INSIGHTS INTO CULTURAL TOURIST BEHAVIOR: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

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ABSTRACT

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As well as being a famous beach destination, Phuket is also a rich cultural destination where the local government has been promoting this type of special interest tourism internationally. The purpose of this research is to explore cultural tourist behavior in Phuket. This research also measures significant predictors of the behavioral intention of cultural tourists. Sequential mixed methods research is utilized. Domestic and international tourists were recruited for in-depth interviews and survey questionnaires, respectively. The in-depth interview was adopted in the first stage of the investigation and 15 domestic and international cultural tourists were approached. Then the interview data was analyzed thematically and used for the survey instrument in the second stage of the study. In the quantitative survey study, 500 questionnaires were distributed, and 403 cases were usable. It was found that cultural travel motivations include life fulfilment, wanting local cultural contact, and desiring unique local participation. These factors are significant predictors of cultural tourist behavior. The value of co-creation is suggested, and theoretical and practical implications are provided. Tourism and hospitality businesses can adopt the findings to provide services to potential customers. This will further contribute a higher level of GDP generated for a country.

Keywords: Cultural tourism; travel motivation; Phuket; tourist behavior

1. INTRODUCTION

Classic models of consumer behavior in marketing tend to depict consumption-related encounters as a linear progression from needs recognition to information search, evaluation, purchase, and consumption. Based on this model, the key concepts being studied in travel behavior research include decision-making, motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty (Cohen et al., 2014). The literature in tourist behavior focuses widely on travel motivation. The literature reveals that different contexts have been the foci of travel motivation studies. Demographic factors have been used in several investigations. Age was applied (e.g., Anantamongkolkul et al., 2017; Ma et al., 2018). While Anantamongkolkul et al. (2017) investigated a group of senior tourists, Ma et al. (2018) pay attention to a group of student travelers. Some studies (e.g., Prayag and Lee, 2019; Ramkissoon and Uysal, 2010) measure travel motivation using types of tourists. This aspect supports the notion that different tourist segments would present specific travel motivations.

Recently, cultural tourism has been very popular. The cultural tourist segment is significant at urban destinations (Cetin and Bilgihan, 2016). Cultural attractions play an important role in tourism and have become a significant aspect of attracting visitors to visit a destination (Richards, 2002), especially domestic tourists. A

lot of investigations have been done to better understand this tourist segment. What can be observed is that previous cultural studies have paid attention to renowned cultural tourist destinations. For instance, the case of an Istanbul cultural tourist experience was explored (Cetin and Bilgihan, 2016). In addition, Molinillo and Japutra (2017) investigated influencers of local cultural activity in Spain. Most recently, Seyfi et al. (2020) applied grounded theory to identify key factors affecting cultural tourist experiences in France, namely, authenticity, quality of service, engagement, cultural exchange, and culinary attraction.

In terms of destination management, several countries, including France, Turkey and Thailand, have promoted cultural tourism as a plan for societal and economic stimulation. For example, the Basques of France has promoted their own festivals, music and dances, their own foods, games and folklore, as well as an acute sense of history and heritage (Lush, 2020). The Thai government initiated a slogan, "Thai style travel as a chic and deep experience" (Rattanasuwongchai, 2011). The Thai government began to support the idea of community-based tourism in 2017—where a tourist could experience real local Thai culture. Hence, locals are required to preserve their own unique culture to present to cultural tourists. With this type of tourism, local communities gain higher income, raise social awareness, and preserve local resources which leads to sustainable communities (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2016). With this idea in mind, the research question for this study is "how do tourists behave during their cultural holiday?"

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Consumer behavior is one of the most researched areas in the marketing and tourism literature. In general terms, consumer behavior involves certain decisions, activities, and experiences that satisfy consumer needs and wants (Solomon et al., 2010). Regarding tourist behavior, the area of travel motivation study receives much attention from tourism scholars. Within the travel motivation models, Crompton's (1979) push-pull model has been widely adopted. The push factors refer to socio-psychological motives emerging from travelers themselves whereas the pull factors are motives aroused by destinations. Numerous studies have investigated key attributes as to why international tourists visit particular destinations. Such findings support Crompton's (1979) push-pull model. In addition, tourism scholars have suggested common travel motivations using the overarching question of why tourists travel to a destination and the idea that travel motives differ depending upon tourism contexts. Relaxation is one of the most mentioned travel motivations (Anantamongkolkul et al., 2017). Spending time with family (e.g., Dutta et al., 2017; Jiang et al., 2019) and seeking novelty are also mentioned (e.g., Caber and Albayrak, 2016). Recently, several studies have illustrated travel motivation relevant to pull factors. For example, Park et al. (2019) found that pull factors of an economic nature are important motivational factors for tourists visiting a destination. Jiang et al. (2019) discovered that natural scenery is a key attribute for tourists. The literature review supports that travel motivation should be continually investigated as motivations change with time.

Table 1: Selected Studies in Cultural Tourism

Author	Research objective(s)	Key finding(s)
Kim et al. (2007)	To explore a tourist participation model at a cultural destination	Demographic factors including education and income have an impact on cultural activities
Lynch et al. (2011)	To measure tourist demand in cultural tourism in Nova Scotia, Canada	High demand for cultural activities despite tourist cultural experiences, Highly educated tourists present high interest in cultural activities, International tourists present more interest in cultural activities that local people
Niemczyk (2013)	To segment cultural tourists in Poland	Five segments were evident based on cultural experience expectations and the unique cultures sought.
Teo et al. (2014)	To understand cultural tourists in Melaka, Malaysia	Cultural tourists appeared to be socially and environmentally responsible. Four segments of cultural tourists were found
Altunel and Erkurt (2015)	To seek relationships between participation, value of experience, satisfaction, and intention to recommend by tourists in Istanbul	Tourist participation, mediated by value of experience and satisfaction, affected intention to recommend.
Molinillo and Japutra (2017)	To investigate influencers of local cultural activity in Spain	Some demographic factors, including gender, income, and psychological factors, impacted cultural activity engagement.

Table 1: Selected Studies in Cultural Tourism (continued)

Author	Research objective(s)	Key finding(s)
Chen and Rahman (2018)	To investigate relationships between tourist participation, local contact, memorable experiences, and cultural tourist loyalty	There is a positive relationship between tourist participation, local contact, memorable experiences, and tourist loyalty.
Khunrattanakorn et al. (2014)	To measure factors influencing cultural service loyalty in Thailand	Marketing mix and images of cultural tourist packages affected service loyalty as mediated by expectation, perception, and satisfaction.
Janthapakul and Sangraksa (2013)	Issues in cultural tourism	Organizational related issues, cultural activity issues, and management issues were indicated.

Table 1 displays examples of studies in cultural tourism. The existing cultural tourism studies can be divided into three aspects. The first group of research has investigated the cultural tourism development concept (e.g., Khlaikaew, 2015; Janthapakul and Sangraksa, 2013; Sanglimsuwan, 2012). These scholars have consistently shown that clear development processes need to be conducted for successful cultural tourism development. Marketing strategies are also required, for example, advertising and press releases. In addition, Khlaikaew (2015) suggests tourism activities focusing on experience and participation should be provided. The second group of research places attention on issues and problems regarding cultural tourism. For example, Janthapakul and Sangraksa (2013) indicate issues in cultural tourism related to the lack of academic support from a relevant organization. There was not enough support from the local government, for instance, in the knowledge preparation of local youth tour guides. In addition, limited creative tourism activities were offered to cultural tourists.

The third group of research investigates cultural tourist behavior. A number of researchers have focused on cultural tourist behavior in Thailand (e.g., Jiratamakul, 2016; Khunrattanakorn et al., 2014; Sanglimsuwan, 2012). This group of scholars show demographic factors, for example, gender, educational background and occupation, as cultural tourist behavior predictors. In terms of cultural tourism activities, tourists preferred cooking classes, bamboo basket weaving, and traditional games. Furthermore, cultural products affected cultural tourist loyalty. For example, Ramkissoon and Uysal (2010) suggest felt authenticity toward cultural and natural heritages influences tourists to visit cultural attractions. In addition, socio-demographic variables and psychographic variables are found as factors influencing domestic tourist attendance at cultural attractions (Molinillo and Japutra, 2017). Recently, Chen and Rahman (2018) addressed effects of visitor engagement toward cultural contact and memorable tourism experience. The most recent study from Suntikul et al. (2020) investigated tourists participating in Thai cooking classes. This study indicated that a combination of social, utilitarian, entertainment, and escape factors are culinary tourist motivations.

The review of literature suggests there is limited studies in relation to cultural tourism. Several research designs have been adopted in the existing investigations. However, in the Thai context, it was found that the present studies have been conducted in popular cultural destinations such as Bangkok and Nakhon Srithammarat. Very limited examination has been done at a world-class destination like Phuket, where there is a unique culture. Phuket is not only a beach-resort style destination, but also a cultural destination. As such, the aims of this investigation are twofold. The first purpose is to explore cultural tourist behavior, in particular cultural tourist motivation and the most popular cultural activities and attractions. The second objective of this research is to measure the significant predictors of cultural tourist behavioral intentions.

This study involves mixed methods research with a sequential research design. The purpose of using a mixed methods design is to discover insights into cultural tourist behaviors and to develop research instruments. The results of one phase of the study are used to inform the other. Stage 1 applied in-depth interviews. Undertaking a qualitative approach allows the researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural tourists' behavior in the under-researched Phuket cultural tourism context. In particular, this study seeks to gain insights into travel motivation and cultural tourism activities in Phuket, a UNESCO city of Gastronomy. The interviews were also designed to assist survey instrument development. Accordingly, stage 2 employed a quantitative approach using the survey instrument to investigate the key determining factors influencing cultural tourism intentions.

Data collection was conducted in Phuket, Thailand. The selection of Phuket as a data collection site was made because of its popularity as a tourist destination. Furthermore, Phuket has a rich culture that has both Thai and Chinese (Fujian) influences. UNESCO selected Phuket in 2015 as the first creative city in gastronomy for the ASEAN region. Hence, the local Thai government has been promoting this type of special interest tourism internationally. The province consists of three districts and each district has a distinctive culture and history that form a unique and interesting story. A variety of cultural tourist destinations such as

historical areas, architectural areas, and traditional and local food areas await tourist visits (Department of Cultural Promotion, 2017). The local historic district is located in the Thalang district. In addition, Phuket Old Town and Kathu districts are the locations where the old architecture of the town can be found. Homes and buildings in the old town are in the famous Sino-European architectural style. Phuket also has many ethnic groups, languages, and religious faiths. Most knowledge and traditions owe direct influence to language and traditions which have been passed from generation to generation for a long time until the present (Pakdeewong, 1999).

In this study, the collection of data took place at popular cultural attractions of Phuket including Phuket's famous Old Town between June and October 2018. Convenience non-probability sampling was employed in this research. This sampling method is widely used among scholars in various research areas, including tourism. This sampling approach was appropriate for this research due to the large number of tourists visiting Phuket. The samples of both investigation stages were both domestic and international tourists who defined themselves as cultural tourists or who travelled in Phuket due to cultural related purposes. The screening questions were asked to ensure the prospective tourists were travelling in Phuket for the main purpose of cultural tourism. These questions included asking subjects about local tourist attractions and activities they had visited or were planning to visit.

The semi-structured in-depth interview of 30 to 45 minutes was utilized in the first stage of the investigation. Both English and Thai versions of the interview guide were used. It consisted of three main sections: general information, key questions, and a reflection note, respectively. The key questions included travel motivation, tourist activities, and on-site travel problems. Fifteen domestic and international cultural tourists were approached. Data saturation was reached at the twelfth interview. Then the interview data was analyzed thematically and used to construct the survey instrument in the second stage of the study.

The quantitative stage was then conducted with survey questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section was cultural tourism experiences and the second part used 5-point Likert scale items for measuring cultural tourist behavior. Items in the first and the second sections were adapted from previous literature (e.g., Chen and Rahman, 2018) and the stage 1 interview findings. General information regarding the respondents was asked in the third section. The last section was an open-ended question to gain further opinions from the respondents, if any. The questionnaire was translated into Chinese and Thai and was checked using the translation-back-translation procedure. An expert panel was also conducted to meet validity and reliability requirements. A pre-test and pilot test of the questionnaire were conducted using tourists in Phuket. In the end, 150 usable pilot questionnaires were retained. The retrieved data was entered into statistical software. The written feedback from respondents about the questionnaire construction was analyzed. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) assisted with scale measurement (Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 2012). A series of multiple regression analyses were then conducted. The datasets, both from the pilot and the actual stage, was analyzed involving three steps: 1) data cleaning, missing value, and normality assessment; 2) principal component analysis (PCA) and internal consistency analysis; and 3) scale item and instrument adjustments. Common exploratory factor analyzes criteria were used in this study. Items are accepted if: (a) the coefficient appeared to be correlated at .30 or greater with at least one other variable; (b) the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ($p < .05$); and (c) the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) score and measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) values on the correlation matrix is .60 or greater (Hair et al., 2010; Hinkin, 1998). In addition, factors are deemed acceptable if: (a) the eigenvalues were greater than one; (b) the component contained at least three items that loaded highly on a single, appropriate factor; (c) the communality statistics for each item were high; and (d) the factor loadings for each item were significant (Hair et al., 2010; Hinkin, 1998). At this stage of the current research, item factor loadings of .45 or greater were deemed significant as explained in the work of Field (2009), Hair et al. (2010), Hinkin (1998), and Tabachnick and Fidell (2013).

In the pilot study, all 30 items were subjected to PCA, one construct at a time. Poorly performing items which did not meet the given criteria were removed one at a time. The results from the PCA led to 22 remaining items across five components satisfying the conditions at this stage. In the pilot test, the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the questionnaire constructs ranged from 0.70 to 0.86, which exceeded the recommended satisfactory level of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). Finally, 500 questionnaires were distributed, and 403 cases were usable for statistical analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings will be reported in two main sections. The first section discusses the in-depth interview findings. Then the quantitative findings will be explained.

Qualitative research findings

In the qualitative stage, 15 interviews of individuals were conducted in Phuket. Nine of them were female tourists. Ten of the informants were international tourists and five of them were Thai. Three interviews were with first-time tourists and the rest were with those who have previously visited Phuket. The range of their duration of stay was between three and 14 days. However, the duration of stay of the first visit and return visitors were different. The length of stay was four to seven days for first-time visitors, whereas the stay in Phuket for revisiting tourists extended up to two weeks. Respondents were aged from 26 to 59 years. Four of them were solo travelers whereas the rest of them were travelling with a companion. The profile of the interview participants is summarised in Table 2. All participants were given a pseudonym for the purpose of anonymity.

The qualitative data analysis reflects two key findings—cultural tourist motivation and cultural tourist activities. The open-ended session also explored issues tourists found while taking a cultural vacation in Phuket.

Cultural tourist motivation

It was found that the participants spoke of common travel motivations for Phuket trips. The common motivations included escape from daily routines, relaxation, and the safety of the destination. For example, *"I have been working hard for over 16 months. This is a good time for me to relax and escape from the usual environment"* (Informant 6).

The weather in Phuket also attracts tourists to Phuket. In this aspect, some tourists from western countries during their winter season expressed that, "In Melbourne this time of the year [July] is very cold. So, we make a trip here to Phuket" (Informant 5). Furthermore, the low cost of living in Phuket compared to the cost of living in the tourists' home countries influences their decisions to have a holiday in Phuket, especially those from overseas. For instance, *"I just finished the final exam. We decided to take a break here [in Phuket] during this time [June], it is not so expensive"* (Informant 3).

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Interview Participants

No	Age	Gender	Nationality	Occupation	Frequency of visits	Duration of stay (in days)	Travel companions
1	45	M	Swedish	Self-employed	6th	10	2
2	61	F	British	Secretary	1st	7	4
3	26	F	Thai	Student	5th	3	5
4	35	F	Australian	Homemaker	3rd	14	2
5	39	M	Australian	IT staff	10th	7	2
6	38	F	Australian	Self-employed	1st	4	1
7	43	F	British	Property salesperson	3rd	14	4
8	33	F	Canadian	Tour operator	5th	5	2
9	33	M	British	N/A	2nd	14	1
10	39	M	Malaysian	Tour guide	3rd	7	2
11	38	M	Australian	Tutor	12th	5	1
12	34	M	Thai	Teacher	7th	3	1
13	41	F	Thai	Officer	2nd	4	3
14	40	F	Thai	Officer	1st	4	3
15	59	F	Thai	Government officer	6th	3	2

In particular, the interview analysis provides insights into cultural tourist motivation. It is evident that the travel motivation of a cultural tourist, at least in Phuket, is related to seeking and learning new experiences, local authentic cultural exposure, and local unique cultural participation.

More than ten tourists in the interview session mention seeking and learning about a new culture. To create new experience as a motivation in Phuket is evident from the informants. For example,

> *hmmmm, I am the kind of person who likes to learn cultural differences, especially Asian cultures. I am British. My culture and your culture are different. I like to travel to a country where I can learn about new cultures. This is the beauty of travel.* (Informant 2)

> *Every time I am here, I see something new. I really like it, I like to learn about local lifestyles. I like to go to Burmese festivals. I like to see the local performances; I learn the original true story from them. This is inspiring to me.* (Informant 11)

A number of informants have spoken of *exposure to the local culture*. The Phuketian culture is experienced through local cuisine and local festivals such as the vegetarian festival. Such events are genuine and authentic. For instance, "*I am vegetarian. I have heard about the extraordinary Phuket vegetarian festival. This time, I have a chance to visit Phuket during the festival. So, here I am*" (Informant 4). Also,

> *I have read that Phuket is a city of gastronomy. Some of my friends also talked to me about local Phuket food. I love cooking, I love trying new types of food, especially when on vacations. In Phuket, I enjoy tasting Phuket food so much.* (Informant 11)

Furthermore, numerous tourists illustrate the notion of *unique cultural participation*. Phuket has a variety of cultural experiences available for cultural tourists, including authentic cuisine, museums, performing arts, local costumes, and historic architectural buildings. Therefore, a key cultural tourist motivation is related to having the opportunity to participate in cultural activities. For example, a person has the chance to both stay locally and to engage in local festivals and activities. For instance, "*To participate in the vegetarian festival, I get involved in doing good deeds. A friend of mine led me to help with the shrine for many days. I really enjoyed it. It was one of my great experiences*" (Informant 4). Another example is,

> *For me, cultural tourists will share wanting to travel to a particular country or a particular location that is unique. Unique cultures include some things that we are able to apply in our daily lives. Participation in such a culture is even more enjoyable for us. I like it when I woke up in the morning and went to the local market with the host family on a trip last year. At that time, I came alone and I learned a lot.* (Informant 4)

Cultural tourist activities

As well as cultural tourist motivations, the interview analysis provides insights into creative cultural activities in Phuket. First, the informants gave definitions of creative tourism from their points of view. In this study, the informants indicated that creative tourism refers to the type of tourism that creates unique experiences that create unique value for tourists. The evidence from the interview analysis is as follows: "*Creative is a positive term. For me, creative tourism is not about getting off a bus and taking a photo. It is something that involves novelty, uniqueness. In Phuket, I think it is peranakan (Chinese Settlers).*" (Informant 1). In addition,

> *The new generation does not like traveling the same way. My kids, for example, prefer to travel to new destinations. They seek new things to do. Otherwise, they would stay home. If you want these people to visit your destinations, you gotta differentiate your products.* (Informant 2)

> *Visitors must not destroy the community, not destroying what you have. The villagers must fully benefit from tourism. If tourism gives you the full benefit, you are probably ready to preserve the traditional culture. It is sustainable tourism management that will be of benefit to tourists like us too. ... Visitors can help to preserve the original items.* (Informant 5)

A definition of creative cultural tourist activities was also given. Many interviewees spoke of activities that focus on obtaining information that enhances and increases knowledge regarding Phuket's culture which is different from the local tourist's culture.

> *Activities that have been done since the antient era. Activities for feeding monks, listening to dharma, and studying dharma with monks at the temple grounds, discussing dharma with them, see the way of life of monks, what happens each day. What are the activities of the monk? I observed at Chalong Temple, I didn't see them. I don't know where they were. We know that somethings were misinterpreted by the local tour guide. Chinese tour guides will never understand Thai culture better than local Thais. So, I think you should be concerned about providing true and right information about history for visitors.* (Informant 5)

All informants also support that the cultural destination should promote some activities which are relevant to learning the genuine way of local life. The words "*authentic*" and "*genuine*" are often spoke of.

> *I would like to participate in traditional Phuket activities, such as waking up early to eat Dim Sum, Kanom Jeen, or something like this. We should adopt the traditional way of life, doing what locals do, sipping tea and chatting, staying with locals, learning how to fish, things like this.* (Informant 9)

These interview results, as well as the existing literature (e.g., Chen and Rahman, 2018), were then used to construct the survey instrument. In particular, the items relevant to travel motivation (i.e., unique cultural participation, and novel experience creation) were used in the survey instrument refinement.

Quantitative research findings

The qualitative findings inform the quantitative survey instrument, as mentioned in the previous sections. The questionnaire was distributed to cultural tourists in Phuket. As shown in Table 3, the research respondents in this stage of the study include more male respondents than females. More than half of them were 21 to 30 years old—indicating the cultural tourists in Phuket are young. Half of them were single and 44 percent of them were married. Nearly 70% were from Asian countries. Please note that, although the Chinese travelers are the main market of the destination, the traveler's region of origin is of interest to this study.

Table 3: The Profile of the Respondents

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	244	60.55
	Female	159	39.45
	Total	403	100.00
Age	20 or below	28	6.95
	21-30	228	56.58
	31-40	80	19.85
	41-50	40	9.93
	51-60	17	4.22
	Older than 60	10	2.48
	Total	403	100.00
Marital status	Single	209	51.99
	Married	178	44.28
	Separated	10	2.49
	Divorced	5	1.24
	Total	402	100.00
Country of origin	Asia	267	66.25
	Europe	62	15.38
	Africa	29	7.19
	North America	17	4.21
	Australia and Oceania	16	3.97
	South America	12	2.98
	Total	403	100.00
Religion	Buddhism	147	36.48
	No religion	98	24.32
	Christianity	97	24.07
	Islam	61	15.14
	Total	403	100.00
Education background	Master degree or higher	99	24.57
	Bachelor	203	50.37
	Certificate/diploma	34	8.44
	High school	67	16.63
	Total	402	100.00
Travel companion	Friends	128	31.76
	Spouse/partner	110	27.30
	Solo	70	17.37
	Family	65	16.13
	Group with travel agent	27	6.70
	Other	3	0.74
Travel Frequency	1 time	199	49.38
	2-5 times	168	41.69
	More than 5 times	36	8.93
Travel duration	Less than 7 days	139	34.49
	7-14 days	223	55.33
	More than 14 days	41	10.17
Information sources	Internet	278	68.98
	Word-of-mouth	145	35.98
	Travel magazine	98	24.32
	Other	23	5.71

The questionnaire item regarding the place of origin asked respondents to provide their home continent, not their country. Although Chinese version questionnaires were distributed, the number of surveys returned in Chinese was not a reliable guide to the number of Chinese respondents as a number of Chinese travelers accepted the English copy of the questionnaire. The respondents are Buddhists, not religious, Christian, and Islam, respectively. Half of them reported their education background as a bachelor's degree holder. In terms of travel patterns, cultural tourists in Phuket travel with friends and spouses, respectively. Nearly half of them were a first-time traveler, followed by those who have been in Phuket from two to five

times. The duration of stay was from seven to 14 days. Most of them sought travel information from the internet.

This study further found the popularity of cultural tourist attractions of Phuket. Table 4 illustrates that the top three attractions are those that were already known by tourists. The most popular attraction for cultural tourists visiting Phuket is Chalong temple. Chalong temple is a holy Buddhist temple which is also a place where local Phuketians fought against the Chinese rebellion in the past. The highly venerable historical monk who was an abbot of the temple was named Luang Pho Chaem. Visitors tour the temple to remember what had happened in the past and to make merit.

The second most popular cultural attraction in Phuket reported in this study is the Sino-Portugal buildings at Phuket old town. This attraction is a must-see. The characteristics of Sino-Portuguese architecture is a mix of European and Chinese styles—it is an example of colonial architecture. This walking street offers a visitor the chance to learn the traditional way of life of Phuketians. The next most popular place is the Thaihua museum. This Museum was established to commemorate the history of Chinese immigration to Phuket.

The list of cultural attractions in Table 4 suggests that there is a number of attractions to visit. Nevertheless, the existence of less popular attractions suggests that Phuket's local government and local tourism policy makers should promote these cultural attractions extensively. Several attractions, for example, Thalang cultural village (Baan Kanaan) and Bann Bangrong cultural village, provide opportunities for cultural tourists to experience authentic and traditional ways of local living.

Table 4: Frequency of Cultural Tourists Visiting Cultural Attractions

Tourist attraction	Frequency	Percentage
Chalong Temple	267	66.25
Sino-Portugal buildings at Phuket old town	210	52.11
Thaihua museum	88	21.84
Prathong Temple	83	20.60
Chinpracha House	54	13.40
Phuket Mining Museum	52	12.90
Kathu Chinese Temple	45	11.17
Thalang cultural village (Baan Kanaan)	45	11.17
Bann Bangrong cultural village	42	10.42
Thao Thep Kasattri Thao Sri Sunthon House	42	10.42
Old Phuket's Brewery	26	6.45
Tuk Kae Cape Cultural Village	23	5.71
Peranakan Museum	38	9.43
Muang Komalapat Temple	18	4.47

In addition, it was found that creative cultural activities, in Table 5, are of interest to tourists. The top three cultural activities discovered in this study are walking streets, local festivals, and traditional cooking classes, respectively. The cultural activity that received the least attention by the cultural tourists is Rong-Ngeng Dancing.

Table 5: Cultural Activity

Cultural activity	Frequency	Percentage
Walking street (Local Markets)	267	66.25
Local festivals	249	61.79
Traditional cooking classes	128	31.76
Local people's lifestyle	116	28.78
Observing culture	93	23.08
Historical museums	90	22.33
Praying to the Buddha	88	21.84
Thai boxing	85	21.09
Local Thai language learning	44	10.92
Rong-Ngeng Dancing	12	2.98
Others	5	1.24

A descriptive analysis further indicates the top three highlights of cultural tourism in Phuket. Local foods are rated as the most outstanding cultural tourism aspect. The following features are temples and the variety of cultural activities, as displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: Uniqueness of Cultural Tourism in Phuket

Attractiveness	Frequency	Percentage
Local foods	245	60.79
Temples	186	46.15
Variety of cultural activities	139	34.49
Long history	123	30.52
Old architecture	101	25.06
Traditional garments	65	16.13
Way of life	96	23.82
Others	10	2.48

The dataset, regarding cultural tourist behavior, is also analyzed involving three steps: 1) data cleaning, missing value, and normality assessment; 2) principal component analysis (PCA) and internal consistency analysis; and 3) scale item and instrument adjustments. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) assists with scale measurement (Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 2012). A series of multiple regression analyses were conducted. The PCA analysis suggests five components of the cultural tourist variables, which are local culture contact, valuable memories, unique cultural participation, novel experience creation, and creative cultural travel behavior intention—as shown in Table 7. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the questionnaire constructs ranged from 0.76 to 0.90, which exceeded the recommended satisfactory level of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 7: Components of the Cultural Tourist Variables

Items	Loading	Communalities	Eigen-values	% of variance explained	α
Local culture contact					
I like to learn about different customs, rituals and ways of life.	0.76	0.58	4.01	57.32	0.88
I prefer just to observe how this culture is different from my own culture.	0.74	0.55			
The more I see, hear, and sense about this culture, the more I want to experience it.	0.79	0.62			
I am very keen on finding out about this culture.	0.79	0.63			
I would like to join traditional activities with local people.	0.76	0.57			
I would like to get involved in cultural activities.	0.74	0.55			
Contact with this culture forms a very important part of my experience in this visit.	0.72	0.51			
Valuable memory					
I know I have other potentials which I can explore and develop.	0.75	0.56	2.03	76.77	0.76
I have wonderful memories of my visit to this place.	0.88	0.77			
I will remember the experience I have here.	0.84	0.70			
Unique cultural participation					
I was involved in something that I really liked doing.	0.72	0.52	2.49	62.14	0.80
I did something new and different.	0.82	0.66			
Participating in this activity gave me my life inspiration.	0.84	0.71			
I did something unique and memorable.	0.77	0.59			
Life fulfilment					
My tourism experience was enhanced because of my participation in cultural and tourist activities.	0.75	0.56	2.77	69.29	0.85
I enjoy taking a hands-on approach during my tourism experience.	0.86	0.73			
I have sought out situations that challenge my skills and abilities during this trip.	0.88	0.78			
I had a "once in a lifetime" experience.	0.84	0.70			
Cultural travel behavior intention					
I am loyal to this cultural destination.	0.73	0.53	2.69	67.28	0.84
I would encourage friends and relatives to visit this place.	0.87	0.75			
I would say positive things about this place.	0.87	0.75			
I would revisit this place in the future.	0.81	0.65			

Results of regression analysis indicate that the model is significant and three predictors (i.e., local culture contact, unique cultural participation, and novel experience creation) have a significant impact on creative cultural tourist behavioral intention in Phuket, explaining 45 percent of the variance (see Table 8).

Table 8: Regression Analysis of Predictors of Cultural Tourist Behavioral Intention

Predictor	β*	t	Sig.
Local culture contact	0.12	2.33	0.02
Valuable memory	0.02	0.35	0.73
Unique cultural participation	0.29	6.05	0.00
life fulfilment	0.38	8.15	0.00
F	83.71		
Model significance	0.00		
Adjusted R^2	0.45		

Note: β = Standardised regression coefficient; Significant factors are in boldface

Among the significant predictors, life fulfilment makes the strongest contribution to the model, followed by unique cultural participation and local culture contact, respectively. The findings show that cultural tourists in Phuket are likely to have strong intentions to either revisit or recommend Phuket to other cultural tourists when they are able to participate in authentic local culture. In addition, if cultural tourists are able to self-contact with the traditional experience, they are likely to either revisit or recommend the experience to others.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The purposes of this study were to explore cultural tourist behavior in Phuket and to measure the significant predictors of cultural tourist behavioral intention. A mixed methods research design was utilized. The qualitative stage extends the travel motivation literature regarding cultural tourists. It can be concluded that cultural tourist motivation relates to pull factors as suggested by Crompton (1979). Cultural travel motivation involves life fulfillment, local cultural engagement, and unique cultural participation. Furthermore, tourists look for experiences, relationships with, and attachments to a local community. This finding supports the previous literature in that cultural tourists seek authenticity, social activity, and entertainment (Ramkissoon and Uysal, 2010; Cetin and Bilgihan, 2016; Suntikul et al., 2020). Such behavior is consistent with the creative tourism concept, a current popular type of tourism. That is, tourists look for authenticity, participation, and experience.

The research findings also support Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Seeking novelty and unique cultural participation are explored. Such needs may occur after individuals already fulfil their basic needs of physiological, safety, and love and belonging. In terms of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, it may be able to conclude that cultural tourist motivation is congruent with the self-esteem and self-actualization need. Such levels of need refer to the realization of one's full potential. When individuals meet the love and belonging need, they already have friendship, sense of connection, and intimacy. Therefore, it is time for them to seek further enrichment. This need may involve seeking novelty and participating in other cultures of interests.

Factors influencing travel intention are investigated in the quantitative stage. The research findings support the existing literature (e.g., Altunel and Erkurt, 2015; Ali et al., 2016; Hung et al., 2016; Chen and Rahman, 2018) that cultural participation has a positive impact on behavioral intention. The current research further extends the literature in that local contact and new cultural experiences also affect cultural travel intentions. However, valuable memories were a non-significant factor of behavioral intention for cultural tourists. The findings suggest cultural tourists seek actual participation where they can experience something new and authentic, rather than only observe and remember.

As well as the theoretical contributions, this research further provides practical implications for various organizations. First of all, tourism practitioners can apply the findings to promote and attract cultural tourists to visit their destinations by emphasizing its creativeness. The research findings provide insights into various creativity aspects of visiting a destination. Tourism organizations should ensure authenticity and tradition when offering experiences to tourists, especially cultural tourists who are likely looking for creativity during their visits. In addition, the people in this special tourist market need to actually participate and experience something unique that is offered by the destination. For example, a Phuketian style wedding reception can be promoted to attract a cultural tourist.

Furthermore, these research findings are beneficial for tourist attraction businesses. Creative cultural tourism activities should be emphasized. Tourist attractions can provide a number of activities that are of interest to a cultural tourist. In this research, tourists mentioned various types of activities, such as religious-related events, local community lifestyles, and local food activities. The aspects such activities have in common are uniqueness and tradition. Such activities give tourists the opportunity to participate in and directly experience the culture. For example, the baba-peranakan way of life can be engaged while in Phuket. A

Phuketian style cooking class providing to a cultural tourist is also a way the tourist can engage with the authentic local culture.

The interview findings suggest practical implications for tour guides. Authenticity, novel experience, and actual participation are what cultural tourists pay attention to. Therefore, tourism organizations and tour guide associations should ensure that they meet the tourists' needs and what they are keen to know. Therefore, tour guides should be reliable and credible sources of local cultural information for this tourist segment. Perhaps, tour guides should be re-trained periodically to refresh knowledge and to improve their skills.

One of the significant factors for this tourist market when considering a vacation is seeking novel experiences. Therefore, policy makers should consider providing opportunities for cultural tourists, especially the young tourist segment, to engage more with local activities and events in order to encourage the tourists to learn more about local challenges at such destinations. In addition, tourism personnel, including the staff at a tourist attraction, should prepare "once in a lifetime" activities for tourists which they could not experience anywhere else. For instance, elephants are a symbol of Thailand. So, activities demonstrating the elephants' way of life should be offered to a tourist.

Tourism policy makers should also be concerned about the concept of co-creation. This concept allows a tourist to create a travel activity based on his or her own interest. Also, co-creation assists a business in strengthening its relationship between the firm and its customers. Table 5, Table 6 and Table 8 suggest participation and co-creation concepts. Table 5 shows cultural activities that reflect cultural tourists' interests while Table 6 displays the uniqueness of cultural tourism in Phuket. Furthermore, Table 8 illustrates why cultural tourists visit Phuket. For instance, tourists rated the walking streets as the most popular activity that they engaged in at the destination. The walking streets in Phuket offer a variety of events tourists can enjoy and several of those activities need collaboration between two parties. Tourists are able to introduce their tailor-made activities. A number of such events allowed tourists the opportunity to work with locals, for example, natural tie dye cloth activities and batik painting. Such activities provide tourists the opportunity to create their own items while learning about the unique local lifestyle. These activities promote the concept of co-creation where tourists can initiate an idea of their preferred tourist activities and locals are able to support such ideas. A cooking class is also a co-creation task. A number of cultural tourists visit a destination for a cooking class and participate in engaging tasks. A tourist and a local are then required to cooperate in order to cook. For example, they will plan together, at least, what to cook and the tastes they are looking for.

In addition, tourists should be offered opportunities to engage with locals in unique experiences. For example, Phuket is one of the most famous island destinations where fishing is a method of living. In this case, tourism organizations should work with fishing villagers and provide a tourist package to stay and learn how to fish in the sea using the local style. Furthermore, such tourists and local fishers will help protect the coastal environment, for example, beach cleanup and coral buoy installation.

Some types of tourism activities can provide tourists opportunities to experience local culture. For example, Buddhism is the key religion of Thailand. Therefore, a cultural tourist can engage in some Buddhist activities that co-create between monks and tourists. At the same time, tourists are able to learn local culture. For example, a meditation course, a work-life-balance class, and a mindfulness course. Such activities indicate the co-creation concept between host and tourists.

However, co-creation is not only about hosts and tourists working together. A local community can also apply the co-creation concept and create value for a visitor. Collaboration between locals in a community should be practiced. One group in the community can offer a home stay, while another group can provide authentic local activities. Transportation and local cuisine can be done by the other teams in such a community. However, the concept of local cultural preservation should be ensured to satisfy this tourist segment.

Despite a mixed method research, some limitations are evident in this study. The current research was conducted during the off-peak season in Phuket. A cultural tourist may also travel more during the high season. Therefore, this research results may not apply to the whole cultural tourist segment. In addition, this is an investigation into cultural travel behavior intention. Predictors of travel intentions might be different from actual behavior.

Future research is suggested. An investigation into cultural tourist behavior should be conducted during peak season at a destination to generalize the current research findings. In addition, other segments of special interest tourists may be studied in order to understand their behavior. For example, community-based tourists prefer to travel and experience local ways of life. Therefore, they may be considered as a group of cultural tourists. Although Phuket is one of the world-class tourist destinations where various tourism products and services are well-blended and distinctive, the idea of including other provinces within the Andaman Region of Thailand would make the result of this study more generalizable. Exploration in these areas may provide additional insights to the tourism literature. Longitudinal research could also be performed to add to the understanding of actual cultural tourist behavior.

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