considerations. First, these three cities have high rates of investment and attract a significant number of cross-border tourists. Also, since there are inbound travellers in the towns, it was possible to find a variety of suitable respondents with different motivations for visiting. Furthermore, since the researcher is familiar with these particular locations, it was easy to manage access and ensure higher response rates. For evaluation, the means of the important attributes and performance attributes were compared (Performance – Importance). In order to interpret the rsults, a positive score indicates that the respondents were satisfied with the border environment. Alternatively, a negative score indicates that the respondents were dissatisfied with the border towns.

Figure 2 Locations of data collection
Adopted from Boonchai (2018)

Lastly, an Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA) grid was employed to present the results. This study was based on the work of Martilla and James (1977), identifying IPA areas of perceived high or low attribute performance combined with high or low importance.

(I)   Keep up the good work means the places were performing well and need to continue working in this way.

(II) Concentrate here refers to a need for additional focus as they were underperforming.

(III) Low priority is a low priority area that requires little investment.

(IV) Possibly overkill refers to a risk of over-investment as this area is of low importance to customers.

According to the review, one limitation of the IPA is its inability to determine positive or negative attitudes about an attribute. Addressing this issue, this study modifies the IPA matrix by adopting a 'data-centered diagonal line' to view consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This method is more practical than the traditional IPA matrix since it is able to show results even when the gaps between importance and performance are only slightly different. This matrix can help retailers in differentiating themselves from competitors, and increasing consumer satisfaction (Disastra et al., 2018). Since the data is a parametric variable, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to compare tourist-perceived importance factors and tourist-perceived performance factors. The results of this section serve as input variables for further investigation into the development of a marketing strategy.

4. Results

4.1 Background of the respondents

The overview of the respondents provides the general background. The data is presented in two parts: demographic profiles and travel-related patterns. Table 1 shows the demographic profiles of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were females (66.7%) within the age range of 18 to 25 years old (43.0%) and 26 to 35 years old (36.5%). In addition, the majority were single (49.7%). Most of the respondents were educated respondents; 31.8% had at least a bachelor's degree, followed by 29.2% with a two-year college degree, and 20.8% with a high school diploma. Moreover, 22.1% of these respondents were self-employed/business owners, 20.8% worked for the government, and 19.5% were students.

Table 1 Demographic profiles

Demographic	N	Percent	Demographic	N	Percent
Gender			Education		
Male	128	33.4	Less than high school	56	14.6
Female	256	66.7	High school	80	20.9
Age			Two-year college degree	112	29.2
18-25 years	165	43.0	Undergraduate degree	122	31.8
26-35 years	140	36.5	Graduate degree	14	3.6
36-45 years	52	13.5	Occupation		
46-55 years	24	6.3	Student	75	19.5
More than 56 years	1	0.3	Governance officer	80	20.8
Missing data	2	0.5	Self-employed/business owner	85	22.1
Family Status			Private officer/ Employee	87	22.6
Single	191	49.7	Housewife	30	7.8
Married	179	46.6	Agriculturist	22	5.7
Divorced/widowed	12	3.1	Other	3	0.8
Missing data	2	0.5	Missing data	2	0.5

4.2 Travel-related behaviors

Table 2 shows that the majority considered shopping to be their main purpose for visiting (56.8%). This was followed by tourism (38.3%) and other purposes such as visiting relatives, participating in festivals, and other activities. Following on from this, a large proportion of respondents participated in eating out (50.0%) and sightseeing in cities (41.1%). In contrast, a smaller percentage joined in tourism activities such as visiting attractive natural places like waterfalls and national parks (17.2%), and festival(s) or event(s) such as religious events (13.5%). 3.4%, meanwhile, were reported to be accompanying partners or drivers, so they did not intend to participate in any shopping activities.

In addtion, the data showed that more than 61.9% of the respondents were one-day visitors. Only 38.1% were short-term visitors. Respondents preferred to travel in a small group, and came with their friends (42.4%) or family (41.1%). Lastly, more than half of the respondents crossed the border in their private car (64.0%), followed by public bus (29.2%).

Table 2 Travel-related behaviour

Variables	N	Percentage	Variables	N	Percentage
Purpose of visiting			Transportation(s) *		
Tourism	147	38.3	Private car	245	64.0
Shopping	218	56.8	Public bus	112	29.2
Others	18	4.7	Activities*		
Length of stay			- Eating out	192	50.0
One day trip	268	61.9	- Sightseeing in cities	158	41.1
More than two days	116	38.1	- Visiting attractive natural places	66	17.2
The type of people			- Participating in festival(s) or	52	13.5

Table 2 (Cont.)

Variables	N	Percentage
Purpose of visiting		
Tourism	147	38.3
Shopping	218	56.8
Others	18	4.7
Alone	36	9.4
Friend(s)	163	42.4
Family	158	41.1
Others	27	7.1

Variables	N	Percentage
Transportation(s) *		
Private car	245	64.0
Public bus	112	29.2
Activities*		
- Not participating in any activities	13	3.4

Multiple responses allowed

4.3 The Important-Performance Analysis

Table 3 demonstrates that respondents scored the importance (column II) in the range of 3.40 to 4.04. This indicates that cross-border shoppers expected all items to be important. The results reveal that the hospitality of local people (4.04) was the most distinctive attribute, followed by the similarity of the language and culture (3.93) and Accessibility to the areas (3.87), respectively. In contrast, Information and signs in bordertown areas had the lowest score on the important criteria (3.40).

After the importance of place attributes had been evaluated, the performance (column III) of the border towns was ascertained in order to explain how the respondents actually perceived the destination. As seen in Table 3, the range of scores was from 3.31 to 4.22. This indicates that the respondents perceived the place performance to be 'good' to 'excellent'. In addition, the data shows that a location performed well on the hospitality of local people (4.22), followed by the Similarity of the language and culture (4.09), and Accessibility to the areas (3.94). In contrast, the weakesr performance factors were Informationand signs in bordertown areas (3.31), and shopping areas representing the local uniqueness (3.59), respectively.

Table 3 The comparison of Importance and Perforance factors

No	(I) Variables	(II) Importance	(III) Performance	(IV) Gaps Values	(V) Correlation
1	Information and signs in bordertown areas	3.40	3.31	-0.09	.503*
2	Famous as a tourist destination	3.85	3.88	0.03	.462*
3	The destination being valued for money	3.79	3.80	0.01	.385*
4	Shopping areas represent-ing the local uniqueness	3.60	3.59	-0.01	.550*

Table 3 (Cont.)

No	(I) Variables	(II) Importance	(III) Performance	(IV) Gaps Values	(V) Correlation
5	Variety of places to dine and experience entertainment	3.82	3.77	-0.05	.544*
6	Accessibility to the areas	3.87	3.94	0.07	.507*
7	The hospitality of local people	4.04	4.22	0.18	.403*
8	The similarity of the language and culture	3.93	4.09	0.17	.520*
9	Familiar with a destination	3.66	3.68	0.02	.554*
10	Authentic landscape and environment	3.74	3.81	0.06	.477*

* $P < 0.05$

Regarding any value gap, the results report significant correlations in all factors (column V). This indicates important factors related to performance. Moreover, the outcomes indicate that most of the attributes exceeded the consumers' expectations (VI). The results indicate that the respondents seem to be satisfied with the border towns. The largest positive gaps between expectation and performance were the hospitality of local people (0.18), followed by the similarity of the language and culture (0.17). There were some negative gaps, however, in respect to the information and signs in shopping areas (-0.09).
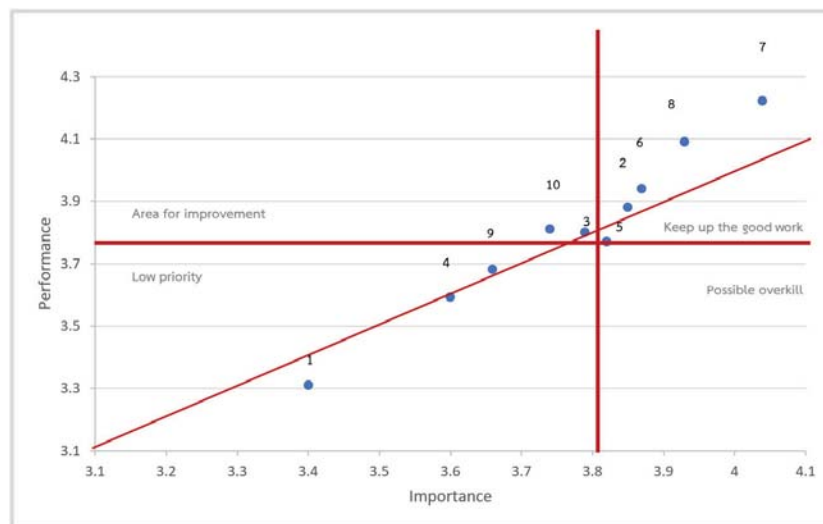

Figure 3 Important and Performance matrix (IPA)

Average means: Performance 3.77/ Importance 3.81

Table 4 Implications of the IPA

Quadrant	No	Items	Gaps*	Implication
Quadrant I: Keep up the good work	7	The hospitality of local people	+	Maintain competitive advantage
	8	The similarity of the language and culture	+	Maintain competitive advantage
	6	Accessibility to the areas	+	Maintain competitive advantage
	2	Famous as a tourist destination	+	Maintain competitive advantage
	5	Variety of places to dine and experience entertainment	-	Emphasis here
Quadrant II: Area for improvement	3	The destination being valued for money	+	Need to focus effort here
	10	Authentic landscape and environment	+	Need to focus effort here
Quadrant III: Low priority	9	Familiar with a destination	+	Do not necessarily focus additional effort here
	4	Shopping areas representing the local uniqueness	-	Do not necessarily focus additional effort here
	1	Information and signs in bordertown areas	-	Do not necessarily focus additional effort here

* + = Satisfaction / - = Unsatisfaction

In order to identify the priorities for development, Figure 3 presents across four dimensions. Before that, the mean averages of importance and performance were evaluated. The means of the Importance were 3.81, while the Performance means were 3.77. Then, ten attributes were plotted into four quadrants. Interestingly, the data show that these results tend to confirm that consumers' expectations (Importance) are significantly related to satisfaction (perceptions of place performance).

As the results in Figure 3 show, Quadrant I demonstrates that five attributes provide opportunities for maintaining a competitive advantage. They were 'the hospitality of local people'(7), 'the similarity of the language and culture'(8), 'accessibility to the areas'(6), 'famous as a tourist destination'(2), and 'variety of places to dine and experience entertainment'(5). This suggests that the authorities should focus on these items as their main priorities. Regarding the area for improvement quadrant, this includes 'the destination being valued for money'(3) and 'authentic landscape and environment'(2). This implies that the authorities should put more effort into these two factor for further improvement. Last, the low priority quadrant, this includes 'Familiar with a destination'(9), 'shopping areas representing the local uniqueness'(4), 'information and signs in border town areas'(1), this indicates that the authorities may not need to put additional effort in these two variables.

5. Conclusion

There are multi-faceted requirements from cross-border tourists. Building a landscape position through such a proposition therefore, could attract and maintain relationships with travellers (Peter and Anandkumar, 2011). Regarding to 'spectacular views, ' there are four different types of tourism landscape between Thailand-Laos borders which were tourist adjacent zones, tourist extended zones, tourist distant zones, and one side tourist zone. According to esthetic views, the results reported that the cross-border travellers concerned 'the hospitality of local people' and 'the similarity of the language and culture' as the most importance and performance factors. It could be seen that the respondents were concerned about the atmosphere in border town more than functional features. The results revealed that cross-border tourists attach importance to a comfortable community where they feel welcome and are able to communicate with local people. These factors could be interpreted, according to Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, as they want to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance while they are in Thailand. The explanation might be because Laotians, like other Asian countries, have collectivistic cultures where it is important for people to be dependable and attentive to the needs of others (Uriely, 2005). Authorities should therefore design a programme that enhances awareness of welcome destinations, so as to establish favourable feelings of association. These consequences have confirmed the statement of Cunningham (2009) who mentioned that tourist landscapes cannot be separated from the cultural activities and social lives of the people who dwell them. Interestingly, the results indicated that the authentic landscape and environment needed to put effort for further development because the destination revealed lower scores on performance than their expectation.

The blending between a town landscape and destination image can give border landscapes their unique character in attracting tourists to places of high aesthetic value. The differences in physical and aesthetic qualities of the border landscape can undergo town restructuring and become tourist attractions (Everett, 2012). The study of IPA can build an agenda to establish priorities, landscape planning and gain a competitive advantage in the border towns. In addition, this study contributes new informationto the study of border landscape and tourism. Perhaps the most significant point to be made here echoes both the border landscape and tourism concepts. For such reasons, government supports are needed for appropriate planning and development, ranging from improvments to infrastructure, to crowd management and having friendly residents.

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