



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
**BUSINESS AND ADVANCED
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**



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of
AU Hybrid International Conference 2024
**Entrepreneurship and Sustainability
in the Digital Era**

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Assumption University of Thailand
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**BUSINESS AND ADVANCED
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

Au Hybrid International Conference 2024
Entrepreneurship and Sustainability in the Digital Era
Assumption University of Thailand
April 26, 2024

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AU HYBRID INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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ABOUT ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY (AU)

The St. Gabriel Foundation, a worldwide organization founded in France in 1705, is responsible for the establishment and administration of Assumption University. The Foundation has been dedicated to education and philanthropic activities in Thailand for more than 100 years and it now operates 14 educational institutions providing all levels of education. Assumption School of Business was initially founded in 1969, and in 1972 it became Assumption Business Administration College (ABAC). In 1975 the Ministry of University Affairs accredited ABAC and later in 1990 it was accredited as a fully-fledged university, and renamed as Assumption University (AU). The University is administered by a Council which takes policy initiatives and provides guidance for long-term planning and the formulation of control procedures.

Today, AU is considered the leading private university in Thailand in the fields of Business, Management and Information Technology as demonstrated by the placement of many of its graduates in key management and technological positions in industry, government, banking and multinational conglomerates worldwide.

The University's curriculum is patterned after the American semester hour credit system and most textbooks are similar to those used in international universities. Graduates receive an education that is both globally marketable and flexible, leading to highly productive careers within the various sectors of society from which the students come and to which they aspire to be.

CAMPUSES

Assumption University maintains three campuses: the original campus located at Hua Mak, the new campus at Suvarnabhumi, and the City Campus, which is located on the 14th floor of the ZEN Department Store @ Central World in the center of Bangkok.

Hua Mak Campus

The original campus is a compact, vertical campus comprising 17 buildings with the tallest having a total of 16 floors. A small lake surrounded by lush gardens and seating is a focal point of beauty and tranquility. Food, convenience and service shops to support student needs surround the campus. This will become the home of postgraduate faculties in the near future.

The Suvarnabhumi Campus

The Suvarnabhumi Campus, constructed as a "University in a Park", comprises 200 acres of a beautifully landscaped assembly of mixed architecture surrounded by lush, tropical gardens and trees. Designed to host the university's undergraduate degree programs, it offers everything: a meeting/exhibition center, hotel, non-coeducational dormitories, a magnificent chapel, a museum, three academic halls, and much more.

The centerpiece of the campus is the Cathedral of Learning, a 39-storey tower which houses student support services, the library, reception halls, seminar rooms and offices. Transportation between the two campuses is convenient and inexpensive. Shuttles run throughout the day between various points in Bangkok and the Suvarnabhumi Campus



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ABOUT THE BSSS INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES (BSSS-IAS)

BSSS Institute of Advanced Studies promoted by the Archdiocese of Bhopal, which stands in a responsible position to meet the educational requirements of the changing scenario constantly striving to update itself and accordingly respond to the needs of all concerned stakeholders. The BSSS IAS will emerge as a top Professional Management Institution in Central India and will play a pivotal role in professional education as a whole in the coming years and determine the path of development as the institute of excellence and of national and international importance.

It envisages to meet the demand for the trained human resource with managerial & analytical skills in the areas of business management, and development management through regular educational courses and also to update the knowledge and managerial skills of the serving professionals in the above areas through short-term Management Development Programmes & Executive Management programmes.



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ABOUT RAJAGIRI CENTRE FOR BUSINESS STUDIES

Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (RCSS) was the first institution established under the banner of Rajagiri Vidyapeetham. Envisaged as a centre of excellence in the field of higher education, RCSS currently provides high quality education, research, training and consultancy in the area of Social Work, Management, Computer Science and Library Science. RCSS began as the Department of Social Work at Sacred Heart College, Thevara in 1955.

Initially the Department was offering one-year Diploma in Social Services (DSS), affiliated to Madras University, subsequently two year Masters Degree programme in Social Work (MSW) with specialization in Community Development, Medical & Psychiatric Social Work, Family and Child Welfare, Social Work Administration and Personnel Management and Industrial Relations was introduced. The Department of Social Work was relocated to Hill Campus at Kalamassery, in 1967 and in the year 1980 the Department was elevated to the status of an independent college affiliated to Kerala University. As per the recommendations of the University Grants Commission (UGC), in 1984 the specialization of Personnel Management and Industrial Relations was delinked from MSW course and was offered as a full fledged two year post graduate management programme, M.A (PM&IR).

This programme was later revamped and rechristened as Master of Human Resource Management (MHRM). To meet the growing demand for quality management education in Kerala the College offered Master of Business Administration (MBA), with affiliation to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam in 1995. This was followed by Rajagiri International School for Education and Research (RISER) in 1998, three years postgraduate programme in Computer Applications (MCA) in 2001, Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) in 2002, and Bachelor of Library Science (BLiSc) in 2005. From the Hill Campus in Kalamassery the Departments of Human Resource Management and Business Administration of RCSS was shifted to the sprawling and picturesque Valley Campus in Kakkanad in 2001.



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ABOUT H.R. COLLEGE OF COMMERCE & ECONOMICS, HSNC UNIVERSITY

It was the historic day of June 20, 1960 that saw the doors of Bombay's newest College of Commerce & Economics open wide at dawn. The city, back then, wasn't so populated, and the Principal wondered if he would have enough students to fill his classes.

History shows that classes filled up soon enough! Located on 123 Dinshaw Wachha Road, at the intersection of the road that faces the University of Mumbai, with its imposing clock tower, the College was founded on idealism.

Seth Hassaram Rijhumal Principal H.C. Malkani Principal K.M. Kundnani, Jyotu Kundnani with Principal H.C. Malkani While the seed of what is today known as the Hassaram Rijhumal College of Commerce & Economics was planted in Hyderabad Sind (formerly undivided India), in 1945, and it was, perhaps, the first commerce college there, although another commerce college was also started in the same year in Karachi, the fledgling Institution had to be hastily forsaken in the storm of Partition.

Uprooted and felled as their spirit was, the foresighted and feisty founding fathers of the College were not about to give up easily, and certainly not in their mission to create an educational institution of lasting value once they migrated to Mumbai (then Bombay) and attempted to restart their lives again. The trials were tremendous, but so was the tenacity of the many mighty men who were determined to germinate this institutional oak again.

One such visionary was Principal Kundnani who, along with Barrister Hotchand Advani, reconstituted the Hyderabad Sind National Collegiate (HSNC) Board in Mumbai, and set about restarting the two colleges the Board already ran in Sind, pre-Partition.

One was the D.G. National College, which was the very first college founded by the HSNC Board in Sind in 1921, and of which Principal Kundnani was Principal at the time of Partition. The second was the College of Commerce & Economics, started with the financial support of the merchant Bhaiband community of Hyderabad.

An interesting, and not entirely coincidental, fact is that when it first started in 1945, H.C. Malkani was appointed as its Principal - and when the College restarted in Mumbai in 1960, the mantle yet again fell upon the industrious H.C. Malkani, to take on the 'principal' role in mentoring and remaking the destiny of an institution that was so closely linked to his own! It was almost as though the two, the College and Principal H.C. Malkani, were a match made with divine exactitude that not even the ruinous Partition could rent asunder.

In the intervening years, between his two stints as Principal of the College, a lot had transpired. Most significantly, the map of the Sub Continent was irrevocably altered, and with it the lives of thousands of dispossessed Sindhis - all of who had to run helter-skelter overnight.



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ABOUT INDUKAKA IPCOWALA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT (IIIM), CHAROTAR UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CHARUSAT)

Indukaka Ipcowala Institute of Management (IIIM), a constituent of Charotar University of Science and Technology (CHARUSAT) has been established under patronage from IPCO Industries- a business house of repute. IIIM started imparting management education from the academic year 2006-07 through the MBA Programme approved by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The Institute has been striving to make the education contemporary and relevant to the current and future global needs.

Vision

To emerge as an eminent management institute for meeting the needs of society by creation and dissemination of world-class knowledge

Mission

To develop leaders with excellent entrepreneurial and managerial qualities

Our Quality Policy

CHARUSAT is committed to quality in all its endeavors like teaching-learning, research and extension; to foster an intellectual culture; and develop graduates for a purpose of life, Service.



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MESSAGE FROM ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY

The Theme of the International Conference on Entrepreneurship and Sustainability in the Digital Era (ICESDE) truly reflects the principle of the upcoming Thailand's Ninth National Policy and Strategy for Research (2017 – 2021). From its current principle emphasizing the quality research works for balanced and sustainable development, the new national policy and strategy for research will soon focus on situating Thai educational system onto the community of intellectuality and learning, congruent with the country's economic, socio-political, and cultural mechanism. Such should be managed with efficient manners and potentials, competitive in the international arena.

As the Kingdom's pioneer of international learning module, Assumption University has always been aware of what academic and research works would bring to the institute and the community alike. Not only does a creation of research study form a principal mission of an institute, it also paves ways toward academic innovation. Creation of academic research means opportunity and inspiration for all concerned to act and react towards dynamism of their consumption, interaction at home and abroad, through which digital culture intertwines within ones' livelihood. The gathering of academics' members, graduate students, and scholars alike at this conference therefore bring about greater learning stages and true exchanging of knowledge principles.

Assumption University wishes to extend a warm welcome to all participants of this conference at our Hua Mak Campus. Our appreciation goes to the participating institutes, organizations, students and committees who make this event possible. May this conference lead to broader benefits for individuals, organizations, and society at large in a truly sustainable outcome.



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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN OF GRADUATE SCHOOL ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY



It is indeed a great privilege for the Graduate School of Business, Assumption University, to host the International Conference on Entrepreneurship and Sustainability in the Digital Era (ICESDE). The conference marks not only an important milestone of Assumption University, but also a significant event on which selective papers from both domestic institutes and international institutes would be presented and discussed. Such works reflect great efforts, endurance and integration of comprehensive perspectives.

We wish to extend our appreciation and our heartfelt thanks go to the scholars, professors, experts, and faculty members for their insightful selection of the research papers and for their suggestions. The Graduate School of Business owes it a great deal to the kindness, generosity, and guidance of the Executives of Assumption University, Deans and Directors of all schools concerned with the making of the conferences. A big thank is offered to all sub-committee members and the staff for their contribution and tireless assistance to have made this event possible.

As an interdisciplinary forum, the conference brings together scholars, practitioners, and graduate students from the region and beyond to discuss their research findings on how environmental- friendly and socially- inclusive growth and success can be sustained in the digital era, in Thailand in particular as it recently embarked on Industry 4.0. Keynote and feature speakers will provide a variety of perspectives on the conference themes. I strongly wish that such creation of new knowledge at this forum—be it from the papers being presented or from the exchange and discussion over the presentations—would produce the added values on our mutual quest for knowledge, thereby benefiting our respective communities and countries.

K. Phothikitti

Asst. Prof. Dr. Kittu Phothikitti
Dean, Graduate Studies
Dean, Graduate School of Business and Advanced Technology
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ABOUT ICESDE 2024

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www.auconference.au.edu

The AU Hybrid International Conference 2024 on “Entrepreneurship & Sustainability in Digital Era” is an annual international conference, The 2024 conference is under the theme of **“People Centric Knowledge in Intelligence World”** The conference articles are double-blind peer-reviewed, and the articles are published as conference proceedings. Articles are from different spectrums of academic fields and are accepted based on their originality, importance, interdisciplinary interest, timeliness, accessibility, elegance, and unforeseen conclusions. The conference subthemes are:

- [1] Organization Development
- [2] Finance: Finance, Accounting, Financial Economics
- [3] Economics: Econometrics, Applied Economics, Development Economics
- [4] Business: Management, Marketing, Decision Sciences, Information Technology
- [5] Social Sciences, Multidisciplinary: others

Mission

The AU Hybrid International Conference 2024 on “Entrepreneurship & Sustainability in Digital Era” is an annual international conference, 2024 conference is under the theme of “People Centric Knowledge in Intelligence World” and thrives to be a leading yearly platform for publishing research works of professors, practitioners, and students. In contrast to traditional academic periodicals, the conference serves as a forum for furthering the discussion of important regional and global topics.

Call for Papers

Scholarly research papers are invited to The AU Hybrid International Conference 2024 on “Entrepreneurship & Sustainability in Digital Era” under the theme of “People Centric Knowledge in Intelligence World”, on April, 26 2024.

Blind Peer Review

The AU Hybrid International Conference 2024 on “Entrepreneurship & Sustainability in Digital Era” under the theme of “People Centric Knowledge in Intelligence World” uses blind reviews, meaning the authors' identities are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. To facilitate this, please include the following



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Types of Paper for AU Hybrid International Conference 2024:

Full Article: This should describe new and/or carefully investigated findings and research methods should be given in sufficient detail for others to verify the work. Articles should be 5,000 - 8,000 words long to describe and interpret the work. All full articles are peer-reviewed by a minimum of 2 referees.

Conference Participation Fees (CPF):

AU Hybrid International Conference 2024 on " Entrepreneurship & Sustainability in Digital Era" under the theme of "People Centric Knowledge in Intelligence World" is accessible for free on the Internet. Yet, the electronic proceedings publication process involves costs including setup and maintenance of the publication infrastructure, conducting a conference, processing of manuscripts through peer-reviews, editing, publishing, maintaining the scholarly record, and archiving. To cover these costs, the conference depends on CPF also called Publication Fee of 2,000 THB for Thai participation, 70 USD for International participants & 500 THB for current students of GS-BATM per article, so CPF is mandatory (the mandatory policy of CPF has been enforced since 2019).

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***Au Hybrid International Conference 2024
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April 26, 2024***

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Conference and Presentations

CONFERENCE AGENDA

AU Hybrid International Conference 2024 “Entrepreneurship and Sustainability in the Digital Era”

Assumption University of Thailand

April 26, 2024

09:00 – 10.30 Opening Ceremony

- Assumption Anthem and House Keeping announcement
- **Speech by the Asst. Prof. Dr. Kitti Phothikitti**, Dean of Graduate School of Business, Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand (In person) (10 min max)
- **Speech by Rev Fr. Jomi Panithas Anthony** - Dean of BSSS-IAS, Bhopal, India - Conference Co-host (In person) (10 min max)
- **Speech by the Rev. Fr. Dr. Francis Sebastian** CMI is the Assistant Director of Rajagiri Business School (RBS)-Conference Co-host (Online) (10 min max)
- **Speech by the Dr. Reshma Sable**, Dean of, Indukaka Ipcowala Institute of Management (IIIM), Charotar University of Science and Technology (CHARUSAT), Changa, Gujarat, India) - Conference Co-host (In person) (10 min max)
- **Speech by Dr. Pooja Ramchandani**, Principal, H.R. College of Commerce & Economics. HSNC University, Mumbai, India (Online) (10 min max)

10.05 - 10.50 Key Note Speaker

- **Lukas Michel** Management Insights (Online). **Theme : People-centric Management: A Systemic Perspective.**



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10.55 - 11.25 Speaker

- **Rungnapa Charoenrungsiri, BBA, MBA (Onsite) Theme: Who are the right talents for the Organization?**

11.30 – 12.00 Speaker

- **David Aldridge, B.Sc., MBA. (Onsite) Theme: Embracing the digital shift: Organizational impacts to expect 2025 and beyond**

Lunch Break

13:30 - 15:30 Paper Presentation Sessions (Five Concurrent Sessions)

- Venue: Assumption Room (Virtual)
- Venue: De Montfort Room (Virtual)
- Venue: Martin De Tours Room (in person)
- Venue: St. Gabriel Room (in person)
- Venue: St. Louis Room (in person)

10.00 - 11.00 Panel Discussion on Gender and work experiences (Social perspectives)

Moderator: Dr. Phylis Lan Lin

Panelists:

- Prof. Phylis Lan Lin
- Dr. May Darli
- Ms. Kamaljit Kaur Gravel,
- Prof. Amber Han, School of Foreign Languages, the Institute of Disaster Prevention
- Ms. Mengi Liu,
- Dr. Vijayakumar Parameswaran Unnithan
- Dr. Angela Na Thin Zar No
- Dr. Nandy Lynn



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CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS
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Factors Influencing Consumers' Purchase Intention in Livestreaming E-Commerce in China

Junhang Zhang ¹, Yi Luo ², Xioadi Zhao ³

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this research is to examine the significant influence of government regulation, GDP growth, platform marketing strategy, parasocial relationship, trust, and consumer confidence on purchase intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – This research uses primary and secondary data collection methods to analyze the factors influencing live streaming e-commerce in China. The data was gathered from 401 respondents with livestreaming e-commerce shopping experience. To conduct a new conceptual framework, this research referred to five previous theoretical frameworks. **Findings** – This study intends to examine the factors influencing purchase intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China. The findings of this research demonstrated that government regulations, platform marketing strategy, and parasocial relationships have a significant influence on trust; GDP growth has a significant influence on consumer confidence; trust and consumer confidence have a significant influence on purchase intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China. **Research Limitations/Implications** – The main limitations of this research include limited samples and overlooked variables. Due to time constraints, the sample collection limitations may not fully represent diverse behaviors. The minimal variable differences and high standard deviation, possibly due to outliers, can affect the reliability. The model's low explanatory power, notably regarding GDP Growth's impact on Consumer Confidence, suggests a need for a more sophisticated approach. These caution against definitive conclusions, highlighting the need for delving into additional variables and employing a more complex model for a comprehensive understanding of Chinese consumer behavior in the context of live-streaming e-commerce. **Originality/value** – This research focuses on significant factors influencing live streaming e-commerce in China.

Keywords – Livestreaming, e-commerce, purchase intention, social media, China

JEL classification code – M31, M38, L81

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of study

The landscape of livestreaming e-commerce in China has undergone a transformative journey. According to Intelligence Research Group's 2023 report, China's livestreaming e-commerce has evolved through four distinct

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developmental phases: The Beginning Phase (2016), Exploring Phase (2017), Growing Phase (2018), and Booming Phase (2019 to present). The latter surged dramatically under the influence of COVID-19 and Chinese government policies, with competition getting more and more intensified over time.

Presently, China's livestreaming e-commerce industry chain has been progressively refining, with stakeholders across the supply chain – from upstream suppliers to midstream livestream service providers and downstream consumers – collaboratively propelling the expansion of the market scale. Notably, between 2017 and 2020, China's livestreaming e-commerce market grew by more than 280%, from \$3bn to approximately \$171bn (McKinsey, 2021). In 2022, the user base of online livestreaming in China reached 751 million, constituting 70.3% of the entire Chinese internet population. The top five livestreaming platforms for live shopping are Taobao, JD.com, Douyin (Tiktok), Xiaohongshu (the Little Red Book or RED in English), and Kuaishou, with products ranging from jewelry and cosmetics to cars and real estate.

On the global stage, China is the largest e-commerce market, generating almost 50 percent of the world's transactions (International Trade Administration, 2023). Such exponential growth solidifies the industry's significance and underscores its pervasive influence within the digital landscape of China and worldwide.

Existing research predominantly focuses on dissecting the impact of various elements within livestream formats and the different facets of livestreaming rooms on e-commerce transactions, as well as the economic implications of livestreaming e-commerce. However, there remains a lack of comprehensive analysis that delves into the broader spectrum of the influence of policy, economic, social, and social media factors on consumer purchasing intentions within livestreaming spaces. Addressing this gap in academic inquiry forms the fundamental objective of this study.

The significance of this research lies in filling the void evident in current academic investigations, providing

valuable insights for practitioners in China's burgeoning livestreaming e-commerce sphere. Given China's leading position in the global livestreaming e-commerce market (International Trade Administration, 2023), this research might also offer indicative insights into the potential trajectory of livestreaming e-commerce development in other countries.

Our study aims to construct a conceptual framework based on existing analyses of the impact of Chinese Government Regulations, GDP Growth, Parasocial Relationship, and Platform Marketing Strategy on Consumer Confidence and Trust building within livestreaming environments, and whether Trust and Consumer Confidence have an influence on consumer's Purchase Intentions. Leveraging this framework, we will delineate independent and dependent variables and design a survey instrument to examine if the identified factors indeed influence purchasing intentions during livestream sessions. This endeavor seeks to validate and elucidate the factors that potentially shape consumer's Purchase Intention within livestreaming e-commerce scenarios.

1.2 Problem statements

The emergence and rapid growth of livestreaming e-commerce in China have catalyzed a transformative consumer landscape; however, existing research predominantly focuses on dissecting the micro-level impacts within livestream formats rather than comprehensively exploring the macro-level determinants influencing consumer purchase intentions. This gap in understanding inhibits a holistic grasp of the multifaceted factors – encompassing policy, economic, societal, and digital realms – shaping consumer behavior within livestreaming contexts.

Consequently, this study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the complex interplay of these influential factors to comprehensively delineate their impact on consumer purchase intention during livestreaming sessions in China. By addressing this gap, this research not only aims to contribute significantly to the existing body of

knowledge surrounding livestreaming e-commerce but also endeavors to lay the groundwork for further in-depth investigations into the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior within digital retail environments.

The ethical approach towards this investigation involves the conscientious collection and analysis of data while safeguarding participant privacy and ensuring the responsible dissemination of findings. Moreover, this research aligns with the researcher's interests, skills, and available resources, facilitating a methodical and rigorous exploration of this pertinent issue in the burgeoning landscape of Chinese livestreaming e-commerce.

1.3 Objectives of study

A research study designed to validate the causal relationship between factors such as Government Regulations, GDP Growth, Parasocial Relationship, Platform Marketing Strategy and consumer Purchase Intention in China's livestreaming e-commerce landscape had the following objectives:

1. To identify the influence of Government Regulations on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.
2. To identify the influence of GDP Growth on Consumer Confidence in livestreaming e-commerce in China.
3. To identify the influence of Platform Marketing Strategy on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.
4. To identify the influence of Parasocial Relationship on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.
5. To identify the influence of consumers' Trust on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.
6. To identify the influence of Consumer Confidence on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

1.4 Research questions

1. Do Government Regulations have a significant influence on consumers' Trust in e-commerce livestreaming?
2. Does GDP Growth have a significant influence on Consumer Confidence in livestreaming e-commerce in China?
3. Does Platform Marketing Strategy have a significant influence on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China?
4. Does Parasocial Relationship have a significant influence on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China?
5. Does consumer Trust have a significant influence on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China?
6. Does Consumer Confidence have a significant influence on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China?

1.5 Significance of the study

After going through the developmental phases of Beginning, Exploring, and Growing, China's livestreaming e-commerce is under the Booming Phase. Despite a gradually complete and refined industry chain and an ever-growing livestreaming user population, the competition among livestreaming e-commerce service providers is increasingly fierce (Zhang et al., 2021). Under such circumstances, what factors would influence Chinese consumers' intention to purchase during livestreaming sessions?

The previous research primarily focuses on dissecting the stimuli within the livestreaming space, such as live streamers' characteristics (Meng & Lin, 2023), the hedonic value provided by visual content and social interactions (Ng et al., 2023), etc., along with examining the economic impact of livestreaming e-commerce. However, a noticeable gap persists, neglecting a comprehensive exploration of the

wider array of influences encompassing policy, economic dynamics, societal aspects, and the role of Platform Marketing Strategy on shaping consumer Purchase Intention within livestreaming realms.

The significance of this research is underscored by its role in filling this evident void within current academic inquiries. By delving deeper into the multifaceted factors influencing consumer's purchase intention during livestreaming in China, this study offers valuable insights in understanding the rapidly evolving domain of livestreaming e-commerce.

Such insights also hold practical significance for future livestreaming e-commerce practitioners in China. The findings can potentially inform strategic decisions and operational tactics for businesses and marketers operating in this industry. Moreover, considering China's leading position in the global livestreaming e-commerce market, the findings of this research may offer valuable lessons and predictive cues for the potential trajectory of livestreaming e-commerce development in other countries.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Theories related to each variable

2.1.1 Government Regulations

For a long time, China lacked specific laws governing the e-commerce domain, leading to industry issues such as “spamming” and “big data discrimination”, placing consumers in a relatively disadvantaged position during e-commerce transactions and causing abnormal development within the industry. Government Regulations stand as a common method to ensure the protection of consumer rights (Xu et al., 2010). In the context of e-commerce, Beyari (2021) found that some countries could not implement e-commerce effectively due to lack of trust and confidence of customers in online transactions and weak laws and regulations to protect them. Given that businesses prioritize

profit and many consumers lack extensive privacy knowledge, the robust enforcement of regulations stands as a crucial measure in safeguarding consumer privacy online and mitigating their concerns (Chang et al., 2018). In the context of livestreaming e-commerce, Shou et al. (2023) examined two potential benefits of Government Regulations, namely improving the marketing environment and restricting the behavior of SMIs and found a significant influence. Perceived benefits were key predictors of consumer attitude toward online shopping, such as the intention to purchase (Al-Debei et al. 2015).

2.1.2 GDP Growth

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of all goods and services produced over a specific time period within a country's borders. It is one of the most widely used indicators of economic performance, often to determine whether an economy is growing or experiencing a recession. (Kramer, L., 2023). According to Callen (2023), an increase in real GDP is interpreted as a sign that the economy is doing well, employment is likely to be increasing as companies hire more workers for their factories and people have more money in their pockets. There is a stable dynamic relationship among economic growth, consumers' income and consumer consumption, in the way that economic growth and increases in consumers' income will drive household consumption (Bai et al., 2018). If households see an increase in their personal wealth, it will increase in confidence to spend, borrow and take risks (Pettinger, 2018). In the novel index of households' macroeconomic environment constructed by Malovaná et al. (2021), GDP, among all 11 indexes, is used to calculate a more accurate Consumer Confidence Index.

2.1.3 Platform Marketing Strategy

According to Dabholkar and Sheng (2011), greater consumer participation in using online product recommendation agents (RAs) leads to more satisfaction, greater trust, and higher purchase intentions, related to the RA and its recommendations. Since the debut of China's

livestreaming e-commerce in 2016, livestreaming has been used as a marketing tool (Ding et al., 2020) to provide direct and efficient communication to reduce information asymmetry (Wongkitrungrueng et al., 2020). Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2018) further examined the relationships among the customers' perceived value of live streaming, customer trust and engagement. Livestreaming provides online shoppers with a true three-dimensional experience in the virtual network environment and increases user adhesion and trust (Li, 2020).

2.1.4 Parasocial Relationship

A Parasocial Relationship is one that develops over time between a media user and a mediated performer (Dibble et al., 2016). It is a one-sided relationship typically exemplified by a celebrity-follower relationship where the follower/media user extends emotional energy, interest, and time, and the celebrity/mediated performer is completely unaware of the user's existence. However, reciprocal relationships are enabled through social media interaction, which potentially helps the followers form long-term socioemotional attachments to the celebrity (Kurtin et al., 2018). In the livestreaming context, sellers, aka. streamers, promote products through real-time video broadcasts where the focal point is the guidance presented during these broadcasts, which includes recommendations put forth by the streamers (Zhang et al., 2023). Park and Lin (2020) identified that consumer potential behavior is impacted by the characteristics of celebrity-streamers. Sun et al. (2021) further suggested that consumer purchase intention is influenced by the interactivity of Internet celebrities.

2.1.5 Trust

Trust is defined as "the expectation held by the consumer that the service provider is dependable and can be relied on to deliver on its promises" (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002). In the context of e-commerce, trust in a merchant reduces the perceived risk of an online transaction. Hong

and Cha (2013) found that efforts made by online merchants to lessen certain types of risk will first improve consumer trust, and then ultimately, increase consumer's intention to buy online. Men et al. (2023) found that consumers' perception of the live streamers' credibility positively affects their purchase intention and ultimately influences their purchase behavior. Zhou & Tong (2022) found that emotional trust and perceived emotional value could be regarded as mediating variables to stimulate consumers' purchase intention in livestreaming e-commerce. In addition, trust is an important factor in building long-term customer relationships and significantly influences the user's intention to purchase specific products and services (Chen et al., 2021).

2.1.6 Consumer Confidence

Consumer Confidence is the degree of consumers' feelings about current and future economic conditions of the economy (Chatterjee & Dinda, 2015). Consumer Confidence indices play a very important role in determining the growth of the country through consumers' spending. Ludvigson (2004) found out that the most popular survey measures do contain some information about the future path of aggregate consumer expenditure growth. Kwan and Cotsomitis (2006) examined the usefulness of Consumer Confidence in forecasting household spending in Canada, and found that it is capable of predicting consumers' spending, although more so at national level than at regional level. Kucuk (2005) explores the impact of Consumer Confidence in the future economy on consumer purchase plans regarding frequently purchased goods (FPG) in an emerging market and indicated a significant influence. By measuring perceived personal finance, perceived consumer price, and perceived economic situation, Shayaa et al (2018) found out a causal link between Consumer Confidence and consumer spending intention.

2.1.7 Purchase intention

Purchase intention means a consumer's tendency to buy products and services, their willingness to purchase. It is a psychological and behavioral tendency that is formed from the consumer attitude and leads to habitual behaviors, such as repurchase intention and intention to recommend to other shoppers (Qing & Jin, 2022). In the context of live-streaming e-commerce, purchase intention determines whether consumers are likely to buy products in a live-streaming session. Many factors can influence consumers' purchase intention, such as a strong agreement on the positive relationship between social presence and purchase intention, which can improve users' perceptions of online shopping security and their subsequent purchase attitude (Shin & Shin, 2011). Trust is also known as an important factor in the buyer-seller relationships and online purchase intention in electronic commerce (Zhou et al., 2007). Consumer confidence index also predicts behavioral intention to purchase (Shayaa et al., 2018).

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 Government Regulations

Government Regulations represent a common method for ensuring consumer rights protection (Xu et al., 2010). Strict regulations can urge enterprises to actively take on social responsibility (Berrone et al., 2013). Enforcing regulations effectively is seen as a method to protect consumers' privacy and alleviate concerns on the Internet. Nevertheless, a significant concern arises from the possibility of excessively stringent Government Regulations having adverse effects on the development of firms or industries (Hafezi & Zolfagharinia, 2018). This strictness may compel enterprises to undergo costly and detrimental innovative changes, resulting in competitive disadvantages, a loss of innovation, and reduced risk-taking (Ji & Wang, 2018). Therefore, to investigate the impact of Government Regulations on consumer's trust, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *Government Regulations have a significant influence on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.*

2.2.2 GDP Growth

Bulin and Baltatescu (2015) made a detailed review of the development of pre-modern and modern attempts to measure the whole of an economy. Gross domestic product (GDP) is among the most widely used indicators to measure the growth of an economy. However, GDP is not a perfect measurement; Landefeld and Villones (2009) explored issues have been raised about the inadequacy of GDP as a metric, such as excluding household production and a broad range of other non-market activities, failing to provide adequate warning about the imbalances that developed in housing and financial markets, etc. Nevertheless, while such consensus acknowledging the inadequacy of relying solely on GDP as a measure of growth and prosperity prevails, the practical constraints related to data availability across numerous countries and an extensive historical span have often necessitated using GDP as the most viable metric (Dobbs et al., 2015). Therefore, to investigate the impact of GDP Growth on Consumer Confidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *GDP Growth has a significant influence on Consumer Confidence in livestreaming e-commerce in China.*

2.2.3 Platform Marketing Strategy

Hesse et al. (2020) examined platform economy, specifically the trust mechanisms platforms employ and how frequent users rely on them, and found that the degree of platform's social interaction has a significant influence on consumers' trust. The primary determinants of consumers' purchasing decisions in traditional e-commerce online shopping are promotion, website quality, online word-of-mouth, product introduction, and other factors (Xiong, 2017). The aforementioned influencing factors also have a significant impact on consumers' impulsive buying

behavior in live streaming e-commerce, which is an emerging e-commerce model developed on the foundation of traditional e-commerce. In addition, it is easy to notice stronger promotion activities, more intuitive product display and more frequent interpersonal interaction in live streaming e-commerce. Live streaming allows the consumer to watch actual products and sellers, which develops consumers' trust in the seller and product, which was difficult in conventional social commerce (Huang & Suo, 2021). Therefore, to investigate the impact of Platform Marketing Strategy on consumer's trust, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *Platform Marketing Strategy has a significant influence on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.*

2.2.4 Parasocial Relationship

According to relationship theory, attractiveness plays a significant role in determining whether someone will be attracted to you and is a requirement for increasing influence (Finkel & Eastwick, 2015). Parasocial Relationship have traditionally been conceptualized as one-sided, non-reciprocal relationships with media figures. However, according to Kowert and Daniel (2021), it is conceptually different in live streaming contexts, shifting towards a "one-and-a-half" sided relationship characterized by the potential for reciprocal communication, high emotional engagement, increased presence, etc. Rungruangjit (2022) examined the role of Parasocial Relationship, congruence and source credibility in Chinese consumers' purchase intentions during livestreaming session, and found that Parasocial Relationship have vital mediating effects on increasing purchase intentions. Chen (2021) explored digital gifting in personal brand communities of live-streaming and how viewer-streamer-viewer Parasocial Relationship are fostered. Therefore, to investigate the impact of Parasocial Relationship on consumer's Trust, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *Parasocial Relationship has a significant influence on consumers' Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.*

2.2.5 Trust

Since e-commerce consumers cannot have a direct experience of the online products, they can only learn from others before such products are delivered to them. But in live-streaming e-commerce, consumers can interact directly and instantaneously with live streamers (Lu et al., 2018). The direct interaction can prompt consumers to pay attention to the focal products and live streamers, which lowers their uncertainty perceptions of live streamers (Clement et al., 2021). Furthermore, live-streaming shopping also allows consumers to observe the live streamers' behaviors (e.g. their interaction with other consumers), as well as other consumers' comments on their past transaction experiences with live streamers (Men et al., 2023). Consumers' trust in one component of the e-marketplace merchant may not only affect their trust in the other, but also has a strong influence upon both attitudinal loyalty and purchase intentions (Hong & Cho, 2011). Therefore, to investigate the impact of Trust on purchase intention, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 5 (H5): *Consumers' Trust has a significant influence on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.*

2.2.6 Consumer Confidence

Consumer Confidence measures the perceptions of customers about their recent and future financial situation and economic climate (Ou et al., 2014). Consumer Confidence indicator is usually based upon answers from the Consumer Confidence survey regarding their expected financial situation, their sentiment about the general economic situation, unemployment and capability of savings (OECD, 2023). Mynařiková and Pošta (2022) navigated the effect of Consumer Confidence and

subjective well-being on consumers' spending behavior and found a causal relationship. Dees and Brinca (2013) assessed empirically the link between consumer sentiment and consumption expenditures for the United States and the euro area, and found that the Consumer Confidence index can be in certain circumstances a good predictor of consumption. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of China has been publishing its monthly Consumer Confidence index (CCI) since 1997, in order to identify changes in consumer attitudes to consumption, income and general economic conditions (Celik et al. 2010). Therefore, to investigate the impact of Consumer Confidence on Purchase Intention, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 6 (H6): *Consumer Confidence has a significant influence on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.*

2.2.7 Purchase intention

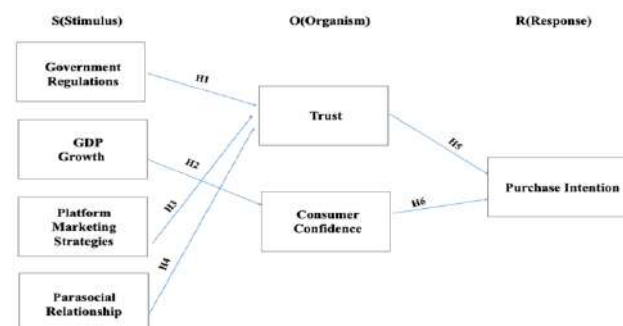
Many scholars have explored the impact of live streaming on consumers' purchase intentions and behaviors, especially based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model. For example, Hu and Chaudhry (2020) used the SOR model to study how relational bonds can enhance consumer engagement. Using the same SOR model, Guo et al. (2021) examined features of livestreaming that influence consumers' purchase intention in cross-border e-commerce and found a significant influence. Wang and Li (2007) found that perceived value significantly and positively influences purchase intention in the online environment. WR and Ariyanti (2017) also found that Indonesian consumers' trust has a significant effect on their online purchase intention. For over 30 years, marketing has delved into consumer behavior through purchase intentions. In the academic world it is also widely acknowledged that these intentions serve as reliable predictors of actual purchase actions (Lakhan et al., 2021).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is created based on previous research based on four theoretical frameworks

(Shou et al., 2023; Malovaná et al., 2021; Han et al., 2022; Wibowo et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2022) and testing literature revealing such variables as Government Regulations, GDP Growth, Platform Marketing Strategy, Parasocial Relationship, Trust, Consumer Confidence, and Purchase Intention. The conceptual framework demonstrating the causal relationship between independent variables and dependent variables is shown in Figure 1 as follows:

Figure 1. *Factors Influencing Purchase Intention in Live Streaming E-Commerce in China by authors*



3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of government regulations, GDP growth, platform marketing strategy, parasocial relationship, trust, and consumer confidence on Purchase Intention in livestream shopping in China. Furthermore, this research will clarify how much Chinese customers are willing to engage in live shopping. This study represents a quantitative research approach, analyzing each variable type through the application of Cronbach's Alpha, simple linear regression, multiple linear regression, and descriptive statistics.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections, comprising a total of 39 questions. These questions cover the 7 variables outlined in the research conceptual framework, including 3 screening questions, 9 demographic questions, and 27 questions related to measuring the variables.

Initiating with the assessment of questionnaire reliability, Cronbach's Alpha is employed to investigate any potential confusion or ambiguity in measurement items. A pilot test is conducted with a group of 50 samples to evaluate the reliability of measurement variables and the comprehensibility of content. Furthermore, simple linear regression (SLR) is used to investigate the impact of GDP growth on consumer confidence, while multiple linear regression (MLR) is used to determine the impact of government regulations, platform marketing strategies, and parasocial relationships on trust, as well as the impact of consumer confidence and trust on purchase intention in China's livestreaming e-commerce.

Likewise, this study employed secondary data predominantly sourced from reputable outlets such as articles, journals, books, and prior research studies.

3.2 Sampling plan

3.2.1 Target Population

Given the chosen field of livestreaming e-commerce and China's leading position in this field, the target population of this study is consumers who have shown interest in and made online purchases in China, especially those who have experience or interest in livestreaming e-commerce in China. According to the annual report of E-Commerce in China 2022 released by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China in April 2023, as of December 2022, the scale of online shopping users in China reached 845 million, accounting for 79.2% of the overall internet users.

3.2.2 Sample Size

The sample of this research is calculated by using Taro Yamane (Yamane, 1973) formula with 95% confidence level. Based on the population of 845 million of online shopping users in China as of 2022, the calculation formula of Taro Yamane is presented as follows.

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where: n = sample size
required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error (%)

* 95% confidence level and p = 0.5 are assumed

Substitute numbers in formula:

$$n = (845,000,000) / (1 + 845,000,000 * (0.05)^2)$$

$$n = 400 \text{ (rounded)}$$

After calculating the sample size by substituting the numbers into Yamane formula, the number of samples is 399.9999981 persons. In order to obtain reliable data, the researchers have rounded up the sample size to 400 persons.

3.2.3 Sampling Procedures

The researchers chose a non-probability sampling method, specifically the convenience sampling method. All response data received were pre-screened for alignment with the research objectives. Because of time constraints in data collection, a non-probability sampling method was chosen. In conclusion, given the constraints of the data collection timeframe and the ease of the process, this method was deemed the best fit for this research.

3.3 Validity and reliability test

3.3.1 Content validity

The advisor conducted a scrutiny and assessment of the questionnaire variables designed by the researchers, along with providing research suggestions. The results and the details of the assessment are presented Table 1 below.

Table 1. Results of Content Validity

Variables	Number of items		Result of variables designed	
	Before	After		
Government Regulations (GR)	5	4	removed item	1
GDP Growth (GG)	5	3	removed items	2
Platform Marketing Strategy (PM)	6	4	removed items	2
Parasocial Relationship (PR)	5	3	removed items	2
Trust (T)	5	4	removed item	1
Consumer Confidence (CC)	5	4	removed item	1
Purchase Intention (PI)	5	5	All retained	
Total items	36	27		

3.3.2 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability with the pilot test

The researchers chose 50 people to conduct a pilot test in order to inspect the questionnaire's variables for any dislocations or errors.

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of a psychometric scale or test's internal consistency reliability (Cronbach, 1951). It measures how closely related a group of items is and is commonly used in psychometrics and social sciences to assess the reliability of a questionnaire or survey. The coefficient is expressed as a number between 0 and 1, with higher numbers indicating greater internal consistency between the items. Cronbach's Alpha and Internal Consistency's Rules with Alpha Coefficient range and strength of association; $\alpha > 0.9$ - Excellent; $0.8 < \alpha < 0.9$ - Good; $0.7 < \alpha < 0.8$ - Acceptable; $0.6 < \alpha < 0.7$ - Questionable; $0.5 < \alpha < 0.6$ - Poor; $\alpha < 0.5$ - Unacceptable.

According to the results of the pilot test conducted with 50 respondents, Cronbach's Alpha was used to evaluate the seven variables: government regulations, GDP growth, platform marketing strategy, parasocial relationship, trust,

consumer confidence, and purchase intention. Based on the Cronbach's Alpha results, Government Regulations of four items were 0.951, GDP Growth of three items was 0.891, Platform Marketing Strategy of four items was 0.874, Parasocial Relationship of three items was 0.911, Trust of four items was 0.896, Consumer Confidence of four items was 0.806, and Purchase Intention of five items was 0.907 (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2. The Significance of Each Item and Variable's Reliability Analysis in This Study ($n=50$)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Government Regulations	0.951	Excellent
GDP Growth	0.891	Good
Platform Marketing Strategy	0.874	Good
Parasocial Relationship	0.911	Excellent
Trust	0.896	Good
Consumer Confidence	0.806	Good
Purchase Intention	0.907	Excellent

4. Findings

4.1 Description Analysis of Demographic Data

Through the online distribution of the survey, the researchers received 440 questionnaires, exceeding the required sample size of 400. Deducting the 39 responses that did not meet the criteria for the target population, 401 valid questionnaires were retained for analysis.

The researchers have incorporated inquiries about demographic information, including gender, age, monthly income, city, living status, online shopping expenditure,



frequently used platforms, types of products watched or bought during livestreaming, and the frequency of online shopping. This research adopted descriptive analysis to analyze the demographic data and classify the target respondents' characteristics.

The frequency distribution and percentage of the demographic data from the sample size of 401 respondents are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of Demographic Data Using Percentage and Frequency Distribution (n=401)

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	187	46.60%
Female	213	53.10%
Prefer not to say	1	0.20%
Total	401	100%
Age		
18-25 years old	71	17.7 %
26-35 years old	183	45.6 %
36-55 years old	116	28.9 %
Over 56 years old	31	7.7 %
Total	401	100%
City		
Tier 1	112	27.9 %
Tier 2	198	49.4 %
Tier 3	68	17.0 %
others	23	5.7 %
Total	401	100%

Monthly income		
10,001 - 20,000 RMB	87	21.7 %
20,001 - 30,000 RMB	27	6.7 %
5,001- 10,000 RMB	172	42.9 %
Lower than 5,000 RMB	86	21.4 %
More than 30,000 RMB	29	7.2 %
Total	401	100%

Living status		
I live alone and pay for my own expenses	182	45.4 %
I live with my family/partner and share expenses	219	54.6 %
Total	401	100%

Online shopping expenditure		
Less than 5%	49	12.20%
5%-10%	141	35.20%
11% - 20%	88	21.90%
21% - 30%	66	16.50%
More than 30%	38	9.50%
Prefer not to say	19	4.70%
Total	401	100%

Frequently used platforms		
Taobao Live		
Frequent	136	33.90%
Not frequent	265	66.10%
Total	401	100%



Douyin (Tiktok)		
Frequent	158	39.40%
Not frequent	243	60.60%
Total	401	100%
Xiaohongshu (RED)		
Frequent	142	35.40%
Not frequent	259	64.60%
Total	401	100%
JD.com		
Frequent	128	31.90%
Not frequent	273	68.10%
Total	401	100%
Kuaishou		
Frequent	79	19.70%
Not frequent	322	80.30%
Total	401	100%
PDD		
Frequent	149	37.20%
Not frequent	252	62.80%
Total	401	100%
Others		
Frequent	3	0.70%
Not frequent	398	99.30%
Total	401	100%
Types of products frequently watched or bought during livestreaming		

Food and Beverages		
Frequent	171	42.60%
Not frequent	230	57.40%
Total	401	100%
Fashion and Apparel		
Frequent	238	59.40%
Not frequent	163	40.60%
Total	401	100%
Electronics and Gadgets		
Frequent	227	56.60%
Not frequent	174	43.40%
Total	401	100%
Beauty and Cosmetics		
Frequent	177	44.10%
Not frequent	224	55.90%
Total	401	100%
Home Improvement and Lifestyle		
Frequent	167	41.60%
Not frequent	234	58.40%
Total	401	100%
Others		
Frequent	8	2.00%
Not frequent	393	98.00%
Total	401	100%
Frequency of online shopping		
Multiple times a week	38	9.50%

Once a week	106	26.40%
2-3 times a month	100	24.90%
Once a month	75	18.70%
3-4 times a year	61	15.20%
Rarely	21	5.20%
Total	401	100%

Gender: The results depict a gender distribution among the 401 respondents, wherein 187 are identified as male, constituting 46.6% of the sample; 213 respondents are identified as female, representing 53.1% of the total sample; one respondent opted not to disclose their gender, accounting for a minimal 0.2% of the overall total.

Age: According to the results of the 401 respondents, the largest age group is 26-35 years old (183 participants, accounting for 45.6%), followed by the group of 36-55 years old (116 participants, accounting for 28.9%), followed by the group of 18-25 years old (71 participants, accounting for 17.7%), followed by the smallest group of over 56 years old (31 respondents, accounting for 7.7%).

City: Based on the tiers of city classified by the National Bureau of Statistics of China, which is detailed in Appendix A, most of the 401 respondents are from second-tier cities (198 participants, accounting for 49.4%), followed by first-tier cities (112 participants, accounting for 27.9%), followed by third-tier cities (68 participants, accounting for 17.0%), followed by other cities (23 participants, accounting for 5.7%).

Monthly income: Monthly income of 5,001- 10,000 RMB is the largest group among the 401 respondents (172 participants, accounting for 42.9%), followed by the groups of 10,001-20,000 RMB and lower than 5,000 RMB, with nearly identical numbers of 87 and 86 participants, accounting for 21.7% and 21.4% respectively. The group of more than 30,000 RMB monthly income has 29 participants

and a percentage of 7.2%, while the group of 20,001-30,000 RMB has 27 respondents and a percentage of 21.4%.

Living status: Out of the 401 respondents, 219 live with their family/ partner and share expenses, accounting for 54.6%; 182 participants live alone and are responsible for their own expenses, accounting for 45.4%.

Online shopping expenditure: Among the 401 respondents, 141 participants (accounting for 35.2% of the sample) allocate 5-10% of their monthly earnings to online shopping; 88 participants (accounting for 21.9%) dedicate 11-20% of their income to online shopping; the subsequent group of 66 participants (accounting for 16.5%) spend 21-30% of their income on online shopping; 38 participants (accounting for 9.5%) allocate more than 30% of their income to online shopping; 19 participants preferred not to disclose their expenditure, accounting for 4.7% of the total responses.

Most frequently used platforms: This is a multiple-choice question where the respondents can select up to three options. The most frequently used livestreaming e-commerce platforms include Douyin (TikTok), PDD, and RED, with 158, 149, and 142 selections respectively. Following closely are Taobao with 136 selections, JD.com with 128, and Kuaishou with 79 selections. Three respondents opted for other platforms.

Types of products frequently watched or bought during livestreaming: This is a multiple-choice question where the respondents can select up to three options. In terms of product categories, Fashion and Apparel garnered the highest interest, boasting a total of 238 selections. Following closely behind were Electronics and Gadgets, Beauty and Cosmetics, and Food and Beverages, which accumulated 227, 177, and 171 selections, respectively. Home Improvement and Lifestyle constituted 167 selections, while 8 respondents expressed a preference for other types of products.

Frequency of online shopping: Based on the results obtained from 401 respondents, it was found that 106 participants, constituting 26.4%, make online purchases once a week. Another 100 participants, accounting for



24.9%, make purchases 2-3 times a month. Subsequently, 75 participants, representing 18.7%, engage in online shopping once a month, while 61 participants, constituting 15.2%, make online purchases 3-4 times a year. Additionally, 38 individuals, equivalent to 9.5%, shop online multiple times a week, and 21 individuals, comprising 5.2%, rarely engage in online shopping.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis with Mean and Standard Deviation

The researchers analyzed the Mean and Standard Deviation for each variable group. These variables encompassed Government Regulations, GDP Growth, Platform Marketing Strategy, Parasocial Relationship, Trust, Consumer Confidence, and Purchase Intention. The mean scores were evaluated based on the following criteria by Imsa-ard et al. (2021):

The Criteria of the Interpretation of Mean Scores

Range	Interpretation
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly agree
3.21 - 4.20	Agree
2.61 - 3.20	Neutral
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly disagree

Mean and standard deviation of Government Regulations, Table 4 presents the findings from a sample of 401 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean and standard deviation of Government Regulations was “*I believe that government laws and regulations can enhance the legitimacy of live-streaming e-commerce in China overall.*” registering at 3.46 and 1.17, respectively. Conversely, the lowest mean and standard deviation in the context of Government Regulations were associated with the statement “*I believe that government regulations help*

guarantee the trustworthiness of products presented during livestreaming.” with corresponding values of 3.41 and 1.14.

Mean and Standard Deviation of GDP Growth, Table 4 presents the findings from a sample of 401 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean of GDP Growth pertains to “*The general economic situation in the country has improved over the last 6 months.*” with a registered value of 3.33. In the context of GDP Growth, the lowest mean was “*In view of the general economic situation, I think now is the right time for people to make major decisions such as having children, purchasing houses, etc.*” which equals 3.24. Moreover, “*In view of the general economic situation, I think now is the right time for people to make major decisions such as having children, purchasing houses, etc.*” also exhibits the highest standard deviation in GDP Growth, measuring at 1.22. “*The general economic situation in the country has improved over the last 6 months.*” shows a comparatively lower standard deviation of 1.19, marking the least variability in GDP Growth.

Mean and Standard Deviation of Platform Marketing Strategy, Table 4 presents the findings from a sample of 401 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean of Platform Marketing Strategy pertains to “*I find it more convenient to engage with streamers about products during live streams.*” with a registered value of 3.36. In the context of Platform Marketing Strategy, the lowest mean was “*My interest and participation in e-commerce live-streams increase when there is a chance for a lucky draw.*” which equaled 3.26. Moreover, “*My interest and participation in e-commerce live-streams increase when there is a chance for a lucky draw.*” also exhibits the highest standard deviation in Platform Marketing Strategy, measuring at 1.2. “*I am of the belief that shopping online leads to significant cost savings.*” shows a comparatively lower standard deviation of 1.13 in Platform Marketing Strategy.

Mean and Standard Deviation of Parasocial Relationship, Table 4 presents the findings from a sample of 401 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean and standard deviation of Parasocial Relationship pertains to “*The recommendations from streamers or advertisements*

strongly impact my purchasing decisions on e-commerce platforms.” registering at 3.39 and 1.16, respectively. In the context of Parasocial Relationship, the lowest mean was “My decision to watch e-commerce livestreams is often influenced by my liking for the streamer/influencer.” which equaled 3.36. Additionally, “I believe there is a significant connection between consumers and streamers/influencers in the context of e-commerce livestreaming.” exhibits the lowest standard deviation in parasocial relationship, measuring at 1.14.

Mean and Standard Deviation of Trust, Table 4 presents the findings from a sample of 401 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean of Trust pertains to “When I trust that livestreaming e-commerce platforms can provide authentic and credible product information, my intention to purchase will increase.” and “The clarity of product details gained through interaction with live streamers directly impacts my intention to make a purchase.” with both registered values of 3.4. In the context of trust, the lowest mean was “My intention to purchase products on live-streaming e-commerce platforms is positively influenced by my satisfaction with the regulations set by the Chinese government for these platforms.” which equaled 3.33. Moreover, this one also exhibits the highest standard deviation in trust, measuring at 1.18. “The clarity of product details gained through interaction with live streamers directly impacts my intention to make a purchase.” shows a comparatively lower standard deviation of 1.15 in trust.

Mean and Standard Deviation of Consumer Confidence, Table 4 presents the findings from a sample of 401 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean of Consumer Confidence pertains to “My confidence in personal finance positively influences my inclination to make purchases.” with a registered value of 3.45. In the context of Consumer Confidence, the lowest mean was “A positive perception of the general economic situation serves as a motivating factor for my purchasing decisions.” which equaled 3.36. Moreover, “A positive perception of the general economic situation serves as a motivating factor for my purchasing decisions.” and “A favorable view of

consumer prices encourages me to make purchases.” both exhibit the highest standard deviation in Consumer Confidence, measuring at 1.22. “My purchase intention has less to do with my confidence in the economic situation, consumer price or personal finance, but more with the product itself (quality, brand image, emotional value, etc.).” shows a comparatively lower standard deviation of 1.17 in Platform Marketing Strategy.

Mean and Standard Deviation of Purchase Intention, Table 4 presents the findings from a sample of 401 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean of purchase intention pertains to “If the merchandiser offers favorable return & refund policies, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.” with a registered value of 3.43. In the context of purchase intention, the lowest mean was “If the platform/live-steamer can offer attractive promotions, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.” which equaled 3.36. Moreover, “If I trust the livestreaming e-commerce platform, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.”, “If my favorite livestreamer or a nationally well-known livestreamer highly recommend some products, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.” and “If the merchandiser offers favorable return & refund policies, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.” all exhibit the highest standard deviation in purchase intention, measuring at 1.17. “If the platform/live-steamer can offer attractive promotions, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.” shows a comparatively lower standard deviation of 1.11 in purchase intention.

Table 4. The Result of Mean and Standard Deviation

	Mean	S.D.	
Government Regulations	3.43	1.155	
GR1: I am sure government rules and regulations have an impact on	3.43	1.15	Agree



my degree of trust in live e-commerce.			
GR2: I think government regulations have improved live-streaming e-commerce platforms' security and dependability.	3.43	1.16	Agree
GR3: I believe that government regulations help guarantee the trustworthiness of products presented during livestreaming.	3.41	1.14	Agree
GR4: I believe that government laws and regulations can enhance the legitimacy of live-streaming e-commerce in China overall.	3.46	1.17	Agree
GDP Growth	3.3	1.207	
GG1: The financial situation of my household has improved over the last 6 months.	3.32	1.21	Agree
GG2: The general economic situation in the country has improved over the last 6 months.	3.33	1.19	Agree
GG3: In view of the general economic situation, I think now is the right time for people to make major decisions such as having children, purchasing houses, etc.	3.24	1.22	Agree
Platform Marketing Strategy	3.32	1.158	
PM1: I am of the belief that shopping online leads to significant cost savings.	3.32	1.13	Agree
PM2: I tend to choose the same e-commerce platform for product purchases to accumulate more points and avail of additional discounts.	3.35	1.15	Agree
PM3: My interest and participation in e-commerce live-streams increase when there is a chance for a lucky draw.	3.26	1.2	Agree

PM4: I find it more convenient to engage with streamers about products during live streams.	3.36	1.15	Agree
Parasocial Relationship	3.373	1.15	
PR1: I believe there is a significant connection between consumers and streamers/influencers in the context of e-commerce livestreaming.	3.37	1.14	Agree
PR2: My decision to watch e-commerce livestreams is often influenced by my liking for the streamer/influencer.	3.36	1.15	Agree
PR3: The recommendations from streamers or advertisements strongly impact my purchasing decisions on e-commerce platforms.	3.39	1.16	Agree
Trust	3.38	1.165	
T1: My intention to purchase products on live-streaming e-commerce platforms is positively influenced by my satisfaction with the regulations set by the Chinese government for these platforms.	3.33	1.18	Agree
T2: When I trust that livestreaming e-commerce platforms can provide authentic and credible product information, my intention to purchase will increase.	3.4	1.16	Agree
T3: My intention to purchase increases when I perceive the marketing strategies offered by live-streaming e-commerce platforms as favorable to my preferences.	3.39	1.17	Agree
T4: The clarity of product details gained through interaction with live streamers directly impacts my intention to make a purchase.	3.4	1.15	Agree



Consumer Confidence	3.39	1.203	
CC1: A positive perception of the general economic situation serves as a motivating factor for my purchasing decisions.	3.36	1.22	Agree
CC2: My confidence in personal finance positively influences my inclination to make purchases.	3.45	1.17	Agree
CC3: A favorable view of consumer prices encourages me to make purchases.	3.39	1.22	Agree
CC4: My purchase intention has less to do with my confidence in the economic situation, consumer price or personal finance, but more with the product itself (quality, brand image, emotional value, etc.).	3.37	1.2	Agree
Purchase Intention	3.39	1.152	
PI1: If I trust the livestreaming e-commerce platform, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.	3.37	1.17	Agree
PI2: If my favorite livestreamer or a nationally well-known livestreamer highly recommend some products, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.	3.39	1.17	Agree
PI3: If I have a positive prospect on my financial situations and employment opportunities in the future, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.	3.39	1.14	Agree
PI4: If the platform/livestreamer can offer attractive promotions, my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.	3.36	1.11	Agree
PI5: If the merchandiser offers favorable return & refund policies,	3.43	1.17	Agree

my intention to purchase during livestreaming will increase.			

4.3 Hypothesis Testing Result

Hypothesis testing is used to assess the plausibility of a hypothesis by using sample data. Researchers employ linear regression to examine the significant impact of variables in the Hypothesis model.

4.3.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H3, H4

Ho: There is no significant influence of Government Regulations (H_1), Platform Marketing Strategy (H_3) and Parasocial Relationship (H_4) on Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

Ha: There is a significant influence of Government Regulations (H_1), Platform Marketing Strategy (H_3), and Parasocial Relationship (H_4) on Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

Table 4 shows the JAMOSI test results for the multiple linear regression analysis, the hypothesis testing aimed to investigate the influence of Government Regulations (H_1), Platform Marketing Strategy (H_3), and Parasocial Relationship (H_4) on Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

The findings indicate that Government Regulations, Platform Marketing Strategy, and Parasocial Relationship all have a statistically significant influence on Trust. Specifically, the regression coefficients (B) for Government Regulations, Platform Marketing Strategy, and Parasocial Relationship were 0.306, 0.317, and 0.162, respectively. The associated standard errors (SE B) were 0.0468, 0.0454, and 0.0444, indicating the precision of the estimates.

The beta coefficients (β) provide insights into the standardized effect sizes, with values of 0.3, 0.315, and 0.166 for Government Regulations, Platform Marketing Strategy, and Parasocial Relationship, respectively. These

values suggest the relative strength of each predictor in influencing the dependent variable, Trust.

The *t*-values for Government Regulations (6.53), Platform Marketing Strategy (6.99), and Parasocial Relationship (3.66) were all statistically significant at $p < .001$, reinforcing the rejection of the null hypotheses. The variance inflation factors (VIF) for each predictor were within acceptable limits, indicating that multicollinearity was not a significant concern in the model.

The overall model's explanatory power was reflected in the R^2 value of 0.382, suggesting that approximately 38.2% of the variance in Trust can be explained by the combined influence of Government Regulations, Platform Marketing

Strategy, and Parasocial Relationship. The adjusted R^2 , accounting for the number of predictors, remained at 0.377.

In conclusion, the results provide robust support for the alternative hypotheses (H_a) indicating a significant influence of Government Regulations, Platform Marketing Strategy, and Parasocial Relationship on Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China. The practical implications of these findings underscore the importance of considering these factors in understanding and enhancing trust dynamics within the context of livestreaming e-commerce.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression for $H1$, $H3$, $H4$

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Government Regulations $\square$ Trust	0.306	0.0468	0.300	6.53	<.001*	1.36	Rejected
H3: Platform Marketing Strategy $\square$ Trust	0.317	0.0454	0.315	6.99	<.001*	1.30	Rejected
H4: Parasocial Relationship $\square$ Trust	0.162	0.0444	0.166	3.66	<.001*	1.33	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.382$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.377$, * $p < 0.05$. Dependent variable = Trust

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: The standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : The standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value | VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

4.3.2 Result of Simple Linear Regression of $H2$

H_0 : There is no significant influence of GDP Growth ($H2$) on Consumer Confidence in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

H_a : There is a significant influence of GDP Growth ($H2$) on Consumer Confidence in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

The JAMOWI test results for the simple linear regression analysis aimed to investigate the influence of GDP Growth ($H2$) on Consumer Confidence in

livestreaming e-commerce in China. Table 5 displays the results.

The analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between GDP Growth and Consumer Confidence. The regression coefficient (B) for GDP Growth was 0.385, with a standard error (SEB) of 0.0442, indicating the precision of the estimate. The beta coefficient (β) was 0.4, suggesting a moderate positive standardized effect size.

The *t*-value of 8.72 was highly significant at $p < .001$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This



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result implies that GDP Growth has a substantial impact on Consumer Confidence in the context of livestreaming e-commerce in China.

The variance inflation factor (VIF) of 1 suggests that multicollinearity was not a significant concern in the model, enhancing the reliability of the findings.

The overall model's explanatory power, as indicated by the R^2 value of 0.16, suggests that approximately 16% of the variance in Consumer Confidence can be explained by the influence of GDP Growth. The adjusted R^2 , accounting for the number of predictors, remained at 0.158.

In conclusion, the results provide strong support for the alternative hypothesis (H_a), indicating a significant influence of GDP Growth (H_2) on Consumer Confidence in livestreaming e-commerce in China. These findings contribute valuable insights to understanding the economic factors shaping Consumer Confidence in the rapidly evolving landscape of livestreaming e-commerce.

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression for H_2

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H2: GDP Growth $\square$ Consumer Confidence	0.385	0.0442	0.400	8.72	<.001*	1	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.16$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.158$, * $p < 0.05$. Dependent variable = Consumer Confidence

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: The standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : The standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value | VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

4.3.3 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H_5 , H_6

H_0 : There is no significant influence of Trust (H_5) and Consumer Confidence (H_6) on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

H_a : There is a significant influence of Trust (H_5) and Consumer Confidence (H_6) on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

The JAMOMI test results for the multiple linear regression analysis aimed to examine the influence of Trust (H_5) and Consumer Confidence (H_6) on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China. Table 6 displays the results.

The findings demonstrate a statistically significant relationship between both Trust and Consumer Confidence with Purchase Intention. The regression coefficient (B) for Trust was 0.315, with a standard error (SEB) of 0.0458, and the beta coefficient (β) was 0.324. Similarly, for Consumer Confidence, the regression coefficient (B) was 0.303, with a standard error (SEB) of 0.0449, and the beta coefficient (β) was 0.319.

The t-values for Trust (6.86) and Consumer Confidence (6.76) were highly significant at $p < .001$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and supporting the alternative hypothesis (H_a) that there is a significant



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influence of both Trust and Consumer Confidence on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

The variance inflation factors (VIF) of 1.27 for both predictors suggest that multicollinearity was not a significant concern in the model.

The overall model's explanatory power, as indicated by the R^2 value of 0.302, suggests that approximately 30.2% of the variance in purchase intention can be explained by the combined influence of Trust and Consumer Confidence. The

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression for H5, H6

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H5: Trust $\square$ Purchase intention	0.315	0.0458	0.324	6.86	<.001*	1.27	Rejected
H6: Consumer Confidence $\square$ Purchase intention	0.303	0.0449	0.319	6.76	<.001*	1.27	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.302$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.298$, $*p < 0.05$. Dependent variable = Purchase Intention

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: The standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : The standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value | VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Findings

In an effort to discern the significance of influencing factors on each dependent variable, the researchers conducted a ranking analysis. The outcomes revealed the following and shown in Table 7:

Consumer Confidence (CC): The strongest causal relationship was identified between GDP Growth (GG) and Consumer Confidence, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.385.

Trust (T): For factors influencing consumer Trust, Platform Marketing Strategy (PM) emerged as the most influential, surpassing Government Regulations (GR) and

Parasocial Relationship (PR). The unstandardized coefficient (B) for Platform Marketing Strategy was 0.317.

Purchase Intention (PI): Trust (T) was found to have a stronger influence than Consumer Confidence (CC) on Purchase Intention. Additionally, the unstandardized coefficients (B) for Trust in relation to Government Regulations (GR), Parasocial Relationship (PR), and Consumer Confidence (CC) were 0.306, 0.315, and 0.303, respectively.

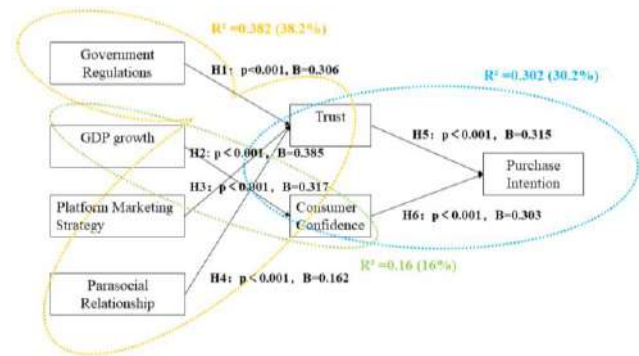
Table 7. Ranking of Significance of Influencing Factors on Each Dependent Variable

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Rank	
MLR with H1, H3, and H4				
Trust	Platform Marketing Strategy	0.315	1 st	H3
	Government Regulations	0.300	2 nd	H1
	Parasocial Relationship	0.166	3 rd	H4
MLR with H5 and H6				
Purchase intention	Trust	0.324	1 st	H5
	Consumer Confidence	0.319	2 nd	H6
SLR with H2				
Consumer Confidence	GDP Growth	0.400	-	H2

5.2 Discussion and Conclusion

As structural research results in Figure 2 from hypothesis testing results suggest that Trust is significantly influenced by Government Regulations, Platform Marketing Strategy, and Parasocial Relationship; GDP Growth affects Consumer Confidence; furthermore, Trust and Consumer Confidence have a significant impact on consumers' Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China.

Figure 2 The results of research Model



5.2.1 Government Regulations, Platform Marketing Strategy, Parasocial Relationship and Trust

The investigation of factors that influence consumer's Trust in livestreaming e-commerce in China is a compelling finding of this study. Strong statistical indicators, such as a low p-value ($< .001$) and a high t-value (6.53), show that Government Regulations have a significant impact. This emphasizes how important regulatory frameworks are in forming trust in the livestreaming e-commerce industry. Similarly, Platform Marketing Strategy emerge as influential, with a noteworthy t-value (6.99) and low p-value ($< .001$), highlighting the necessity for e-commerce platforms to carefully develop and communicate their marketing strategies in order to cultivate trust among consumers. Furthermore, the study demonstrates the important role that Parasocial Relationship plays in cultivating Trust, as evidenced by a low p-value ($< .001$) and a substantial t-value (3.66). This emphasizes how crucial the relationships that the followers have with the livestreamers are to building and maintaining trust, which calls on platforms and influencers to make investments in methods that can strengthen such relationships.

5.2.2 GDP Growth and Consumer Confidence

In the context of livestreaming e-commerce, the study finds a significant relationship between GDP Growth and Consumer Confidence. The high t-value (8.72) and low p-value (< 0.001) highlight the importance of the economic



indicator of GDP in influencing Consumer Confidence. Policymakers and industry stakeholders should take economic growth trajectories into account when strategizing for increased Consumer Confidence.

5. 2. 3 Trust, Consumer Confidence and Purchase Intention

The study provides clear insights into the interplay of Trust, Consumer Confidence, and their impacts on Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China. Robust data support the hypothesis that Trust significantly influences Purchase Intention, as indicated by a substantial beta coefficient (0.324) and a high t-value (6.86). This underscores the pivotal role Trust plays in shaping consumers' willingness to make purchases. The findings suggest that livestreaming platforms should prioritize strategic initiatives aimed at bolstering user's trust to effectively drive positive purchase intentions.

Similarly, Consumer Confidence is identified as a key predictor of Purchase Intention in livestreaming e-commerce. The beta coefficient (0.319) and t-value (6.76) highlight the importance of Consumer Confidence in influencing Purchase Intention. This emphasizes the importance of observing Consumer Confidence index and making strategic interventions that can boost Consumer Confidence, as they have been shown to be effective in positively shaping purchase intentions in the livestreaming e-commerce landscape. Taken together, these findings highlight the multifaceted nature of consumer behavior in livestreaming e-commerce, emphasizing the importance of platforms simultaneously addressing and enhancing both Trust and Consumer Confidence to optimize positive purchasing outcomes.

In conclusion, this study validates the causal relationships between Government Regulations, GDP Growth, Platform Marketing Strategy, Parasocial Relationship, Trust, Consumer Confidence, and Purchase Intention in China's livestreaming e-commerce landscape. The results provide actionable insights for policymakers, industry practitioners, and platform operators.

5.3 Recommendations

Livestreaming e-commerce occupies a leading position in the dynamic evolution of markets, displaying considerable potential in reshaping consumer behavior and retail models. Expanding scholarly investigation beyond current studies could unveil a comprehensive range of factors that influence consumer preferences in this thriving industry.

The positive findings of this research have demonstrated the necessity of looking at consumer behavior in livestreaming e-commerce from a broader spectrum, taking into consideration political, economic, social and other factors. Thus, conducting a thorough examination of variables not addressed in this study might reveal additional factors that impact consumers' inclination to purchase in livestreaming e-commerce. Elements such as cultural nuances, societal shifts, and the psychological facets of consumer behavior present untapped opportunities for exploration. Charting these unexplored areas could yield new insights into the multifaceted realm of consumer decision-making, leading academia towards a more holistic understanding of the industry's trajectory.

Practically speaking, stakeholders in livestreaming e-commerce can harness elements like governmental regulations, economic indicators including GDP growth, platform marketing strategies, and the dynamics of parasocial relationships. These can be utilized to refine operational approaches, marketing strategies, and initiatives for engaging customers, thereby fostering trust and bolstering consumer confidence, ultimately stimulating consumers' purchase intention, which could lead to the decision of purchasing.

In essence, the convergence of academic exploration and pragmatic utilization of analyzed variables in this research not only enriches the understanding of consumer behavior within the scope of livestreaming e-commerce but also steer towards industry evolution and sustained growth.



5.4 Limitations of the Study

The study faces limitations due to time constraints, neglecting potential variables that could affect Chinese consumer behavior. Additionally, the sample collection, limited by time and distribution channels, might not fully represent the diverse nature of consumer behavior in China.

Furthermore, in our analysis, minimal differences in variable means and high standard deviation, potentially indicating extreme data dispersion or outlier presence, could affect the reliability of our findings. Additionally, the model's relatively low explanatory power, particularly regarding GDP Growth's influence on Consumer Confidence, suggests the need for a more sophisticated model to capture nuanced dynamics in the data.

These limitations caution against drawing definitive conclusions and highlight the necessity of considering additional variables for a more comprehensive understanding of Chinese consumer behavior.

5.5 Further Studies

While this study has showcased substantial impact from the independent variables on consumers' purchase intention in livestreaming e-commerce in China, the following points merit attention for researchers interested in further exploration within this field in the future.

Exploring unaccounted variables: Future research could delve into identifying additional factors that might wield a stronger influence on purchase intention, potentially overlooked by the existing model. Investigating non-linear relationships, interactions, or other complexities could offer a more comprehensive understanding.

Enhancing data quality: Subsequent studies might focus on improving data integrity and completeness to bolster the model's accuracy and explanatory capability. Addressing issues related to outliers or incomplete data could refine the model's performance.

Augmenting model sophistication: Consideration of more intricate models or the inclusion of supplementary

explanatory variables could enhance the model's capacity to effectively represent the complexities inherent in purchase intention dynamics.

Identifying potential variations: The fluctuations in Consumer Confidence might be influenced by numerous other unmeasurable or unknown factors that could have been overlooked in the model. Future research endeavors could focus on identifying and incorporating these overlooked elements into the model to enhance the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the analysis of Consumer Confidence fluctuations.

While this study demonstrated a statistically significant causal relationship among the variables, the data's explanatory power (R-squared value) was not high. Therefore, in the context of livestream e-commerce, these assumed variables might affect consumers' purchase intention, but not conclusively. It's possible that other variables could have a more significant impact. Another plausible interpretation could be that live purchasing isn't the primary mode of online shopping for Chinese consumers.

In such circumstances, further research and analysis may be necessary. This could involve refining the model, incorporating more variables, exploring non-linear models, or seeking comprehensive datasets to enhance the model's explanatory capabilities. Simultaneously, it's crucial to use the model's results cautiously, acknowledging its limitations, and ensuring that the relatively low R-squared value is considered when interpreting the results.

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In-app factors influencing customers' intention to use online food delivery application through smartphone in Bangkok

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this research is to determine the significant influence of prior online purchase experience, information quality, ease of use, price, and perceived convenience towards customers' intention to use online food delivery applications. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – This research uses primary and secondary data collection methods to analyze the in-app factors influencing customers' intention to use online food delivery applications. The data was collected from 385 respondents who live in Bangkok, have a smartphone that can access the internet, and have used online food delivery application prior in the past. This research referenced three theoretical frameworks from previous studies to construct a conceptual framework. **Findings** – This research is intended to discover the in-app factors influencing customers' intention to use online food delivery applications. The findings of this research shows that information quality, ease of use, and price have significant influence towards customers' intention to use online food delivery applications. **Research Limitations/Implications** – The limitations of this research was limited to Bangkok and focused on smartphone users with prior experience, potentially limiting its generalizability. The results suggest that competitive prices, clear menus, and an easy-to-use interface are key factors in attracting users. **Originality/Value** – This research focuses on significant in-app factors influencing customers' intention to use online food delivery applications.

Keywords – Prior Online Purchase Experience, Information Quality, Ease of Use, Price, Perceived Convenience, Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application

JEL classification code – M30, M31, D12

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In these times, the lifestyle of people in Bangkok regarding the perspective of ordering food has notably shifted from the past. Prior to this if people wanted to order food delivered to their subject location, the sole option was to call a specific restaurant, make the order without seeing the exact menu, and provide them the subject delivery location in words which is considered challenging. In contrast, today, many food delivery

applications are emerging for smartphone users to download. The global online food delivery market was roughly calculated to be at USD 168826.4 million in 2022 and is predicted to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 10.97% to reach USD 315183.2 million in 2028 (Intellect Insights Journal, 2023). In late 2012, Foodpanda was one of the first explorers to be introduced in Thailand (*Foodpanda Announces Nationwide Coverage in Thailand – the First Food Delivery Platform to Operate*

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Across All 77 Provinces | Foodpanda | Food and More, Delivered, n.d.).

An online food delivery application is a digital platform through a smartphone that connects users with restaurants, enabling them to order food and have it delivered to their doorstep. It serves as a convenient intermediary between customers and restaurants, streamlining the food ordering and delivery process. In the last few years, Alexander Van Felde, co-founder & managing director for Thailand said that Food Panda Thailand is still in its infancy stage for food delivery service as far as the online meal delivery sector is concerned. In general, the emergence of rivalry indicates a highly promising market for the future. In two or three years, online food delivery in Bangkok might exceed 100,000 transactions per day (Boonruang, 2017).

The study would scrutinize the in-app factors influencing the customers' intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok. Considering there is a large number of food delivery applications accessible to download, all applications provide nonidentical information, ease of use, and price. Therefore, people have divergent perceptions of the factor that dominates them to utilize the application. Furthermore, we cannot contradict that every single one of us has a smartphone with the internet. Research has shown that the internet manipulation of Thai citizens aged 16 to 64 was determined to be a heavy 8.06 hours a day (Leesa-Nguansuk, 2023).

At this present moment, the smartphone becomes handy, it goes with us to whatever place. This causes most functions from computers to evolve and collaborate with a modern smartphone which in this case is a food delivery application. Moreover, Bangkok the capital city of Thailand, is considered to have the greatest population-dense province within the country. In 2023, 11,070,000 people live in the province of Bangkok, with a 1.56% growth from 2022. This makes Bangkok the province with the highest population in the country (Bangkok, Thailand Metro Area Population 1950-2023, 2023). Therefore, Bangkok would be the focus city for the food delivery application. Allen Penn, UberEats' regional general manager Asia-Pacific said that Thai people love to eat, and Bangkok has a significant population that uses

smartphones widely. The city also has wonderful cuisine. By using technology, we can quickly and reliably serve more meals to more consumers, giving more people more possibilities to make money in more areas. Additionally, we can introduce individuals to a wider variety of regional eateries and flavors that they might not have known existed (Boonruang, 2017).

Consequently, the motive for manipulating this study is to determine the significant factors that influence the customers' intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok. The study issued an online questionnaire as a methodology to trial the contemplated hypothesis.

The factors to analyze are Prior Online Purchase Experience, Information Quality, Ease of Use, Price, and Perceived Convenience toward Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Platforms conceivably affecting the customers' intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok. Accordingly, this study aims to prove that the factors stated above influence the customers' intention to use online food delivery.

1.2 Problem statements

A study has discovered that an astonishing 67% of respondents from Thailand claimed to be using food delivery apps at least a few times a month. Then it was followed by 21% of the respondents utilizing food delivery at least apps three to six times a week. Surprisingly, 10% of the participants in the poll have engaged in multiple orders daily (Elena, 2023). Stipulates that in the globalization world of 2023, concerning the rise of smartphone and internet era, online food delivery platform has attained users rapidly. As a consequence of high user demand, a lot of platforms have emerged and glance a big market share.

To set a comparison, in the old days, each restaurant had its website or call center where users were required to allocate a generous amount of time figuring out how to order food and get the delivery location right.

Regarding a great deal of food delivery platforms available in the market for users to choose from, each application provides no identical information, ease of use,



and price. Since 2019, Thailand's online food delivery market has grown rapidly due to the nation's growing population of internet and smartphone users as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, which has limited Thais' ability to dine at restaurants and increased their dependence on food delivery services. In addition, compared to others, urbanites, who lead chaotic lifestyles, are more likely to place food orders online (Sirikeratikul, 2020). Nonetheless, after the pandemic, according to a survey conducted in May 2023, the majority of respondents (44%) continued to place food orders online but reduced the frequency of their purchases as a result of an increased preference for dining out or preparing meals at home. Hence, this group does not want to incur the extra expense that comes with placing food orders online (Leesa-Nguansuk, 2023). On top of that, the cost of gasoline in Thailand per liter increased from 24.55 THB on April 27, 2020, to 43.21 THB on June 27, 2022. (*Thailand Gasoline Prices, 2023*) For food delivery drivers, who are facing higher and more difficult-to-reduce business expenses, the rise in petrol prices has raised concerns (*View of the Factors Affecting Customers' Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Services: An Empirical Assessment*, n.d.).

As a result, the market for food delivery applications become tremendously competitive. Some applications may receive a drop in profit. The study strongly believes that a deep knowledge of factors influencing customers' intention to use would benefit the application provider significantly. The study aims to suggest useful details for an application provider to make changes to their in-app features and acquire more users.

1.3 Objectives of study

The objective of the study of 'In-app factors influencing customers' intention to use online food delivery application through smartphone in Bangkok' is to scrutinize the factors that influence customers to make use of online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok. The study anchors on the city of Bangkok. The city where more than 20 million food delivery orders are being placed using online food delivery applications alone (Sirikeratikul, 2020).

The study aims to offer valuable guidance to online food delivery application providers in Bangkok. Hence, online food delivery application providers can make alterations to the functionality of their applications to enhance customers' satisfaction.

1. To describe the influence of prior online purchase experience orientation on the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok.
2. To describe the influence of information quality on the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok.
3. To describe the influence of Ease of Use on the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok.
4. To describe the influence of delivery price on the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok.
5. To describe the influence of perceived convenience on the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok.

1.4 Research questions

The questions in this study are directly related to the goals of the study, as presented below:

1. Does prior online purchase experience affect the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok?
2. Does the information quality provided by the online food delivery platform affect the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok?
3. Does the easy use of online food delivery platforms affect the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok?
4. Does the delivery fee affect the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok?



5. Does the convenience of using an online food delivery platform affect the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok?

1.5 Significance of the study

The aim to make use of online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok is stated as the intention that users will be making orders of food via the online application available in the market to download.

Hence, the significance of the study refers to the focus on the significant in-app factor that impacts customers' intention to make use of online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok.

Regarding the outstanding number of people using online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok and the intense competition between the food delivery application providers. This resulted in users switching the apps every so often for overall comparison (Leesa-Nguansuk, 2023). Each application is in desperate need of users to become the market leader, and as a consequence the competition is high.

The study would benefit the provider of food delivery applications in Bangkok in terms that the provider of online food delivery applications can become conscious of the needs and wants of users and make alterations to the functionality of their applications to enhance customers' satisfaction and appeal to more users. On top of that the study outgrowth to the researchers who are doing the research focusing on factors that would influence customers' intention to use online food delivery applications in the time ahead.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Theories related to each variable.

2.1.1 Prior Online Purchase Experience

Online acquisition brings the meaning of the objective of each consumer to buy online items (Chen et al, 2010). Prior online purchase experience is related to the

repurchase intention of consumers (Prabowo & Nugroho, 2018). It means that the intention to use online food delivery services is expected to increase for every point increase in prior online purchase experience. (Hooi et al., 2021). By having online purchase experience, it will affect the customers' decision whether they are having the intention to use those products or services for the second time. It goes without saying that having prior online purchase experience is linked with the repurchase intention of the consumers (Prabowo & Nugroho, 2018). A study by (Zhao et al., 2020) found that prior online food purchase experience significantly increased individuals' intention to use online food delivery platforms. Additionally, (Li et al., 2019) also found that individuals with a higher frequency of online purchases were more likely to trust and use online food delivery platforms.

2.1.2 Information Quality

Investments in mobile app service quality can cultivate competitive advantages in the catering industry, especially as the online food delivery sector's potential for post-pandemic survival seems unclear (Lin et al, 2023). Lu et al. (2015) identifies accuracy, completeness, objectivity, relevance, timeliness, credibility, and accessibility as key dimensions of Information Quality. Moreover, information quality refers to people's understanding of the quality of information presented on the system (Ghasemaghahi and Hassanein, 2019). Also, focusing on the information or service quality of mobile apps and discovering its significant effect on consumer's intentions to use online food delivery (Ray et al., 2019). Furthermore, in the e-commerce context, the study shows that information quality had a positive impact on the intention to use by reinforcing the attitude of customers' namely trust (Escobar-Rodriguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014).

2.1.3 Ease of Use

The definition of ease of use was how easy the system is to navigate (Assaker, 2020). The factor of ease of use about to the degree to which an invention can be understood easily, learned and operate in a manner that does not involve hard work (Ramayah & Lo, 2007). Furthermore, Khechine et al. (2014) found that customers



can feel that some obstacles related to the use of technology exist at the earliest stages of different behavior, but once they are used to the technology, the perceived ease of use will become more significant. Moreover, (Lee et al., 2017) found that perceived ease of use positively influences user adoption and continued usage of food delivery apps. Furthermore, (Yeo et al., 2017) also confirmed that perceived ease of use has a significant effect on user attitudes towards food delivery apps and their intention to use them again.

2.1.4 Price

Price is the cash value on individual must offer in trade for a service or a product in as purchase treaty (Nagle et al., 2010). Consumers get opportunities to browse for retrieving information such as compare prices when they use mobile technology for ordering food online (Grunert & Ramus, 2005). From (Alalwan, 2020), the research examined and confirmed that reviews, rating, and price influenced the intentions to reuse mobile food ordering apps. Moreover, regarding to (Wang et al. 2021) research, they found that price significantly influences consumers' intention to use online food delivery services.

2.1.5 Perceived Convenience

Consumers tend to utilize the online food delivery service for its convenience benefits of swapping the long traditional process with shorter time of placing online orders (Gunden et al., 2020). Convenience explained as any component of customer experience that saves the customer's time and effort (Alalwan, 2020). According to research, people demand food for delivery because of convenience (Kimes, 2011). The recent trend to catch up is the online food delivery system. With people's fast-paced lifestyles, there seems to be no time to cook or even dine in a restaurant for a luxury three-course meal, unless it is for a special event such as an anniversary or a birthday (Aryani et al., 2023). The study also found that perceived convenience had a stronger impact on intention to use online food delivery applications among younger consumers (Hong et al., 2021). The waiting period might be well utilized by completing other duties around the house or at work (Londis, 2021).

2.1.6 Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Platform

Intention to use stands for an individual's desire to use a certain technology system (Wang et al., 2006). Customers' intention to consume online food delivery services is measured by their desire to order food through mobile applications (Ling et al., 2010). Some of the online food delivery services companies, such as Grab Food and Food Panda, have made online food ordering more accessible and convenient for customers (Statista, 2020). The test result shows four elements that will influence the consumers' intention to use 53 the online food delivery services: the price offered, delivery time, perceived ease of use and perceived convenience (Aryani et al., 2023).

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 Prior online purchase experience and Intention to use online food delivery applications.

Prior online purchase experience means a person's history or background in buying goods or services through online platforms. Thus, they have used or heard about your online platform before they know you. For instance, individuals who have used online food delivery (OFD) services from restaurant websites or mobile applications would have some familiarity with the OFD process. That is why they can confidently utilize the food delivery service by placing online orders, given their prior satisfaction with the OFD service (Akar & Nasir, 2015). After they have tried the services and are satisfied with that the customer will look forward to using it again. Study from Yeo et al. (2017) indicates that if they experience good service, it will incur them to use that service again. In contrast, they will probably not be interested in using it for the second time once they have been through a bad experience. Moreover, the research written by Prabowo and Nugroho (2018) and Mihić et al. (2018) found that individuals with more online shopping experience were more likely to use online food delivery services. Similarly, research by Munshi et al. (2020) demonstrated that positive online purchase experiences were associated with increased intention to use food delivery applications. As a



result, it will motivate them to utilize the OFD service for a subsequent occasion.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *There is no significant influence of prior online purchase experience orientation on the intention to use online food delivery application among smartphone users Bangkok.*

2.2.2 Information quality and Intention to use online food delivery applications.

Information quality refers to the measure of how good or valuable the information provided is for its intended use and it is a multidimensional concept encompassing various aspects like accuracy, completeness, timeliness, relevance, and accessibility (Lee & Kozar, 2012). Information quality is an important factor that can influence customers' intention to use online food delivery applications. Customers want to be able to trust that the information they are seeing on the app is accurate and up to date. If they have doubts about the quality of the information, they are less likely to use the app. Information quality had a positive impact on customer satisfaction and willingness to continue using chat robots in the context of online food delivery (Ashfaq et al., 2020). Moreover, information quality had a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction and continuous use intention of mobile food delivery apps (Ran & Li, 2022). Furthermore, there are several studies that have established a positive relationship between information quality and the intention to use OFDAs. Users are more likely to trust and engage with applications that provide accurate, complete, and timely information (Lee & Kozar, 2012; Kim et al., 2020).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *There is no significant influence of information quality on the intention to use online food delivery application among smartphone users Bangkok.*

2.2.3 Ease of use and Intention to use online food delivery applications.

Ease of use is a measure of how easy it is for a user to learn and use a product or service. According to

research, it has shown that ease of use is a significant predictor of intention to use online food delivery applications (Waris et al., 2023). There are several reasons why ease of use is important for online food delivery applications. First, online food delivery applications are typically used on mobile devices, which can have small screens and limited input capabilities. This makes it important for the user interface to be simple and easy to navigate. Second, online food delivery applications often involve a complex process of browsing menus, placing orders, and tracking deliveries (Al-Debei & Al-Emari, 2014). For example, Roh and Park (2020) observed a positive association between Ease of Use and Intention to use in South Korea, highlighting the importance of a user-friendly interface and intuitive navigation.

It is important for the application to make this process as easy and efficient as possible for the user. This means that users who perceive an online food delivery application to be easy to use are more likely to express an intention to use it.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *There is no significant influence of Ease of Use on the intention to use online food delivery application among smartphone users Bangkok.*

2.2.4 Price and Intention to use online food delivery applications.

Price is the amount of money that a customer is willing to pay for a product or service. It is one of the most important factors that consumers consider when making a purchase decision. In terms of online food delivery applications (OFDA), price refers to the total cost of ordering and receiving food from a restaurant through a third-party platform. This includes the cost of the food itself, as well as any delivery fees, service charges, or taxes.

According to the study by Chaveesuk et al. (2021) found that food delivery service fees are the most influential factor in customers' decisions to use online food delivery platforms in Thailand. Similarly, a study by Chai and Yat (2019) found that price is a key factor in consumers' choices of online food delivery services in Malaysia. Jaroenwanit et al. (2022) found that the main

determinant affecting the decision to utilize online food delivery platforms is the cost of the food delivery service. As a result, if customers found that the price is not reasonable or affordable, they will not use it. This means that price can affect the intention to use online food delivery applications.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *There is no significant influence of price on the intention to use online food delivery application among smartphone users Bangkok.*

2.2.5 Perceived convenience and Intention to use online food delivery applications.

Perceived convenience is the consumer's subjective assessment of how easy and effortless it is to use a product or service. Also, Fast delivery times, accurate orders, and hot food upon arrival enhance possession convenience and lead to positive user experiences, thereby increasing intention to use (Huang et al., 2020). Research has shown that perceived convenience is a significant predictor of intention to use online food delivery applications (Hong et al., 2021). This is because consumers are more likely to use a service that they perceive to be easy and effortless. The study from Lee & Kozar, (2020), Easy access to applications, such as having the app readily available on their smartphones, has been linked to increased usage. As a result, consumers are more likely to use a service that they perceive to be easy and effortless because they are more likely to use a service that they perceive to be easy and effortless.

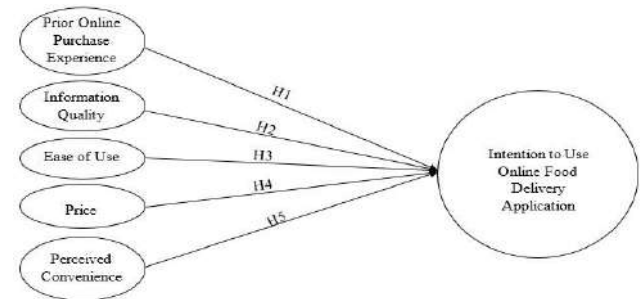
Hypothesis 5 (H5): *There is no significant influence of perceived convenience on the intention to use online food delivery application among smartphone users Bangkok.*

2.3 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is created on previous study based on three theoretical concepts (Hooi et al., 2021; Muhammad et al., 2021; Aryani et al., 2023) and testing literature revealing the independent information quality, attitude, social influence, perceived convenience, and price on the intention to use online

food delivery applications (OFDAs). The conceptual framework determines the influencing the OFDA as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *Factors influencing customers' intention to use online food delivery mobile application in Bangkok by authors.*



3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

The objective of this research is to determine the in-app factors that influence the intention to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok. These determinant factors include an individual's prior online purchase experience with online food delivery applications, the quality of the information provided on the application, the ease of use of the application, the prices offered by the application, and an individual's perceived convenience regarding the use of online food delivery application. This study utilizes quantitative research methods, namely Item-Objective Congruence for content validity, Cronbach's Alpha for internal consistency reliability test, etc.

The questionnaire is divided into three parts, consisting of thirty-three questions in total. All the questions relate to the six variables from the research's conceptual framework, three screening questions, seven demographic profiling questions, and twenty-three questions related to measuring the variables.

The content validity test is conducted through the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index to screen the quality of the items in the questionnaire. A pilot test,



specifically an internal consistency reliability test for discovering the interrelatedness of the items within the questionnaire is completed with the use of Cronbach's Alpha and a small group of 50 samples. Multiple Linear Regression was then applied on the variable group consisting of all six variables.

This research also employs secondary data from reliable and reputable sources. These sources can be books, academic journals, online articles, and online databases.

3.2 Sampling Plan

3.2.1 Target Population

The target population of this research are individuals living in Bangkok, specifically those who use online food delivery service through an online food delivery application through a smartphone in Bangkok, Thailand. According to macrotrends.net (2023), the population in Bangkok is 11,070,000. This includes those living in urban, suburban, and rural areas of the fifty districts of Bangkok.

3.2.2 Sample Size

Since there are limitations in knowing the exact population, this research utilizes the Cochran's Formula at 95% confidence level to determine the sample size (Cochran, 1977). According to the calculation, the sample size for this research is 385 Thai and non-Thai nationality respondents living in Bangkok and possess a smartphone with online access.

3.2.3 Sample Procedures

The researchers chose to employ non-probability sampling method depending on the ease of accessing a person of interest, in other words, convenience sampling. Additionally, snowball sampling will be used so that the chosen respondents can provide referrals to other potential respondents. The respondents of the online questionnaire are screened during the answering process. The sampling methods were chosen due to time constraints, and the ease of access and distribution of the online questionnaire. On top of that, the screening

questions will allow the researcher to receive responses that align with the research's objective.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

3.3.1 Content validity (IOC)

The researcher made use of Item- Objective Congruence (IOC) Index to measure the content validity of the questions in the questionnaire in order to screen the questions' quality. There is 1 expert who provided the opinion and scored each item on the questionnaire. Questions with a lower score than 0.5 were revised, and questions with a higher score than 0.5 were reserved. Meanwhile, questions with a score of -1 were removed from the questionnaire. The result of the IOC validity test on the questionnaire returned a score of 1.00 for all applicable questions as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *The Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) Index with one expert*

Variables	Before Number of items	After Number of items	IOC Scoring Result
Prior Online Purchase Experience (PO)	5	5	All items applicable
Information Quality (IQ)	4	3	All items applicable
Ease of Use (EU)	4	4	All items applicable
Price (P)	4	4	All items applicable
Perceived Convenience (PC)	5	3	All items applicable
Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application (I)	5	4	All items applicable

3.3.2 Reliability Test (Pilot Test)

To perform an internal consistency reliability test, the researcher selected a group of 50 respondents to participate in the pilot test. The purpose of this test is to



find out how closely related a set of questions in the questionnaire are as a group.

The researcher has chosen Cronbach's Alpha as the technique to conduct the reliability test. Cronbach's Alpha was developed by Cronbach (1951) to provide a measure of the internal consistency of a test. It is expressed as a number between 0 and 1. Internal consistency describes the extent to which all the items in a test measure the same concept or construct and hence it is connected to the inter-relatedness of the items within the test (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

In the pilot test, the researcher applied Cronbach's Alpha to evaluate the five independent variables and one dependent variable using the data from 50 respondents. These five independent variables are prior online purchase experience, information quality, ease of use, price, and perceived convenience. The one dependent variable is the intention to use online food delivery application. The test results indicated that all items score above 0.80 and have good strength of association as shown in Table 2. Thus, the questionnaire is reliable and can be further used in conducting this study.

Table 2. *The Value of Reliability Analysis of Each Item and Variable in this Study (n=50)*

Item No.	Variables/Measurement Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
	Prior Online Purchase Experience	0.829	Good
PO1	I have had a positive experience with food	0.826	Good

	delivery online platforms in the past.		
PO2	I find it convenient to order or purchase online through my smartphone.	0.823	Good
PO3	I am willing to pay a premium for the convenience of the online application.	0.829	Good
PO4	I am concerned about the safety of my personal information when ordering online.	0.84	Good
PO5	I am comfortable using my smartphone to make online payments.	0.826	Good
Information Quality		0.824	Good
IQ1	I can easily find the information I need on the online food delivery application.	0.823	Good
IQ2	The information provided on the online food delivery application is reliable.	0.826	Good
IQ3	I am satisfied with the overall quality of the online food delivery information in application.	0.824	Good
Ease of Use		0.824	Good
EU1	It is easy for me to navigate the online food delivery application.	0.822	Good
EU2	I can easily find the food and drinks I am looking for on the online food delivery application.	0.825	Good
EU3	The online food delivery application is easy to use, even for people who are not tech-savvy.	0.828	Good



EU4	I can easily place an order on the online food delivery application.	0.822	Good
Price		0.827	Good
P1	I am willing to pay more for online food delivery than for traditional food delivery methods.	0.825	Good
P2	I compare the prices of different online food delivery apps before ordering.	0.83	Good
P3	The price of online food delivery is a major factor in my decision to use or not use these services.	0.827	Good
P4	I am more likely to use an online food delivery application if the prices are competitive.	0.825	Good
Perceived Convenience		0.823	Good
PC1	Food delivery apps make it easy to track my order and know when it will arrive.	0.824	Good
PC2	The online food delivery applications offer convenient payment options.	0.824	Good
PC3	I can save time by ordering food online instead of cooking or going to a restaurant.	0.822	Good
Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application		0.824	Good
I1	I have a strong intention to regularly use the online food delivery application in the upcoming months.	0.822	Good
I2	I am planning to increase my utilization of the	0.825	Good

	online food delivery platform.		
I3	The next time I decide to order food, I am likely to use an online food delivery application.	0.822	Good
I4	Given the choice, I would prefer using an online food delivery application over other methods of ordering food.	0.825	Good

4. Findings

4.1 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

This descriptive analysis is based on the primary data collected by the questionnaire distributed through online channels by the researcher. The researcher collected the data from 394 respondents, 102.34% of the sample size, in which 9 respondents were eliminated. Afterward, the researcher continued with the data analysis on 385 eligible respondents, which is 100% of the sample size. The researcher has included seven questions regarding the demographic information of the respondents. This is to gain an insight into the basic information on the respondents.

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution and percentage of demographic information from a sample size of 385 respondents. It is as follows:

Age: Age refers to the length of time in years that a person has lived. The largest age range of target respondents is 18-24 years old from 140 respondents or 36.4% of all respondents. The second age range is 25-34 years old from 118 respondents or 30.6% of all respondents. The third age range is 35-44 years old with 71 respondents or 18.4% of all respondents. The fourth range is 45-54 years old from 33 respondents or 8.6% of all respondents. The final age is of those over 55 years old from 23 respondents or 6.0% of all respondents.

Gender: We classified gender into three groups which are male, female, LGBTQ+, and also choice for



people who prefer not to say. According to the data gathered from 385 with 192 females or 49.9% of all respondents, and 161 males, or 41.8% of all respondents. There are a small group of 6.8% and 1.6% which are LGBTQ+ and a group of people who prefer not to say respectively.

Household Number: The result of the survey indicates that 91 target respondents have 3 household members or 23.6%, 22.9% or 88 respondents each have 2 people or 5 people or more in their household. The respondents who have 4 people in their household calculated to 14% or 54 respondents of all target respondents.

Monthly Income: The majority of 385 target respondents separate to respondents to have income between 30,001 – 45,000 Baht calculated to 34.8% or 134 respondents, followed by 98 respondents who have income between 15,001 – 30,000 Baht calculated to 25.5% of all target respondents, 83 respondents who have income over 60,001 Baht which calculated to 21.6%, 10.4% of all target respondents have income less than 15,000 Baht and, 30 respondents who have income between 45,001 – 60,000 Baht calculated to 7.8%

Apps Usage: 203 target respondents are using online food delivery applications weekly, which is calculated to be 52.7%. Ordering monthly represents 63 responses or 16.4% and ordering dairy represents 61 responses or 15.8%. The respondents who order less than once a month are calculated to be 15.1% or 58 target respondents.

Most Important Factor: From 385 target respondents, Convenience is the most chosen factor with 233 respondents or 60.5%, followed by the price which was calculated to 22.1% of target respondents, 35 respondents chose prior purchase experience which represents 9.1% of respondents, 26 respondents chose factor of ease of use which calculated to 6.8%, only 2 respondents or 1% chose information quality, and only 0.5% or 2 respondents chose others factor as their important factor.

Favorite App: Based on the survey, the majority of 215 respondents, or 55.58% of all target respondents chose Grab as their favorite application, the second

group including 139 respondents, or 36.1% chose Lineman as their favorite application, the third of respondents with 18 respondents or 4.7% chose Robin Hood, the fourth of respondents with 7 respondents or 1.8% chose Food Panda and 6 respondents or 1.6% chose others as favorite application.

Table 3. *Demographic Information Analysis by using Frequency Distribution and Percentage (n=385)*

Demographic Factors	Freq.	%
Age		
18-24 years old	140	36.4 %
25-34 years old	118	30.6 %
35-44 years old	71	18.4 %
45-54 years old	33	8.6 %
Over 55 years old	23	6.0 %
Total	385	100%
Gender		
Male	161	41.8 %
Female	192	49.9 %
LGBTQ+	26	6.8 %
Prefer not to say	6	1.6 %
Total	385	100%
Household Number		
1 person	64	16.6 %
2 people	88	22.9 %
3 people	91	23.6 %
4 people	54	14.0 %
5 or more people	88	22.9 %
Total	385	100%
Monthly Income		
Less than 15,000 Baht	40	10.4 %
15,001 - 30,000 Baht	98	25.5 %
30,001 - 45,000 Baht	134	34.8 %
45,001 - 60,000 Baht	30	7.8 %
More than 60,001 Baht	83	21.6 %
Total	385	100%
Apps Usage		
Daily	61	15.8 %
Weekly	203	52.7 %
Monthly	63	16.4 %
Less than once a month	58	15.1 %
Total	385	100%
Most Important Factor		
Price	85	22.1 %



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Ease of Use	26	6.8 %
Convenience	233	60.5 %
Prior Experience	35	9.1 %
Information Quality	4	1.0 %
Others	2	0.5 %
Total	385	100%
Favorite App		
Grab	215	55.8 %
Line Man	139	36.1 %
Food Panda	7	1.8 %
Robin Hood	18	4.7 %
Others	6	1.6 %
Total	385	100%

4.2 Descriptive analysis with a mean and standard deviation

This section shows a summary of the Mean and Standard Deviation values for each group variable consisting of the prior online purchase experience, information quality, ease of use, price, perceived convenience, and intention to use online food delivery applications. This section uses criteria provided by Imsard et al. (2021) to evaluate the mean scores which are displayed below:

The criteria for the interpretation of mean scores

Mean Score	Interpretation
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly agree
3.41 - 4.20	Agree
2.61 - 3.40	Neutral
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly disagree

Table 4 presents findings from 385 respondents with no missing data. The highest mean for prior online purchase experience was "convenience from ordering via smartphone" at 4.37, while the lowest was "concerns about online safety" at 3.66. Standard deviations varied,

with the highest at 1.036 for safety concerns and the lowest at 0.826 for smartphone convenience.

Information quality in Table 4 scores among 385 respondents revealed the highest mean at 4.20 for "easily accessible information" and the lowest at 3.92 for "reliability of information." Standard deviations ranged from 0.846 (for reliability) to 0.774 (for overall quality satisfaction).

For ease of use in Table 4, a top mean of 4.22 for "easy navigation" and a lowest mean of 3.80 for "ease of use for non-tech-savvy users." Standard deviations varied, with the highest at 0.951 for tech-savvy ease and the lowest at 0.833 for order placement ease.

Regarding price, the data in Table 4 among 385 respondents demonstrated the highest mean at 4.49 for "preference for competitive prices" and the lowest at 3.81 for "price comparison before ordering." Standard deviations ranged from 1.189 (for price comparison) to 0.743 (for competitive prices).

In terms of perceived convenience, Table 4 indicated a top mean of 4.46 for "order tracking convenience" and a lowest mean of 4.40 for "payment convenience." Standard deviations ranged from 0.833 (for payment convenience) to 0.787 (for order tracking).

Lastly, the results for intention to use the online food delivery application among 385 respondents revealed the highest mean at 4.11 for "strong intention to use regularly" and the lowest mean at 3.89 for "planning to increase utilization." Standard deviations varied, with the highest at 0.965 for "preference over other methods" and the lowest at 0.893 for "strong intention to use regularly."

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation

Prior Online Purchase Experience	Mean	S.D.	
PO1: I have had a positive experience with food delivery online platforms in the past.	4.13	0.851	Agree



PO2: I find it convenient to order or purchase online through my smartphone.	4.37	0.826	Strongly Agree
PO3: I am willing to pay a premium for the convenience of the online application.	4.2	0.922	Agree
PO4: I am concerned about the safety of my personal information when ordering online.	3.66	1.036	Agree
PO5: I am comfortable using my smartphone to make online payments.	3.93	0.995	Agree
Information Quality			
IQ1: I can easily find the information I need on the online food delivery application.	4.2	0.824	Agree
IQ2: The information provided on the online food delivery application is reliable.	3.92	0.846	Agree
IQ3: I am satisfied with the overall quality of the online food delivery information in application.	4.17	0.774	Agree
Ease of Use			
EU1: It is easy for me to navigate the online food delivery application.	4.42	0.854	Strongly Agree
EU2: I can easily find the food and drinks I am looking for on the online food delivery application.	4.2	0.876	Agree
EU3: The online food delivery application is easy to use, even for people who are not tech-savvy.	3.8	0.951	Agree
EU4: I can easily place an order on the online food delivery application.	4.33	0.833	Strongly Agree
Price			
P1: I am willing to pay more for online food delivery than for traditional food delivery methods.	4.08	1.006	Agree
P2: I compare the prices of different online food delivery apps before ordering.	3.81	1.189	Agree
P3: The price of online food delivery is a major factor in	4.34	0.827	Strongly Agree

my decision to use or not use these services.			
P4: I am more likely to use an online food delivery application if the prices are competitive.	4.49	0.743	Strongly Agree
Perceived Convenience			
PC1: Food delivery apps make it easy to track my order and know when it will arrive.	4.46	0.787	Strongly Agree
PC2: The online food delivery applications offer convenient payment options.	4.4	0.833	Strongly Agree
PC3: I can save time by ordering food online instead of cooking or going to a restaurant.	4.44	0.789	Strongly Agree
Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application			
I1: I have a strong intention to regularly use the online food delivery application in the upcoming months.	4.11	0.893	Agree
I2: I am planning to increase my utilization of the online food delivery platform.	3.89	0.952	Agree
I3: The next time I decide to order food, I am likely to use an online food delivery application.	4.05	0.894	Agree
I4: Given the choice, I would prefer using an online food delivery application over other methods of ordering food.	4.04	0.965	Agree

4.3 Hypothesis testing results

To conduct the hypothesis testing, the researcher applied linear regression from statistical analytical methodology to investigate the significant impact of variables such as significant influence of price, perceived convenience, information quality, and ease of use intention to use online food delivery applications. Concerning linear regression analysis, the researchers used a multiple linear regression with R-square to investigate the amount of variation in the dependent variables which is explained by the independent variables to investigate the influence of factors on intention to use online food delivery applications in

Bangkok. According to Hair et al. (2018), R-square (R^2) shows how much of the variation in the data can be attributed to the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H2, H3, H4, H5

Statistical Hypothesis

H_0 : There is no significant influence of prior online purchase experience orientation (H1), Information Quality (H2), Ease of Use (H3), Price (H4), or Perceived Convenience (H5) on the intention to use online food delivery application among smartphone users Bangkok.

H_a : There is a significant influence of prior online purchase experience orientation (H1), Information Quality (H2), Ease of Use (H3), Price (H4), and Perceived Convenience (H5) on the intention to use online food delivery application among smartphone users Bangkok.

Table 5 indicates the analysis calculation result by multiple linear regression which significant influence of prior online purchase experience on intention to use online food delivery applications in Bangkok. According to Hypothesis 2, 3, and 4, information quality analysis results show that the significant level or P-value from this study is less than 0.001, according to the P-value is less than the standard limit of 0.05. Consequently, the outcome indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. Nevertheless, hypothesis 1 and 5, prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience analysis result indicates that the significant level or P-value from this study is 0.60, P-value becomes more than 0.05. Therefore, the result can be implied that the null hypothesis was not rejected. To sum up, the result shows that there is a significant of information quality, ease of use, and price

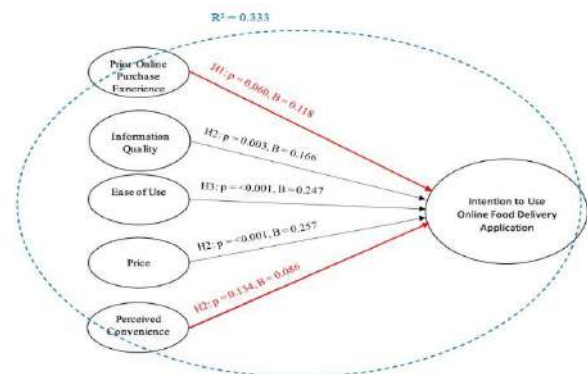
Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Variables	B	SE B	β	t >1.96	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
Prior Online Purchase Experience	0.118	0.062	0.094	1.890	0.060	1.430	Fail to Reject
Information Quality	0.166	0.055	0.151	3.020	0.003*	1.440	Rejected
Ease of Use	0.247	0.056	0.225	4.390	<.001*	1.520	Rejected
Price	0.257	0.054	0.239	4.800	<.001*	1.420	Rejected
Perceived Convenience	0.086	0.057	0.078	1.500	0.134	1.550	Fail to Reject

Note: $R^2 = 0.341$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.333$, * $p = < 0.05$, Dependent Variable = Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application

among intention to use online food delivery applications in Bangkok, whereas there is no prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience among intention to use online food delivery applications in Bangkok.

Figure 2. The results of research framework



Source. Authors.

Furthermore, the regression analysis result indicated that this model has a variance of 33.3% and this model was significant with a P-value less than 0.05. The R-square from the analysis is 0.333 and the confidence level of this model is 95%. According to the result, it can be concluded that prior online purchase experience ($B = 0.118$, $p\text{-value} > 0.05$) and perceived convenience ($B = 0.086$, $p\text{-value} > 0.05$) has no significant influence on intention to use online food delivery application in Bangkok. However, information quality ($B = 0.166$, $p < 0.05$), ease of use ($B = 0.247$, $p < 0.05$), and price ($B = 0.257$, $p < 0.05$) has a significant influence on intention to use online food delivery application in Bangkok as shown in Figure 2. In addition, the result from the value of the variance inflation factor (VIF) of all five variables is around 1. Since VIF is less than 5, it implies that no issue occurred in multicollinearity.



5. Discussions, Conclusions, and

Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Research Intentions

This research aims to analyze five factors influencing customers' intentions to use online food delivery applications through smartphones in Bangkok. The research questions focus on the impact of prior online purchase experience, information quality, ease of use, delivery fee, and convenience. A sample size of 385 respondents was determined using Cochran's method after estimating the population size based on MacroTrends data.

The researchers employed closed-ended questions in a questionnaire with three sections: screening, demographic profile, and variables related to the study. The Cronbach's Alpha test confirmed the questionnaire's reliability, scoring above 0.6. Data analysis involved the use of mean and standard deviation for five variables: perceived convenience, ease of use, price, information quality, and prior online purchase experience.

Demographic data from the 385 respondents revealed the majority were aged 18-24 (36.4%), female (49.9%), with 3 members in their household (33.6%), and a monthly income between 30,000 - 45,000 Baht (34.8%). Most used online food delivery weekly (52.7%), prioritizing convenience

(60.5%), and favoring Grab (55.58%).

The mean and standard deviation of the variables ranked perceived convenience highest ($\bar{x} = 4.43$, $SD = 0.803$), followed by ease of use ($\bar{x} = 4.19$, $SD = 0.876$), price ($\bar{x} =$

4.18 , $SD = 0.941$), information quality ($\bar{x} = 4.11$, $SD = 0.815$), and prior online purchase experience ($\bar{x} = 4.058$, SD

$= 0.926$).

The research employed multiple linear regression to test five hypotheses. The findings rejected the null hypothesis for information quality, ease of use, and price ($p < 0.06$), indicating a significant influence on the intention to use online food delivery applications. However, the null hypothesis for prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience was not rejected.

Summarizes the hypothesis testing results:

H1: No significant influence of prior online purchase experience on intention ($p = 0.060$) - Fail to Reject

H2: Significant influence of information quality on intention ($p = 0.003$) - Rejected

H3: Significant influence of ease of use on intention ($p < 0.001$) - Rejected

H4: Significant influence of price on intention ($p < 0.001$) - Rejected

H5: No significant influence of perceived convenience on intention ($p = 0.134$) - Fail to Reject

The researcher ranked the influencing factors based on their strength in affecting the intention to use online food delivery applications. The findings indicate that the most influential factor in the intention to use online food delivery applications are price, with a standardized coefficient of 0.239.

Following closely is Ease of Use, ranked second with a coefficient of 0.225. Information quality takes the third rank with a standardized coefficient of 0.151. The factors of prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience have lower standardized coefficients, suggesting a comparatively weaker influence on the intention to use online food delivery applications. The results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Summary strengths of influencing factors of each dependent variable.



Dependent Variable	Rank	Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficient
Price (P)	1st	Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application	0.239
Ease of Use (EU)	2nd	Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application	0.225
Information Quality (IQ)	3rd	Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application	0.151
Prior Online		Intention to Use	0.094
Purchase Experience (PO)		Online Food Delivery Application	
Perceived Convenience (PC)		Intention to Use Online Food Delivery Application	0.078

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study delved into five key research questions exploring the nexus between prior online purchase experience, information quality, ease of use, price, and perceived convenience concerning the intention to use online food delivery applications. Employing a quantitative approach, the study gathered data from a sample of 385 respondents through the convenience sampling method. The questionnaire design, comprising closed-ended questions, underwent rigorous testing for reliability using the Cronbach Alpha method, ensuring the validity of the questions. Statistical analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression (MLR).

Demographically, the majority of respondents were female (49.9%), predominantly in the 18–24 age group (36.4%). Most respondents resided with three household members (33.6%), with a monthly income ranging between 30,000 - 45,000 Baht (34.8%). A significant portion of respondents utilized the application weekly

(52.7%), and Grab emerged as the preferred choice for the majority (55.58%).

Examining five variables— prior purchase experience, information quality, ease of use, price, and perceived convenience—the study found that perceived convenience exhibited the highest mean and standard deviation, followed by ease of use, price, and information quality, with prior online purchase experience ranking lowest. Notably, information quality, ease of use, and price demonstrated a significant influence on the intention to use online food delivery applications in Bangkok. However, perceived convenience and prior online purchase experience did not exhibit a significant direct impact on users' intentions.

In summary, the study underscores that price and ease of use exert the most robust and noteworthy effects on users' intention to use online food delivery applications, closely followed by the quality of information provided. This emphasizes the pivotal role of developing user- friendly applications with competitive pricing and comprehensive information to enhance the user experience and foster repeat usage of online food delivery platforms.

5.3 Discussion Based on Findings

The results of the hypothesis testing provide valuable insights into the factors influencing the intention to use online food delivery applications in Bangkok. Notably, information quality, ease of use, and price emerged as significant contributors to user intentions, while prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience did not demonstrate a significant impact.

1. Information Quality: The study establishes a substantial link between information quality and the intention to use online food delivery applications. The p-value of 0.003, below the significance threshold of 0.05, supports the significance of this relationship. The robust unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.166 emphasizes the considerable impact of accurate and reliable information



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on user adoption. This finding aligns with prior research, such as Muhammad et al. (2021), emphasizing the pivotal role of information quality in facilitating user-friendly application usage.

2. Ease of Use: Similarly, the study highlights the crucial role of ease of use in influencing user intentions. With a p-value of less than 0.001 and a substantial unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.247, the research affirms a strong positive relationship between the ease of use and the intention to use online food delivery applications. This resonates with findings from Lee et al. (2017), emphasizing that user-friendly interfaces encourage sustained usage.

3. Price: The impact of price on user intentions is a significant finding, supported by a p-value less than 0.001 and an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.257. This aligns with the findings of Aryani et al. (2023) and Chaveesuk et al. (2021), emphasizing the pivotal role of pricing in users' decisions to utilize online food delivery platforms in Thailand. This underscores the importance of competitive pricing as a motivator for user adoption.

4. Prior Online Purchase Experience and Perceived Convenience: Contrarily, the study did not find a significant impact of prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience on the intention to use online food delivery applications. The p-values of 0.060 and 0.134, respectively, suggest that these factors may not be direct determinants of user intentions in this context. It is possible that these variables are already encapsulated within users' overall satisfaction, rendering them less influential in predicting intentions.

5. Model R-square: The model's R-square of 34.1% indicates that the included independent variables (information quality, ease of use, and price) explain a substantial proportion of the variation in the intention to use online food delivery applications. However, the remaining 65.9% of unexplained variance suggests the presence of other factors not considered in the model. Future research could explore additional variables to enhance the model's explanatory power.

In conclusion, this in-depth analysis underscores the pivotal roles of information quality, ease of use, and price in shaping user intentions to use online food delivery applications. Understanding these key factors provides valuable insights for platform developers and marketers to optimize user experience and drive adoption.

5.4 Recommendations Based on Findings

The findings of this research underscore the significant influence of information quality, ease of use, and price on the intention to use online food delivery applications in Bangkok. Building upon these insights, the following recommendations are put forth to strengthen the relationships between variables and enhance the overall effectiveness of online food delivery platforms:

1. Focus on Dynamic Pricing: Given that price emerged as the most influential factor, online food delivery applications in Bangkok should consider implementing dynamic pricing models. Adapting prices based on demand, peak hours, and specific time periods can provide competitive rates and attract cost-conscious consumers. Strategies such as offering lower prices during peak periods, where competing platforms may have higher fees, can incentivize users to choose a particular service.

2. Prioritize User Experience and Ease of Use: To enhance user experience, platforms should prioritize intuitive and user-friendly designs. Clear menus, robust search functions, and streamlined order placement processes are essential. Despite the multifunctional nature of contemporary applications, simplicity remains paramount. Users appreciate applications that are easy to navigate, ensuring accessibility for individuals with varying levels of technological proficiency. A seamless user experience contributes significantly to application success.

3. Enhance Information Quality: Recognizing the impact of information quality, online food delivery applications should prioritize the accuracy and comprehensiveness of information presented on their platforms. This encompasses detailed food descriptions,



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including ingredients, allergens, and dietary information. Real-time order tracking, customer reviews, ratings, transparent communication regarding order status and promotions, and high-quality visual elements such as restaurant photos and videos are vital for building trust and engagement.

4. Explore Additional Services: Considering the evolving landscape of consumer preferences, online food delivery applications could explore the integration of additional services beyond food delivery. Integrating complementary services, such as cleaning, messenger services, or taxi bookings, can enhance the overall value proposition for users. Diversification can attract a broader user base and foster continued engagement.

5. Leverage Data Analytics: To refine strategies and offerings, online food delivery platforms should leverage data analytics. Analyzing user behavior, preferences, and feedback can provide valuable insights for continuous improvement. Implementing data-driven decision-making processes can optimize service offerings, promotional campaigns, and overall platform performance.

In conclusion, implementing these recommendations can contribute to a more robust and user-centric online food delivery experience in Bangkok. By addressing the key factors identified in the study, platforms can not only attract new users but also foster loyalty and repeated usage, ultimately ensuring sustained success in the competitive food delivery market.

5.5 Implications Based on Findings and Theories

The study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing the intention to use online food delivery applications in Bangkok. The implications derived from the findings and theories are as follows:

Price competitiveness is crucial. The study highlights the critical importance of setting competitive prices for food delivery services. Users tend to compare

prices before placing an order, and when they perceive lower prices on a platform, they are more likely to proceed with the order. Online food delivery applications in Bangkok should strategically position their pricing to attract and retain users.

User-Friendly Interface Enhances Intention: A userfriendly interface with clear functionality and menu navigation positively influences users' intentions to utilize online food delivery applications. Application developers should prioritize creating platforms that are easy to navigate, ensuring a seamless and intuitive user experience.

Unexplored Territory: Prior Experience and Perceived Convenience: While information quality, ease of use, and price were identified as significant factors, the study does not definitively establish whether prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience contribute to users' intention to use online food delivery applications. Further research is essential to comprehensively understand the role of these factors and their potential impact on user behavior.

Integrated Approach for App Success: In conclusion, developing an online food delivery application with competitive pricing, a clear menu layout, and an easy-to-use interface is crucial for attracting and retaining users. A holistic approach that considers these factors collectively is likely to contribute to the success of the application in the competitive food delivery market in Bangkok.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

Several limitations must be considered in interpreting the study's findings:

Geographical Scope: The study focused solely on individuals in Bangkok, limiting generalizability to other regions.

Device Exclusivity: By concentrating on smartphone users, the study excludes those using alternative devices, potentially overlooking a diverse user base.



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Experience Bias: The sample included only individuals with prior online food delivery experience, potentially overlooking the perspectives of first-time users.

Sampling Bias: The study may overemphasize factors relevant to regular users, leading to potential inaccuracies regarding broader market trends.

Regional Variations: Limited geographical scope may obscure variations in food delivery preferences across different regions.

5.7 Further Studies

In light of the hypothesis testing results, the study suggests avenues for future research:

Exploring Generalization of Prior Online Purchase Experience: Investigate whether the lack of influence from prior online purchase experience is due to a general comfort level with online platforms, diminishing the need for specific prior experience in online food delivery.

In- depth Analysis of Perceived Convenience: Examine perceived convenience in diverse contexts, considering factors such as premium vs. budget applications and varied user segments based on demographics, lifestyle, and food preferences.

Contextualizing Findings: Acknowledge that the influence of prior online purchase experience and perceived convenience is context-dependent, urging further research to unravel the intricate dimensions of these factors.

In summary, a nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding user behavior in online food delivery applications is crucial. Future studies can delve deeper into the identified factors, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the conditions under which these factors significantly impact usage intention.

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The Factors Influencing Banking Employee Engagement in Thailand

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Abstract

This study proposes to investigate factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand. The objectives of this study were: 1) to study the banking employee engagement; and 2) to study the factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand. The questionnaire was distributed to 391 respondents who are banking employees in Thailand. The study utilized quantitative research methods through the convenience sampling technique consisting of online surveys and the Snowball, which uses electronic questionnaires to apply Cronbach's alpha, descriptive and inferential statistical analysis methods to assess the reliability of the questionnaire, demographic information analysis, and hypothesis testing. The study results were: 1) Three crucial factors influencing banking employee engagement consist of administrator leadership, communication, and compensation. Together, these three independent variables could explain 44.0% of the variation in banking employee engagement. 2) The most potential factor influencing banking employee engagement is administrator leadership at 41.4%. Following communication and compensation in descending order 3) Two factors indicated a P value or significant value over 0.05 consist of rewards and recognition and work environment, which interprets these variables as having a significant influence on banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Keywords: Banking employee engagement, Communication, Compensation, Leadership

Introduction of study

Business today must overcome dominant challenges to survive among intensifying competition situations (Bangkok Post, 2023). According to Naufer and Kumar (2020), human resources are essential for driving business successes. Employee engagement is the top requirement for both employees and high-level management. Moreover, Harvard Business School (2016) reveals employee engagement is the top priority and mainly important to businesses in order to accomplish organizational successes.

Rozon (2023) published in Forbes that an uncertain economy, the growing turnover rate, and employee burnout have become huge challenges for several organizations. Increasing the leaving of employees rate

drives the companies to incur higher expenses for requirement processes and training costs, while leading to losing their talented people. The effective prevention of this situation is employee engagement, which is able to assist the companies in saving on expenses and losing talent.

Bangkok Post (2020) disclosed that across Southeast Asia, there is a high attrition rate, which showed Singapore has the highest rate, which is 19.6%, while Thailand equals 15.4. For Thailand, the attrition rate has significantly increased between 2021 and 2022, from 9.1% to 11.4% (Bangkok Post, 2023). The banking industry is an important sector of a modern nation's economy. Practically, they are a primary source of funding. Therefore, individuals, corporations, and



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businesses are able to provide liquidity in the financial system by providing a variety of loans to meet their requirements, including several financial products and services. (Hall, 2023). The banking industry in Thailand highly focuses on enhancing employee engagement in order to reduce the cost of employee turnover, retain their talent, and sustain their long-term business success (Verma, 2021).

Bangkok Bank is committed to increasing employee engagement and ensure productivity in the long term ("Employee Welfare and Well-being", 2023). Additionally, Kasikornbank has pointed out increased employee engagement. They received the reward of HR Asia Best Companies to Work for in Asia 2022 in recognition of exemplary internal management practices that promote employee engagement, staff welfare, and the creation of a good working atmosphere and encourage a culture of teamwork (KBank wins "HR Asia Best Companies to Work for in Asia 2022–Thailand region", highlighting its HR strategy of creating "Possibility to Make an Impact.", 2022). Moreover, United Overseas Bank aims to develop meaningful strategies that are relevant to raising the level of employee engagement, fulfillment, and purpose at the bank (Verma, 2021).

According to the previous basis above, this indicates that employee engagement is a crucial factor in leading the banking business to success productively. Furthermore, the banking industry must mainly develop its strategies to survive the significant increase in attrition rates. Thus, this research aims to investigate and understand the factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Research objectives

The research objectives are to study the banking employee engagement and to study the factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Scope of research

The researcher intends to investigate which factors significantly influence employee engagement. The research tool is an online survey that provides information on the Thai and English languages in order to simplify understanding for respondents. The researcher will randomly select respondents who are currently employed in Thailand.

Literature Review

2.1 Employee Engagement

According to Kahn's (1990) study, as cited in Shuck (2011), employee engagement at the workplace is the perspective and behavior of employees related to their works, people, and activities. Thus, physical, emotional, and cognitive are the three dimensions of employee engagement. The result of three combinations mainly influences the meaningfulness, safety, and availability of employees. Additionally, Naidoo et al. (2019), as cited in Ngobeni et al. (2022), refer to the scope of employee engagement, which is relevant to employees' attention and feelings toward their work. They disclose that employee engagement is the key to driving business performance. Joo (2017) referred to three dimensions of emergent employee engagement as similar to the aspects of Kahn's study, which are cognition, emotion, and behavior of the employee.

2.2 Leadership

Leadership is the effective level of the management-level command to employees, which consists of awareness dimensions, information management, transparency, and ethics (Jagannathan, 2013). The leader level has the ability to build engagement among employees through meaningful communication when they do their work, which relates to effort in business success. Therefore, genuine and encouraging leadership influence can increase



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employees' sense of association and satisfy work enthusiasm (Schneider, 2009).

2.3 Compensation

Compensation was applied to motivate employees to achieve and focus on their work and individual development. Moreover, compensation was divided into two aspects, which are financial and non-financial, and attractive packages include a combination of incentive pay, bonuses, and other rewards such as extra days off and vouchers (Jagannathan, 2013).

2.4 Rewards & Recognition

Referring to the study of Saks (2006), Reward and Recognition, the employee receives reward and recognition in exchange for effective behaviors or works. Thus, the employees will feel committed to responding with high engagement.

2.5 Communication

Communication is the process of internally communicating effectively with employees in an

organization. This factor is an important aspect of governing a successful business, including the necessity of driving employees toward business goals and building a powerful organizational culture (Mufeed & Showkat, 2021).

2.6 Work Environment

The work environment is an environment in the working area that employees perceive in three aspects. There are physical surroundings, job characteristics, and organizational culture. The degree of the work environment has a significant impact on employee engagement in the organization (Dash & Mohanty, 2019).

Conceptual framework

The researcher intends to illustrate the relationship among factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand and examines the factors, which are leadership, rewards and recognition, communication, compensation, and work environment, that influence banking employee engagement. Referring to previous studies, the researcher modifies the conceptual framework for this study as follows:

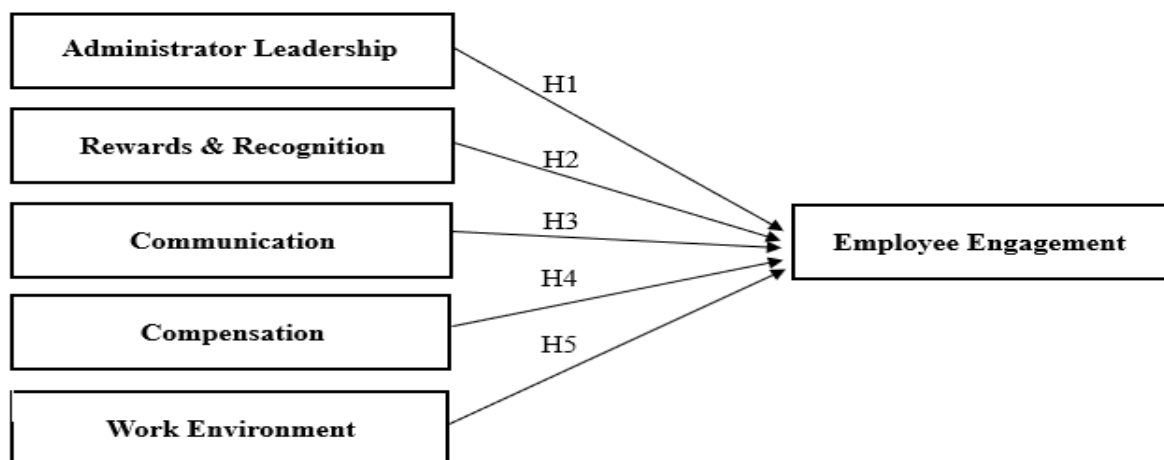


Figure 1: The Factors Influencing Banking Employee Engagement in Thailand

Research hypothesis

According to the conceptual framework of this study, the researcher created five hypotheses. Therefore, examine the factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand as following:

H1a: Administrator leadership has significantly influenced banking employee engagement in Thailand.

H2a: Rewards and Recognition has significantly influenced banking employee engagement in Thailand.

H3a: Communication has significantly influenced banking employee engagement in Thailand.

H4a: Compensation has significantly influenced banking employee engagement in Thailand.

H5a: The work environment has significantly influenced banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Research Methodology

This study indicated that the target respondents were the researcher focuses on respondents who are banking employees in Thailand. The conceptual framework of this study consists of five independent variables: administrator leadership, rewards and recognition, communication, compensation, and work environment. While the dependent variable is employee engagement.

As part of the data collection, the researcher applied the quantitative method. Firstly, this study reliability, which helped the researcher detect non-qualifying questions. The data was collected through a pretesting questionnaire by using Cronbach's Alpha with around 40 respondents, who are banking employees in Thailand.

The study by Gawali (2018) interpreted Cronbach's alpha scores, which follow a rule of thumb.

collected data from approximately 40 respondents by using a questionnaire to test the reliability of each question, which relied on Cronbach's alpha. The reliability test was used before distributing the questionnaire to the target population that was approximately 385 people. The calculation of target population was used the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) technique. The research used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program for data analysis. Additionally, the researcher applied the non-probability sampling method that was used for unknown populations. There are two techniques, which are convenience sampling through published online surveys and snowball sampling through electronic questionnaires in Google Forms platform.

The researcher applied statistical tools to analyze the data from target respondents to summarize it based on appropriate processes and accuracy, which utilize descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis methods.

For the question part, the researcher divided it into three parts: screening questions, demographic information, and opinions on the factors influencing banking employee engagement from respondents.

The Results of Reliability

Pretesting Questionnaire

The pretesting question was used for testing

The study indicated Cronbach's alpha score, which consists of $\alpha \geq 0.9$ as excellent, $0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$ as good, $0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$ as acceptable, $0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$ as questionable, $0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$ as poor, and $0.5 > \alpha$ is unacceptable.

Table 1 The result of reliability testing from the pretesting questionnaire N=43

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha score	No. of Items	Reliability
Employee Engagement	.726	5	Acceptable



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Administrator Leadership	.707	4	Acceptable
Rewards & Recognition	.771	5	Acceptable
Communication	.812	5	Good
Compensation	.868	5	Good
Work Environment	.841	5	Good

According to Table 1, the reliability level of a questionnaire from 43 respondents is demonstrated. The result showed three variables, which are employee engagement, administrator leadership, and rewards and recognition, took scores greater than 0.7 but not over 0.8, which interpreted these variables as acceptable. While three variables, which are communication, compensation, and work environment, took scores greater than 0.8 but not over 0.9, which interpreted these variables as good.

Thus, the result of the reliability level illustrated that this questionnaire is reliable and ready to be distributed to the sample target respondents which are 385 Banking employees in Thailand.

Results of the study

The results of this study are divided into three parts consisting of descriptive analysis, descriptive analysis of dependent and independent variables with mean and standard deviation, and hypothesis testing. The data was collected from 391 respondents who are banking employees in Thailand. Thus, analysis and understanding of the general data are needed to investigate the factors influencing banking employee engagement.

Table2 Summarization related to mean, standard deviation, including interpretation covering independent variables and dependent variable

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Employee Engagement	391	3.8593	.56998	Agree
Administrator leadership	391	3.7136	.80171	Agree
Rewards & Recognition	391	4.1437	.66015	Agree

Descriptive Analysis

The researcher applied the descriptive analysis method to describe quantitative data that was collected from 391 banking employees in Thailand. The results of this study reveal that the gender of respondents is 76.2% or 298 people who are female, 23.3% or 91 people are male, and other gender 0.5% or 2 people. Moreover, the age range 25–35 years old is 57.5%, or 225 people, 36–45 years old is 16.6% or 65 people, 46–55 years old is 11% or 43 people, the age less than 25 years old is 10% or 39 people, and above 55 years old is 4.9% or 19 people. Including, the group of education level is 74.7%, or 292 people with a bachelor's degree, 23% or 90 people with a master's degree, and 2.3% or 9 people with below bachelor's degrees. Additionally, the proportion of the work experience period is 35.0%, or 137 people who have more than 10 years of experience in the bank, 25.6% or 100 people who have 3–5 years of banking experience, 21.2% or 83 people who have experienced less than 3 years, and 18.2% or 71 people who have 6–10 years of banking experience.



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Communication	391	4.0895	.64392	Agree
Compensation	391	4.2517	.72628	Strongly Agree
Work Environment	391	4.2767	.60413	Strongly Agree

The result of the mean and standard deviation scores of independent variables indicated that administrator leadership, rewards and recognition, and communication were agreed upon by the respondents. The standard deviation scores of these three variables are equal to 0.80171, 0.66015, and 0.64392. The other variables, which are compensation and work environment, are strongly agreed upon by the respondents. The standard deviation scores of these two variables are equal to 0.72628 and 0.60413. Finally, the work environment has the highest mean

score of independent variables (4.2767). On the other hand, the lowest mean score is administrator leadership, which consists of 3.7136. Moreover, the highest standard deviation of independent variables is administrator leadership, which is equal to 0.80171.

Additionally, the dependent variable is employee engagement. The result of the mean score is equal to 3.8593. It is shown that the respondents agree with the dependent variable, including that the standard deviation score is equal to 0.56998.

Hypothesis testing

Table 3 The model summary of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	F
1	.670 ^a	.448	.441	.42613	.448	62.553	5	385	.000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Environment, Administrator Leadership, Compensation, Rewards & Recognition, Communication

Table 3 illustrates that the adjusted R square value is equal to 0.441, which is 44.1% of the variation influence on banking employee engagement in Thailand. However, other independent variables that

were not included in the investigated area were equal to 55.9%. The other variables that are not examined in this study may influence banking employee engagement in Thailand as well.

Significant Value & Beta Coefficient Analysis

Table 4 The result of Multiple Linear Regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF



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1	(Constant)	1.399	.168		8.320	.000		
	Administrator leadership	.297	.035	.417	8.439	.000	.586	1.707
	Rewards & Recognition	-.032	.050	-.037	-.629	.530	.422	2.368
	Communication	.158	.053	.179	2.993	.003	.401	2.495
	Compensation	.117	.046	.149	2.554	.011	.419	2.387
	Work Environment	.080	.049	.085	1.625	.105	.521	1.918

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

Table 4 reveals the result of the P value less than 0.05 in this study that there are three variables consisting of administrator leadership, which is 0.000, communication, which is 0.003, and compensation, which is 0.011. It showed that three variables had a significant influence on banking employee engagement in Thailand. While there are two variables regarding rewards and recognition (0.530) and work environment (0.105), The result of the P value over 0.05 illustrated that these two variables did not have a significant influence on banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Based on the standardized coefficients in terms of the beta value of the four independent variables in Table 5, it is revealed four strength variables that influence dependent variables in this study, consist of administrator leadership which is .417 or 41.7%, communication which is .179 or 17.9%, compensation which is .149 or 14.9%, and work environment which is 0.085 or 8.5%.

However, there is one independent variable, which is rewards and recognition. The result of the standardized coefficients in terms of the beta value indicates the negative value, which is equal to -.037, or 3.7%. Thus, the negative value reveals an inverse relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

Lastly, the results of Variance Inflation Factor or VIF score indicated five variables consist of administrator leadership, which is 1.707, rewards and recognition, which is 2.368, communication, which is 2.495, compensation, which is 2.387, and work environment, which is 1.918. These results of VIF scores not exceeding 5 demonstrate the absence of multicollinearity among five independent variables.

In conclusion, the results show that these three variables, which consist of administrator leadership, communication, and compensation significantly influence banking employee engagement in Thailand. Thus, these three variables are allowed to reject the null hypothesis.

On the other hand, the result of the significant values over 0.05 indicates two independent variables, including rewards and recognition and work environment. This finding illustrates that these variables have a negative influence on banking employee engagement. It indicates that these two variables were exhibited to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the researcher desired a second-round analysis of independent variables, which abandoned two. Hence, the second-round analysis of the three independent variables consists of administrator leadership, communication, and compensation. The result demonstrates a slight



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change in several values that influence banking employee engagement in Thailand, as follows:

Table 5 The second-round model summary of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.	F
1	.666a	.444	.440	.42658	.444	103.092	3	387	.000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Compensation, Administrator Leadership, Communication

According to Table 5, the results of second-round analysis demonstrate the adjusted R square value is 0.440, or 44.0%. It indicates that 44.0% of the three variables. However, the suggestion is that 56% of

other variables were not examined in this study. Thus, it may investigate the other factors that are significant in banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Significant Value & Beta Coefficient Analysis

Table 6 The result of Multiple Linear Regression analysis for Significant Variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.492	.148		10.055	.000	.620	1.613
	Administrator leadership	.294	.034	.414	8.600	.000	.458	2.182
	Communication	.176	.050	.198	3.545	.000	.581	1.723
	Compensation	.131	.039	.167	3.349	.001	.620	1.613

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

According to Table 6, the results of significant variables analysis demonstrates that P values, or the significant values below 0.05, consist of the three variables, including administrator leadership,

In addition, the standardized coefficient in terms of the beta value in the above table pointed out three variables that influence dependent variables in this study, there are administrator leadership, which is 0.414, or 41.4%; communication, which is 0.198, or 19.8%; and compensation, which is 0.167, or 16.7%.

which is 0.000, communication, which is 0.000, and compensation, which is 0.001. This finding indicated that three variables have a significant influence on banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Hence, the positive value reveals a direct relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Additionally, this result demonstrated that when administrator leadership, communication, and compensation increase in one unit, it influences the increase in banking employee engagement in Thailand.



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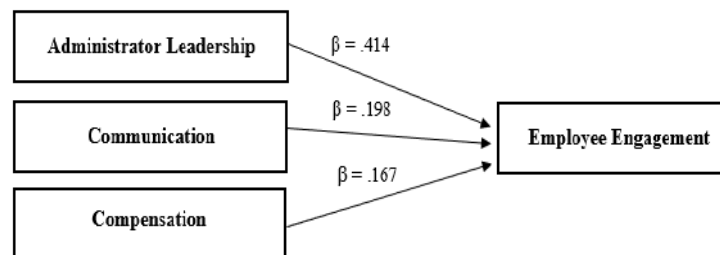


Lastly, the results of the VIF score of three variables, which consist of administrator leadership (VIF = 2.182), communication (VIF = 1.723), and compensation (VIF = 1.613) are less than 5. The result

presented the absence of multicollinearity among the three independent variables of this model. Therefore, these three variables are allowed to reject the null hypothesis.

Figure 2: The Factors Influencing Banking Employee Engagement in Thailand, Model

Refer to the results of this study, is modified the conceptual framework, as below:



Regression equation: $\text{Employee Engagement} = (1.492) + .294 (\text{Administrator Leadership}) + .176 (\text{Communication}) + .131 (\text{Compensation})$

Discussion and Conclusion

This research objective focuses on investigating the factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand, which contain five variables: administrator leadership, rewards and recognition, communication, compensation, and work environment. The researcher collected 391 people who are the target respondents, specifically banking employees in Thailand. The result demonstrates that the majority of target respondents were female, which is 76.2% or 298 people; the age range was 25–35 years old, which is 57.5% or 225 people; the education level was a bachelor's degree, which is 74.7% or 292; and they had worked experience in the bank for more than 10 years, which is 35.0% or 137 people.

Moreover, the result illustrates three variables, including administrator leadership, communication, and compensation, show a P value less than 0.05 or have a significant influence on banking employee engagement in Thailand. In contrast, two variables, including rewards and

recognition and work environment, have a P value over 0.05.

In contrast, the two variables of rewards and recognition and work environment have a P value over 0.05, which indicates that these variables have no significant influence on banking employee engagement in Thailand.

Otherwise, these two variables were identified as having no significant influence on banking employee engagement.

In conclusion, this study offers valuable factors influencing banking employee engagement in Thailand. The outcome illustrates that administrator leadership, communication, and compensation have essential power to contribute to employee engagement in the banks. Moreover, these factors are important to analyze and implement in banking strategies due to the increasing level of employee engagement. In addition, this study points out the interesting dimensions for future studies that should be investigated through rewards and recognition and the work environment in several aspects

to understand the critical factors that influence employee engagement.

Recommendation

According to the outcome of this study, outstanding factors, including administrator leadership, communication, and compensation, have a significant influence on banking employee engagement. The Human Resources Department and Research and Development Department should focus on understanding and developing strategies for increasing the potential of three factors: administrator leadership, communication, and compensation. The outcome indicated that three factors can increase banking employee engagement by 41%. The most powerful factor is administrator leadership, which can increase banking employee engagement by 41.4%. The relevant departments that respond develop and contribute efficient strategies to enhance the level of employee engagement. They should contribute and develop strategies regarding increasing the competency of administrator leadership to exhibit ethics and support employee self-awareness as always. Specifically, they should initiate development programs related to encouraging their management level, which can build employee inspiration and express that they always prioritize transparency, fairness, and equality.

Moreover, communication in the workplace, which is the bank, has a potential of 19.8%. The entrepreneurs or business units are involved with monitoring, supporting connections, and exchanging information within interpersonal and group settings to ensure that the employees can achieve company requirements frequently and efficiently. Additionally, the bank should reveal honest communication and a clear long-term vision to employees, which can boost employee engagement.

Lastly, 16.7% of the compensation that banking employees receive from their bank is

significant to generating banking employee engagement. The entrepreneurs or business units involved in developing strategies should understand and examine how to provide appropriate monetary gifts and financial incentives that are suitable and fair for expenses, well-being, and the stable financial status of their employees.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that three critical factors have a significant influence on banking employee engagement. This outcome points out the distinguished aspects in terms of opportunity choices for banking industries that they can apply or research in several aspects to develop efficiency and appropriate strategies for their businesses, including the prevention of an increase in employee turnover rate and overcoming competitors in the future.

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Influential Factors of Moocs on Piano Lesson at University Level in China

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Abstract

Purpose: With growing need in on-line learning especially during the lock-down periods caused by COVID-19 pandemic, learning the piano at university level in China has faced challenges as the piano students could opt to the virtual mode. Therefore, this study aims: 1) To investigate influential factors on the piano students to use MOOCs in their piano performance lessons at university level in China. 2) To suggest the academics to handle the MOOCs method in the academics and other online learnings for music performance properly, thus being ready for the up-and-coming learning technology. **Research design, data and methodology:** Using quantitative approach via an online survey held from July to October 2023, this study conducted surveyed 402 students who attend on-line piano-performance classes at 295 universities in China. Descriptive and Inferential Analyses are used to analyze the data collected via the questionnaire. **Results:** With Multiple and Simple Linear Regression Analyses, the results show that all independent and mediating variables exhibit their significant influences on the dependent variable—MOOCs Use Intention. **Conclusions:** MOOCs for piano-performance learning shows a strong likelihood to be popular among university students. Improvement of piano teachers' skills, their readiness for virtual interaction, and university preparation for MOOCs using are suggested.

Keywords: Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Autonomy, Social Influence, Learner Instructor Interaction Quality, Learning Engagement, Satisfaction, MOOCs Use Intention

JEL Classification Code: I23, M31, O39

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the globalized knowledge economy, the advancement of information and communication technology has transformed educational models. The concept of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) was first proposed by Canadian scholars in 2008 (Cheng et al., 2022). MOOCs are courses that offer open registration

through an online platform. In addition to their cost-effectiveness, flexibility, and scalability, MOOCs

provide an opportunity for a large number of learners worldwide to access online courses, regardless of their educational background, physical location, and time constraints (Cheng, 2022).

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Numerous global MOOCs platforms have been established, with a small number of the world's top universities taking a proactive approach by developing their own MOOCs platforms to provide online courses. Various universities and MOOCs providers, including Coursera, edX, Udacity, and Udemy, have adopted an international partnership approach (Khalid et al., 2021). In some cases, MOOCs platforms are jointly launched by governments and

universities (Khalid et al., 2021). Certain universities utilize MOOCs as a strategic direction to develop new online learning products, catering to specific skills and knowledge domains, while others employ MOOCs to extend their international positioning and meet the needs of overseas students (Guerrero et al., 2021). Chinese universities have also actively embraced the development and promotion of MOOCs (Zheng et al., 2018).

Since 2012, renowned universities in China have joined the MOOCs movement, offering a plethora of online course resources on five well-known platforms, including Coursera, edX, Chinese MOOCs, China University MOOC, and Xuetang Online (Zheng et al., 2018). As a result, over 110 million learners from more than 900 universities worldwide have registered for learning on these platforms (De Notaris, 2021). In China, MOOCs have played a pivotal role in advancing distance learning within higher education (Zhang et al., 2019).

The advantages of MOOCs over traditional music education are evident (Wan, 2022). Taking piano learning as an example, in traditional piano classrooms, the teacher takes the leading role, deciding the class content, adopting a single teaching method, and providing limited course materials, resulting in low student motivation. Piano performance encompasses a unique artistic quality, requiring students in piano majors not only to master piano playing techniques but also to grasp intricately the style of piano works and exhibit an exceptional stage

performance ability. In comparison to traditional classrooms, piano lesson via MOOCs enriches the course content through videos and images, stimulating students' interest in learning and improving overall learning efficiency. MOOCs provides a convenient, time-saving, and effective approach for piano students to engage in online learning, breaking the constraints of exclusively relying on face-to-face instruction for knowledge acquisition in piano education (Yang, 2021).

MOOCs offer comprehensive and content-rich piano courses. The piano courses on MOOCs not only cover piano playing techniques, grasping the style of piano works, and stage performance abilities, but they also incorporate video presentations of performances by pianists from various countries. These performances are contextualized with the historical and artistic backgrounds, enabling students to gain a better understanding of the stylistic evolution of piano compositions across different periods. Piano performance majors can benefit from MOOCs by accessing exceptional courses recorded by world-renowned piano performers and top universities, an opportunity that may be challenging to attain through the traditional offline means.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some piano teachers opted for using WeChat or TenCent platforms to conduct online live-streaming piano lessons, aiming to replicate the traditional face-to-face or one-on-one teaching format through online channels. However, during these live-streaming sessions, they often encountered issues such as network delays, unclear video quality, and distorted piano sound. Students were unable to discern the subtle differences between their teacher's demonstrations and their own performances, and in some cases, both the teacher and students were forced to exit the live session due to network latency, resulting in wasted class time. As a consequence, this mode of instruction was quickly abandoned by piano educators and students. Unlike live-streaming lessons, MOOCs piano courses do not suffer from interruptions

caused by network congestion. Students can smoothly follow the course schedule without being affected by network issues and can review their teacher's instructional videos repeatedly. Additionally, teachers can monitor students' learning progress through the platform, ensuring the smooth progression of the teaching process.

In China, MOOCs have more features to offer piano performance students (Yang, 2021). Using MOOCs to learn piano courses also enables online quizzes, online communication, online assessment and other aspects, which saves the time of both teachers and students. Piano performance students studying a particular piano course on MOOCs can receive a certificate issued by the platform after completing the test. Some universities require students to study piano course on MOOCs platforms co-operated by any music institutes, and after completing the test, they can obtain credits recognized by the university without the platform certification.

The advantages of MOOCs—being open, accessible, and free from time and location constraints—have made piano performance majors more willing to utilize MOOCs for piano learning. Among the Chinese MOOCs platforms, the China University MOOCs platform stands out for having the highest number of partner universities. Taking China University MOOCs as an example, it offered 12 piano courses before December 2019. By July 2023, the platform has expanded its piano course offerings to 35, representing an increase of 23 courses (China University MOOC, 2014). Even after the COVID-19, piano courses continue to be favored by both piano teachers and students. In the regions with concentrated, high-quality higher education resources, such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, higher education institutions have contributed a significant portion, accounting for 61%, of the music courses offered on the China University MOOCs platform. Among all music courses, Piano fundamental courses have the

highest enrollment numbers (Lv, 2020). In a survey conducted by Cheng (2020) among piano performance majors in a university in Zhejiang province, it was found that 80% of the students believed that the use of innovative digital resources made piano learning more enjoyable, while 90% of the students found that utilizing piano learning platforms and other digital resources made learning piano easier.

Currently, scholarly research studies on MOOCs primarily focus on how to construct MOOCs to meet students' personalized service needs, the instructional methods used in MOOCs, and, whether MOOCs can promote educational equity, among other related issues (Cheng et al., 2022). There is limited attention given to the behavioral intention of students to use MOOCs. However, with MOOCs becoming a significant channel for online piano learning in China, investigating the perspectives of Chinese piano performance major on MOOCs becomes particularly essential. Therefore, studying the factors that influence the Chinese students' views of MOOCs for their learning calls for a significant attention in improving the platform and administration of MOOCs for piano learning.

Traditional piano teaching and MOOCs piano teaching are different in their respective teaching methods, learning environments, and instructor-student interactivity. Traditional piano teaching typically involves an instructor and a student in a one-on-one session, where student meet with teacher at a fixed time and location. In addition to providing face-to-face feedback and guidance, teacher also discusses related stories and shares small talks about livelihood pertaining to the lesson or piece being studied. This interpersonal interaction not only allows student to earn insights about the music, but also some relevant principles of knowledge about the context of history, composers' biography and situations that shaped one composition.

In contrast, when student learns the piano through MOOCs by utilizing online video, being free from time and location constraints, the interaction between student

and teacher in MOOCs strictly relies on the service modules provided by the MOOCs platform. The online platform deprives an opportunity for teacher and student from vivid interaction and close connection. By focusing more on self-directed learning, MOOCs piano teaching may offer a wide range of learning materials, but lack the depth of interaction.

In both traditional piano teaching and MOOCs piano teaching, therefore, teacher-student interaction is a crucial component, which directly has impact upon students' learning experiences, their outcomes, and their overall satisfaction with the course.

1.1. Statement of Problem

Since MOOCs have been launched in the past 15 years, many studies on their efficacy in teaching and learning have been conducted. MOOCs show their successes in many areas of teaching and learning, both amidst the COVID-19 years and after the COVID-19 crisis. Despite MOOCs' popularity, a few research works are found on the music learning, or, piano performance lesson in particular. More evidently in China, it is likely that the population of piano performance students—both at private lessons and university levels—are showing their preference to choosing purely MOOCs over a blended learning approach or any one-on-one and face-to-face lessons.

A research to investigate piano performance students at university level is anticipated to provide information necessary in realizing the direction of music or piano teaching, as well as the likelihood for businesses or institutes related to piano performance lesson to adapt or changes themselves to respond to the music learning environment.

1.2. Research Objectives

- [1]. To describe the factors for using MOOCs to conduct the learning of piano performance at the university level in China.
- [2]. To identify the extent to which the factors for using MOOCs influence the Intention to Use MOOCs in piano performance lesson.

1.3. Research Questions

- [1]. What describes factor for using MOOCs to conduct the learning of piano performance at the university level in China?
- [2]. To what extent the factors for using MOOCs influence the students' intention to use MOOCs in their piano performance lesson?

1.4. Scope of Research

This research study is confined to the young Chinese students at the undergraduate level who are enrolled and have major in piano performance course at Chinese universities in China. Piano performance course refers to the courses offered by universities' undergraduate level, including the students from their Year One to Year Four. The courses consist of piano playing, technique of playing, and the aesthetic part of the playing.

Covering approximately 295 Chinese universities in People's Republic of China, which offer the piano performance courses at the undergraduate level, the respondents to this study must experience and be currently using MOOCs in their online learning of piano performance courses. Their experience on the MOOCs piano lessons should be equal to that of the one-on-one or face-to-face piano lessons.

The period of survey under this study started from July to October 2023, though the respondents' experiences may reflect their perception of what



provides a more comprehensive understanding of MOOC usage intentions, in which perceived usefulness and attitude are critical to the continuance intention to use MOOCs. Perceived usefulness stands as a significant mediator of the effects on perceived ease of use, task technology fit, reputation, social recognition and social influence on continuance intention. Previous literature research indicates that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of MOOCs play a significant role in behavioral intentions when using the TAM model as a research component (Al-Rahmi et al., 2021; Pozón-López et al., 2021; Wu & Chen, 2017).

2.1.2. Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology Model (UTAUT)

The Unified Theory of Technology Acceptance and Use (UTAUT) Model has four main structures that determine the behavioral intention and ultimate behavior of technology system adoption and use. These structures include performance expectations, effort expectations, social impact, and promotion conditions. Gender, age, technical experience, and voluntary use are the four moderating variables of the UTAUT Model. Pozón-López et al. (2021) research found a behavioral model was proposed by combining the three theoretical frameworks of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Unified Theory of Technology Acceptance and Use (UTAUT) Model. A behavioral model explaining the behavioral intention of using MOOCs through different structures was proposed by utilizing the different advantages of these three theoretical frameworks. The effectiveness of user perceived satisfaction and autonomous motivation as the strongest predictors of usage intention was found through validation. Course quality, entertainment value, and practicality have a positive impact on choice intention.

Khalid et al. (2021) used the UTAUT Model and added two variables: perceptual autonomy and absorptive capacity. An explanation is given for the relationship between various factors and students' intention to use MOOCs using this framework. Four

variables (social influence, absorptive capacity, facilitating conditions, and perceived autonomy) significantly impact students' intention to use MOOCs.

2.1.3. Expectation-Confirmation Model (ECM)

The basic theory of the Expectation Confirmation Model (ECM) is to further develop the Technology Acceptance Model by adding satisfaction and confirmation variables. There are four variables in the basic ECM, including confirmation, perceived benefits, satisfaction, and sustained tension. The basic ECM model and the developed ECM model have been widely used in technical research by researchers. Cheng (2022) has developed a Mixed Model based on learning participation and information system successfully expanded Expectation Confirmation Model (ECM), and used this integrated model to examine whether or not quality factors that serve as antecedents of student beliefs would influence their intention to continue MOOC participation. Research shows that students' perception of knowledge quality, system quality, interface design quality, learner-instructor interaction quality and collaboration quality have a positive effect on the perceived usefulness, confirmation and learning engagement of MOOCs, which jointly explains students' satisfaction with MOOCs, and thus leads to students' willingness to continue MOOCs. Prasetya et al. (2021) found that the quality factor of using ECM Model reaffirms the determining factor for satisfactory and continuous use of e-learning.

2.2. Research Variables

Perceived Ease of Use: Perceived Ease of Use is the degree to which someone has trust in using a particular system with little effort (Davis et al., 1989). In the use of MOOCs, Perceived Ease of Use can be understood as students using MOOCs systems not having to spend a lot of time learning operational methods. For example, the ease of acquiring skills through MOOCs. Numerable empirical evidence suggests a significant relationship between perceived usability and intention (Pozón-López et al., 2020). Perceived Ease of Use also positively

impacts the behavioral intentions of MOOCs users. Wu and Chen (2017) believe that Perceived Ease of Use can directly or indirectly effect the intention to use MOOCs through Perceived Usefulness.

Learner Instructor Interaction Quality:

Essentially, collaboration between learners and other learners is conceptualized as the quality of interactions between learners and other learners in the communication process via using the e-learning system (Kuo et al., 2014; Cheng, 2022). The quality of communication and interaction between students and teachers in the online classroom learning process can affect the use of online learning systems. Taghizadeh and Hajhosseini (2021) found that both interaction and teaching quality have a positive impact on satisfaction when studying the contribution of interaction and teaching quality to satisfaction.

Learning Engagement: Learning engagement, which is the continuous initiative that a learner expends in the learning process to achieve learning goals, is the most widely used metric to assess learning outcomes in MOOCs (Alamri, 2022). The sense of immersion experienced by students while learning in a virtual world can positively impact their satisfaction within the virtual environment (Goel et al., 2013). The sense of immersion triggered by the mobile learning system can actively enhance their satisfaction with the system (Reychav & Wu, 2015). Learning Engagement is often described as students actively participating in learning activities and performing well. Alamri (2022) contends that learning engagement is a continuous effort by learners to achieve learning goals during the learning process and is the most widely used indicator for evaluating learning outcomes in MOOCs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the learning engagement of students using MOOCs systems had a positive impact on their willingness to continue using them. Cheng (2022) confirmed that learning engagement positively effects students' satisfaction and willingness to continue using MOOCs.

Perceived Usefulness: Perceived Usefulness is the degree to which someone believes that implementing a particular scheme can enhance work performance

(Davis et al., 1989). Perceived Usefulness in this study can be understood as the use of MOOCs systems by students to learn online courses, which can help them better learn the courses and achieve the expected learning outcomes. Wu and Chen (2017) pointed out in their study that, relative advantages, complexity, trialability, observability, compatibility, and have a positive impact on Perceived Usefulness. Perceived Usefulness has a substantial impact on the usage intention of MOOCs users.

Perceived Autonomy: Khalid (2021) defined Perceived Autonomy as an individual's sense of their ability to exercise a degree of freedom in making choices within modular learning. Khalid et al. (2021) added the variable of perceptual autonomy to the study based on the Unified Theory of Technology Acceptance and Use (UTAUT) model. It was determined that Perceived Autonomy has a positive and significant impact on behavioral intention to use MOOCs. The findings of the study indicated that the factors that influence students' adoption of online discussion and the resultant use of MOOCs include perceived process, perceived autonomy, perceived competence, and perceived relatedness.

Social Influence: Social Influence is one's conviction that people who are in one's social circle and are important to them think that the use of a particular technology will be beneficial (Venkatesh et al., 2003). In previous studies, Social Influence has been strongly demonstrated as a driving factor for user behavior. When a person perceives the benefits of using MOOCs by others, the observer is more likely to accept MOOCs and is more willing to use MOOCs (Wu & Chen, 2017). Khalid et al. (2021) to find that Social Influence has a positive impact on Thailand's behavioral intention to use MOOCs.

Satisfaction: Placing Satisfaction within the context of MOOCs environment refers to learners' perception of joy and accomplishment within the learning environment (Zhou, 2017). Learners who find MOOCs satisfactory are more likely to have a stronger intention to continue learning. Pozón-López et al. (2021) validated the effectiveness of user- perceived satisfaction and

autonomous motivation as the strongest predictors of usage intention. Students' satisfaction with using MOOCs has a positive impact on their willingness to use them, further leading to their willingness to continue MOOCs (Cheng, 2022; Wan et al., 2020; Alyoussef, 2021).

MOOCs Use Intention: Use Intention refers to the willingness to use and continue using technology, as well as the factors that determine the use of a particular technology (Al-Rahmi et al., 2021). In this study, MOOCs Use Intention is defined as the attitude of Chinese piano major students towards using the MOOCs platform and their willingness to engage in piano course learning through MOOCs.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 is the study's conceptual framework is built upon the similar research dimensions found in the previous three models (TAM, UTAUT, and ECM).

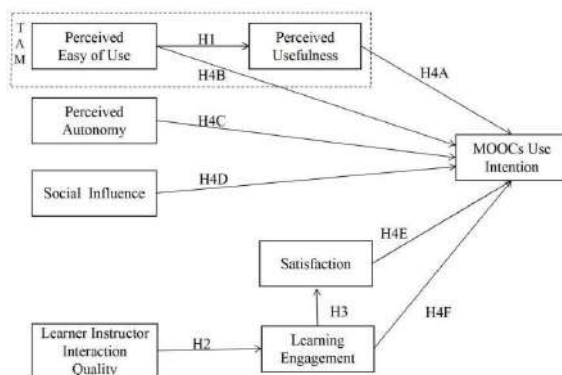


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of this Study

2.4. Research Hypotheses

[H1] Perceived Ease of Use of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly

influences their Perceived Usefulness of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H2] Learner Instructor Interaction Quality of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Learning Engagement of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H3] Learning Engagement of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Satisfaction of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H4A] Perceived Usefulness of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Use Intention of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H4B] Perceived Ease of Use of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Use Intention of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H4C] Perceived Autonomy of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Use Intention of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H4D] Social Influence of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Use Intention of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H4E] Satisfaction of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Use Intention of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

[H4F] Learning Engagement of Chinese undergraduates enrolled in piano performance major significantly influences their Use Intention of music learning via MOOCs provided by Chinese University.

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1. Methods of Research Used

In this study, a descriptive research approach is employed to determine the willingness of undergraduate piano performance majors in Chinese universities to use MOOCs for online piano courses and to describe the factors that influenced their intention to use MOOCs. The primary data collection method chosen for this study is a questionnaire survey, which is also one of the commonly used methods in descriptive research (Zikmund et al., 2013). Online questionnaire data were collected from undergraduate students whose major is in piano performance at Chinese universities, using non-probability sampling methods. The results of the study help identify the factors that influence the intention to use MOOCs and then determined the degree to which these factors influence the intention to use MOOCs for learning online piano courses.

The research questionnaire consists of three parts, using a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate the differences in opinions of each respondent in different aspects. The use of the Likert scale helps assess the respondents' level of agreement with the questions and is suitable for measuring the intention to use MOOCs. This study utilizes Descriptive Analysis, Reliability Analysis, and Inferential Analysis to analyze the data collected through the survey instrument.

3.2. Respondents and Sampling Procedures

3.2.1. Target Population

As the respondents must be students who take their major study in piano performance in Chinese higher education, investigation should be conducted with 295 current academies in China who offer piano performance majors. These institutes' piano performance curricula include four-years undergraduate program. The average numbers of students enrolling in each year for the piano performance class is 30. Therefore, the total four-year-

program in each institute should have 120 students. This comes to an approximate target population of 35,400 students over China.

3.2.2. Sampling Unit and Procedures

These participants must meet both the criteria of being university piano performance majors and using MOOCs for piano course study.

In designing empirical research, a crucial step is determining the necessary sample size. The key purpose of sample size is to elucidate how the collected data is expected to provide valuable information based on the researcher's hypothesis objectives (Lakens, 2022). A convenience sampling method is hence applied on this study. Based on the expected accuracy of 95% confidence level, the population size ranged from 25,000 to 50,000 requires a sample size of 381 (Taherdoost, 2017). As the targeted population of this study is 35,400, the acquired sample size of 402 respondents is hence justified for the current study.

A cross-sectional questionnaire survey is employed to test this study's research hypotheses, and all data are collected at one point in time. Distribution of the questionnaires to the piano performance students in higher education institutes in China via an online survey was administered. Screening questions are applied to target the right respondents, who actually experienced the use of MOOCs for their respective university's piano lessons.

3.3. Research Instruments/ Questionnaire/Data Collection

This study collected data from respondents by using questionnaires. The questionnaire is based on a conceptual framework and divided into three sections. This study employs survey method to collect primary data from Chinese undergraduate piano performance majors who used to engage in online piano learning through MOOCs for over six months. An online survey was administered to furnish the variables proposed in the research framework. Distribution of this survey was conducted via WeChat over a three-week period.

3.4. Statistical Treatment of Data

After obtaining 402 valid data, statistical treatment of data underwent three phases. The study first used Cronbach's Alpha for reliability test, of which the results show the reliable levels from 0.725 to 0.886, thereby all variables are acceptable. Descriptive analysis was then used to explain the demographic and general data of the participants.

For the data related to scale items, this study finally employed Simple Linear Regression Analysis and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis within Inferential Analyses.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Summary of Demographic Factors

Demographic factors	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	330	82.09%
Age	Below 20 years	349	86.82%
Level at The University	1st Year (Freshmen)	328	81.59%
Years of Experience in Taking Piano Lesson	Below 3 years	325	80.85%
Extra-curricular Piano Lesson	No	300	74.63%
Type of Piano	I don't own a piano, and use the university	180	44.78%

	piano room for practice		
Type of Piano for Practice	Upright Piano	129	32.09%

Among the 402 respondents, female respondents (82.09%) are the majority. About 349 respondents are under the age of 20, accounting for 86.82% of the sample. This results in the highest numbers of respondents being the university freshman, with 328 respondents accounting for 81.59%. The survey found the majority of respondents having experience of piano learning below 3 years, from 325 respondents constituting 80.85% of the sample. Only 300 respondents (74.63%) exclusively learned piano through university piano courses. A total of 180 respondents, 44.78% or nearly half of the sample, do not own the pianos and have to use university-provided pianos for their piano studies. About 32.09% of the sample, or 129 individuals, use upright piano type at their homes. The conditions of their ownership of the piano and types of the piano—grand, upright, electronic piano—imply the respondents' likelihood for a preference of virtual learning to the traditional one-on-one learning.

4.2 Hypotheses Testing Inferential Analysis

Table 2: Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis for Hypotheses H1

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.098	.172		18.033	<.001
Perceived Ease of Use	.191	.045	.209	4.268	.000

Note. $R^2 = .0436$, Adjusted $R^2 = .0412$, $p < .01$.
DV=Perceived Usefulness

Table 2 explains the result of Simple Linear Regression (SLR) analysis computed on Perceived Ease of Use as the independent variable and Perceived Usefulness as the dependent variable. The model formula is as follows: $\text{Perceived Usefulness} = 3.098 + 0.191 \times \text{Perceived Ease of Use}$. The model's R-squared value is 0.0436, indicating that Perceived Ease of Use can explain 4.36% of the variance in Perceived Usefulness. Further analysis reveals that the regression coefficient for Perceived Ease of Use is 0.209 ($t = 4.268$, $\text{Sig} = 0.000 < 0.01$), suggesting that Perceived Ease of Use has a significantly positive effect on Perceived Usefulness. In summary, the analysis indicates that Perceived Ease of Use constantly has a significantly positive influence on Perceived Usefulness.

Table 3: Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis for Hypotheses H2

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.75	.189		14.567	<.001
Learner Instructor Interaction Quality	.347	.047	.35	7.469	.000

Note. $R^2 = .122$, Adjusted $R^2 = .12$, $p < .01$. DV=Learning Engagement

Table 3 indicates a Simple Linear Regression analysis on Learner Instructor Interaction Quality as the independent variable and Learning Engagement as the dependent variable. The model formula is as follows: $\text{Learning Engagement} = 2.75 + 0.347 \times \text{Learner Instructor Interaction Quality}$. The model's R-squared value is 0.122, which means that Learner Instructor Interaction Quality can account for 12.2% of the variation in Learning Engagement. Further specific analysis reveals that the regression coefficient for Learner Instructor Interaction Quality is 0.35 ($t = 7.469$, $\text{Sig} = 0.000 < 0.01$), implying that Learner Instructor Interaction Quality has a significantly positive

influence on Learning Engagement. In summary, the analysis indicates that Learner Instructor Interaction Quality consistently has a significant positive influence on Learning Engagement.

Table 4: Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis for Hypotheses H3

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.052	.199		10.314	<.001
Learning Engagement	.474	.047	.448	10.024	.000

Note. $R^2 = .201$, Adjusted $R^2 = .199$, $p < .01$.
DV=Satisfaction

Table 4 presents the result of Simple Linear Regression analysis computed on Learning Engagement as the independent variable and Satisfaction as the dependent variable. The model formula is as follows: $\text{Satisfaction} = 2.052 + 0.474 \times \text{Learning Engagement}$. The model's R-squared value is 0.201, indicating that Learning Engagement can account for 20.1% of the variation in Satisfaction. Further specific analysis reveals that the regression coefficient for Learning Engagement is 0.448 ($t = 10.024$, $\text{Sig} = 0.000 < 0.01$), implying that Learning Engagement has a significantly positive influence on Satisfaction. In summary, the analysis indicates that Learning Engagement consistently has a significant positive influence on Satisfaction.

Table 5: Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Hypotheses H4A, H4B, H4C, H4D, H4E, H4F

Note. $R^2 = .514$, Adjusted $R^2 = .507$, $p < .01$. DV=MOOCs Use Intention

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-0.401	.22		-1.819	0.07
Perceived Usefulness	.135	.039	.131	3.431	.001
Perceived Ease of Use	.143	.036	.151	4.016	.000
Perceived Autonomy	.144	.035	.179	4.139	.000
Social Influence	.152	.037	.157	4.143	.000
Satisfaction	.367	.042	.353	8.624	.000
Learning Engagement	.135	.05	.123	2.692	.007

Table 5 shows the result of Multiple Linear Regression analysis computed on Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Autonomy, Social Influence, Satisfaction and Learning Engagement as independent variables, and MOOCs Use Intention as the dependent variable. The model formula is as follows: MOOCs Use Intention = -0.401 + 0.367 Satisfaction + 0.135 Learning Engagement + 0.152 Social Influence + 0.144 Perceived Autonomy + 0.135 Perceived Usefulness + 0.143 Perceived Ease of Use. It can be observed from the table above that the model's R-squared value is 0.514. The results indicate that Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Autonomy, Social Influence, Satisfaction and Learning Engagement can explain 51.4% of the variance in MOOCs Use Intention. Further specific analysis reveals that:

The regression coefficient for Perceived Usefulness is 0.131 (t=3.431, p=0.001<0.01), signifying that Perceived Usefulness has a significantly positive influence on MOOCs Use Intention.

The regression coefficient for Perceived Ease of Use is 0.151 (t= 4.016, p= 0.000<0.01), indicating that Perceived Ease of Use has a significantly positive influence on MOOCs Use Intention.

The regression coefficient for Perceived Autonomy is 0.179 (t=4.139, p=0.000<0.01), meaning that Perceived Autonomy has a significantly positive influence on MOOCs Use Intention.

The regression coefficient for Social Influence is 0.157 (t= 4.143, p= 0.000<0.01), suggesting that Social

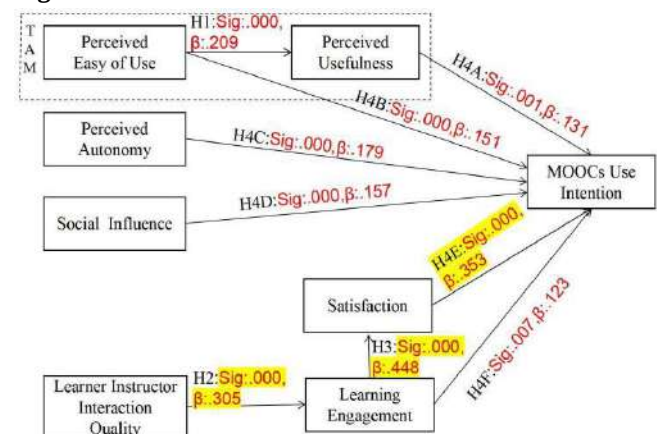
Influence has a significant positive effect on MOOCs Use Intention.

The regression coefficient for Satisfaction is 0.353 (t=8.624, p=0.000<0.01), implying that Satisfaction has a significantly positive influence on MOOCs Use Intention.

The regression coefficient for Learning Engagement is 0.123 (t=2.692, p=0.007<0.01), indicating that Learning Engagement has a significantly positive influence on MOOCs Use Intention.

In summary, the analyses indicate that Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Autonomy, Social Influence, Satisfaction and Learning Engagement all consistently have a significantly positive influence on MOOCs Use Intention.

Figure 2: The result of the structural model



5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Discussion and Implications

Table 6: The Coefficients of the Variables by Multiple Linear Regression

Variables	Beta
Independent Variables	
Perceived Ease of Use	.151

Perceived Autonomy	.179
Social Influence	.157
Mediating Variables	
Perceived Usefulness	.131
Learning Engagement	.123
Satisfaction	.353

As shown in Table 6, Perceived Ease of Use, as an independent variable, has a positive influence on the intention to use MOOCs. The piano major students of this study believe that simplicity of using MOOCs increases their willingness to use MOOCs for piano learning. Therefore, improving the user-friendliness of the MOOCs platform is likely to encourage more numbers of students to use MOOCs for their piano study. This result is congruent with Wu and Chen (2017), who believe that perceived ease of use can directly or indirectly effect the intention to use MOOC through perceived usefulness.

The independent variable of Perceived Autonomy has a positive influence on the piano students' Intention to Use MOOCs. Such result suggests that MOOCs platforms can provide a more autonomous learning experience to increase students' willingness to use MOOCs for learning. Similarly, Khalid et al. (2021) found a positive and significant impact of perceived autonomy on the behavioral intention to use MOOCs in their research studies.

The independent variable Social Influence has a positive influence on the intention to use MOOCs. This suggests that the positive views and encouragement from friends regarding MOOCs have likelihood to influence the willingness of piano majors to use MOOCs. In previous research study, social influence has been strongly established as a driving factor in user's behavior. When an individual perceives the benefits of others using MOOCs, observers are more

likely to accept and willing to use MOOCs (Wu & Chen, 2017).

The mediating variable Perceived Usefulness plays an intermediary role in the intention to use MOOCs. When students under this study perceive that MOOCs are beneficial for their learning, this perception increases their willingness to use MOOCs for piano online courses. Wu and Chen (2017) noted in their research that relative advantage, complexity, trialability, observability, and compatibility have a positive influence on Perceived Usefulness. Under this study, Perceived Usefulness significantly influences the Usage Intention of MOOCs users. Perceived Usefulness plays a crucial role in the relationship between Perceived Ease of Use and the MOOCs Use Intention.

The mediating variable Learning Engagement plays an intermediary role in the intention to use MOOCs. When the piano students actively participate in and engage with their learning, it increases their inclination to use MOOCs for piano online courses. Stimulating students' interest in learning and enhancing their engagement in learning can boost their willingness to use MOOCs for learning. Cheng (2022) confirmed in his research study that learning engagement has a positive impact on students' satisfaction and intention to continue using MOOCs. Learning Engagement plays a crucial role in the relationship between Learner Instructor Interaction Quality and the MOOCs Use Intention.

The mediating variable Satisfaction has the most significant influence on the intention to use MOOCs. Students' satisfaction with MOOCs learning has a crucial influence on their willingness to use MOOCs in the future. Pozón-López et al. (2021) validated the effectiveness of user-perceived satisfaction and intrinsic motivation as the most potent predictors of usage intention. Students' satisfaction with using MOOCs positively effects their intention to use, further leading to their continued usage of MOOCs. This finding aligns with the results of this study. Satisfaction plays a critical role in the relationship between Learning Engagement and the MOOCs Use Intention.

5.2. Conclusions

In an attempt to investigate the Chinese students' preference of using MOOCs to learn their piano performance at universities in China, this study finds favorable results for universities in China to develop using MOOCs on their piano performance courses among the undergraduate levels. The study shows the three independent variables—Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Autonomy, and Social Influence—with relatively weak influences on the Chinese piano-performance students' intention to use MOOCs. While their Perceived Usefulness and Learning Engagement in relation with Intention to Use MOOCs are relatively low, their Satisfaction of using MOOCs is moderate with its beta value (β) at 0.353. When measuring the Chinese piano-performance students' Perceived Usefulness and Learner Instructor Interaction Quality, and Perceived Autonomy, this study finds statistically moderate results from SLR. The statistically positive influences—be they weakly or moderately influential between variables—imply that the Chinese university students with piano-performance major possess a favorable perception toward using MOOCs in their piano learning at the universities. It should be noted that the characteristics of the samples under this study are majorly freshmen who experience a short duration of piano learning, thus suggesting that their elementary exposure to piano performance. In a different scenario, if the respondents had appeared to be in higher levels of learning with longer duration of experiences, their behavioral intention to use MOOCs for piano learning would have become more pronounced, and the degree of influence among variables varied.

5.3. Recommendations

The achievements of MOOCs in the field of music education are widely recognized, but there has been limited research on the behavioral intentions of piano performance major students to use MOOCs. This study

has added research dimensions and data to this area, providing valuable data support for future research. The researcher can build upon the foundation of this study to expand research dimensions and further investigate the factors influencing intentions to use MOOCs.

Based on the results of Hypothesis 4E, satisfaction is the most significant factor effecting the intention to use MOOCs. Higher education institutions and MOOCs platform providers should prioritize students' satisfaction, and formulate corresponding strategies. This study recommends that MOOCs platform providers collaborate with higher education institutes to offer to students a variety of online piano courses and increase the appeal of online piano courses. They should optimize the MOOCs platform user interface and simplify the operational steps.

The amount of time students need to learn how to use the MOOCs system significantly effects their intention to use it, given that the results of Hypothesis 4A support these recommendations. Piano performance majors have their unique characteristics. Based on the results of Hypothesis 4C and 4D, the study recommends that MOOC platform providers consider these characteristics by adding specialized service modules for piano performance undergraduate students and building a solid publicity for broader recognition.

Hiring well-known piano instructors and assembling professional teams to create high-quality MOOCs piano online courses are recommended in order to meet with students' demands for the course quality, given that the results of Hypothesis 4B indicate that students believe using MOOCs for online learning can help them better achieve their learning goals. Furthermore, recommendations are for the higher education institutes to provide incentive for the online piano student to continue using MOOCs.

Piano teachers should be more mindful of their interpersonal communication when interacting with students during the use of MOOCs platforms, than they are on the traditional platform. They should promptly respond to student messages and ensure that students upload performance videos after each lesson to monitor their progress. Evidently, the results of Hypothesis 2

show that the quality of interaction between teachers and students has a positive influence on the students' engagement. According to the results of Hypotheses 3 and 4F, piano teachers should also focus on the quality of students' piano learning in online courses, rather than just completion of tasks. For highly-achieved learners, teachers should introduce a reward system to maintain high engagement, while for average-quality learners, teachers should identify their issues to help them improve their learning quality and participation in online piano courses.

The recommendations proposed in this study will help drive the development of MOOCs in the field of piano education, meet the learning needs of piano performance majors, and, provide substantial data support for the improvement of MOOCs platforms.

5.4. Future Research

While achievements of MOOCs in the field of education have been widely recognized, there has been limited numbers of research on the intention to use MOOCs in music education. Though this study hopes to encourage more researchers to focus on this research area, particularly with regard to the specific group of undergraduate piano performance majors in China and their intentions to use MOOCs, researchers in the future should opt to analyze the works with larger and more diverse samples by selecting students from different academic years for more in-depth and detailed investigations.

More investigation should be placed on the students' capabilities in playing certain levels of musical exercises, such as Sonata or Etude Albums by major composers, the foundation of fingering development by Baroque composers like Bach's Preludes and Fugues and Two-Part Inventions.

This study uses only six dimensions to examine the influential factors on the MOOCs intention to use by the undergraduate piano performance majors in China.

The researcher believes that the quality of MOOCs piano courses, the learning methods offered by MOOC platforms, technological updates on MOOC platforms, the addition of application modules, and, students' educational backgrounds can all furnish as factors in studying the intention to use MOOCs. Different research dimensions can be adopted to help the future research studies to address more profoundly the students' preferences and needs on their online piano lesson.

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The Influencing Factors of Customer Trust towards KPLUS in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify and investigate the influencing factors of customer trust towards KPLUS, a prominent banking application offered by KASIKORNBANK in Thailand. The objectives of this study were: 1) to study customer trust towards KPLUS; and 2) to study the influencing factors of customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand. The questionnaires were distributed online with a sample size of 413 via Google Forms, randomly using convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and purposive sampling, all within the non-probability sampling method. Subsequently, the information from all respondents was analyzed using the SPSS program. The study covers two analyses: descriptive analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The study results were: 1) Four crucial factors significantly influenced customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand consist of corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use. These factors explained customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand at 88.8 percent 2) The most influencing factor of customer trust towards KPLUS was internet banking security at 43.4%. This was followed by internet banking privacy, corporate reputation, and perceived ease of use respectively. 3) The study provides recommendations to assist KASIKORNBANK in improving KPLUS to enhance customer trust, recognizing customer trust as a key factor for long-term business success.

Keywords: Customer Trust, Corporate Reputation, Internet Banking Security, Internet Banking Privacy, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness

JEL Classification Code: D12, L86, M31, O33, P42

Introduction of Study

Nowadays, as globalization approaches and many technological advancements have been developed, the way we live has also changed significantly. Now, the online payment system has been raised to align with the cashless system in Thailand in which Bank of Thailand has successfully moved the country towards a cashless society and digital economy in 2023. It contributes to the enhanced convenience, speed, safety, and efficiency of these transactions. (Yakean, 2020). Besides, the efforts of Bank of Thailand (BOT), the pandemic of Covid-19 has outbound Thailand to adopt the new system and adjust to the changes brought by “the New Normal”

(Lakarnchua, 2021). Thus, this leads to the dramatic change of their buying behaviors to buy products online and make cashless payment through

the mobile banking services. It is more convenient for them to conduct online transactions where each transaction can be done in a minute and the accuracy of the transaction can be verified with the e-receipts provided by the application (Ongsakul, 2023). The growing familiarity of consumers with payment methods, combined with the government's initiative to enhance the online payment system have contributed to the success of a cashless society. This success was confirmed by the Global Digital Report 2019. The report put Thailand in the first ranking for mobile



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banking users where 74 percent of the total populations can access to online banking services (Leesa-Nguansuk, 2019).

This rising trend has become the golden opportunity for the scammers to exploit and lure money from many individuals. In recent years, there has been an increase in smartphone and call center scams. According to the research (Online Scams in Thailand Rose Sharply, Inflicted over THB1 Billion Losses, 2022), such a scam is a widespread occurrence that individuals may come across in their everyday experiences which includes fraudulent SMS, phishing email, personal data scams, fraudulent requests or hacking for banking information. A significant number of people have fallen victim to deceptive activities, leading to a substantial financial loss exceeding a billion in a year, with the likelihood of further increase. The rise in cyber scams not only puts users' money and financial safety at risk, but it also makes mobile banking systems less reliable. People have begun to question whether they should place their trust in applications such as KPLUS for their financial transactions. To address these growing concerns, banks are actively working to find ways to deal with these problems. Since February 20th, 2023, KASIKORNBANK had announced to halt sending messages containing hyperlinks as found online scammers tried to scam the customers to click the hyperlinks under the bank name, except in the case where customers have specifically requested them ("Bank Warns of SMS Scams," 2023).

According to the previous basis above, this indicates that customer trust is a crucial factor in aiding the company in gaining a competitive edge and maintaining a strong market presence, allowing KPLUS to attract new customers through positive word of mouth and the well-established reputation of a secure and reliable mobile banking application. Thus, this research aims to investigate and understand the influencing factors of customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

Research Objectives

The research objectives were: 1.) to investigate the customer trust of KPLUS in Thailand; 2.) to investigate

the factors that related with customer trust of KPLUS in Thailand; and 3.) to investigate the most influencing factors toward customer trust of KPLUS in Thailand.

Scope of Research

In this research, the targeted respondents are users of KPLUS residing in Thailand. The questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms to a sample group of 413 respondents, utilizing a convenience sampling approach. The research employs the Five-Point Likert Scale, a recognized quantitative analysis method, within the questionnaire for comprehensive data collection and analysis.

Literature Review

Bounded Rationality

According to Vargas-Hernández and Ortega (2018), human behavior can be categorized as either rational or irrational. Their judgment tends to rely on limited information or cognitive capacity. Put simply, people generally make satisfactory decisions rather than optimal ones. Achieving perfect rational decisions is often unattainable due to decision-making complexities and limited computational resources. Even in relatively straightforward problems, it is impossible to explore all potential alternatives to reach a maximum outcome. In addition, individuals vary in both available opportunities and desires, which are influenced by environmental factors.

Customer Trust

According to the research (Stravinskienė et al., 2021), it suggests that building a strong corporate reputation is the way for the company to tackle the inclining trust. Corporate reputation is a valuable and intangible asset of the company. It is defined as the stakeholders' expectations, values, and perception that



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the company can reach its objectives, meet consumer expectations, and honor its commitments.

Research findings, along with insights from market research organizations, indicate that establishing stakeholder trust through a positive corporate reputation can contribute to both short-term and long-term economic and social benefits in maintaining relationships with stakeholders (Nicolò, 2015).

Perceived Usefulness

According to Davis (1989), perceived usefulness is defined as the extent to which an individual believes that utilizing a specific system would improve their job performance is a crucial factor in technology adoption. This aligns with the definition usefulness in which it refers to being able to utilize the benefits of something. In general, people prefer to be positively reinforced for them to do something.

Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use is defined as the extent to which an individual believes that utilizing a specific system would involve minimal effort is a critical aspect in the context of technology adoption. Thus, the concept of being user-friendly and requiring minimal effort becomes a key influencer in the decision-making process for individuals considering the adoption of new technology.

Perceived Security

It is found that the customers are pleased with the protective measurements conducted through internet banking, covering personal banking information protection as they rely a lot on non-human interaction. Parasuraman et al. (2005) defined the term security as the customers confidence that the system is safe and that they are protected from financial risk and fraud. Indicates that the concerns over a security or privacy risk exists when there is a potential loss caused by fraudulent activities or unauthorized intrusion by hackers into the security of an internet banking customers.

Perceived Privacy

Parasuraman et al. (2005) stated that the term security covers many aspects of the protection of the customer's information, ranging from technical prerequisites related to the security, trustworthiness, and payment procedures of a system. Other dimensions are also considered which are corporate reputation, trustworthiness, and the overall confidentiality maintained among both customers and employees engaged in communication processes as these dimensions signal the privacy of the system. It refers to the extent to which the customer perceives the system how their personal information is kept confidential and protected by unpermitted parties.

Perceived Quality

Ojasalo (2010) stated that, in general, perceived service quality is defined as the outcome of how well actual experiences or performance align with customer expectations so called disconfirmation. The quality of the service is considered good or excellent if performance meets or exceeds expectations. Conversely, if the performance falls below expectations, the service quality is deemed inferior or poor.

Corporate Reputation

According to the research (Stravinskienė et al., 2021), it suggests that building a strong corporate reputation is the way for the company to tackle the inclining trust. Corporate reputation is a valuable and intangible asset of the company. It is defined as the stakeholders' expectations, values, and perception that the company can reach its objectives, meet consumer expectations, and honor its commitments.

Corporate Image

Under the studied context, Dowling (1993), defined corporate image as a strategic asset and how people perceive the company through a set of meanings collected themselves. It is a useful concept in determining corporate success. According to Song et al., (2019), it can be concluded that corporate image is regarded as a crucial factor as it can impact not only the behavioral intentions of the customers, but also

their overall assessment of the company. It is essential to build a positive corporate image as it directly affects how people evaluate and make the decision on the company's products and services.

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is formed by gathering relevant insights from previous studies on customer trust, with seven similar independent

variables: corporate image, corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, perceived ease of use, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness. The dependent variable in this research is customer trust towards KPLUS, focusing on individuals who use the KPLUS and live in Thailand. The influence between these independent variables and the dependent variable is presented in Figure 1.

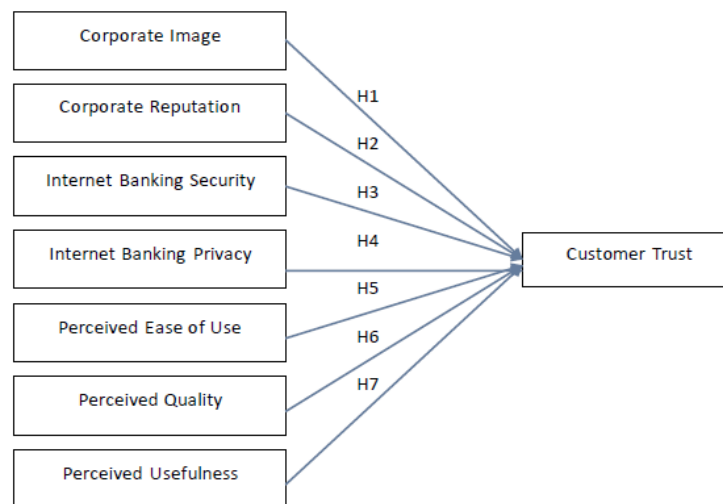


Figure 1: The Influencing Factors of Customer Trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

Research Hypothesis

According to the conceptual framework of this study, the researcher created seven hypotheses. Therefore, examine the influencing factors of customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand as following:

H1a: Corporate image has an influence on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

H2a: Corporate reputation has an influence on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

H3a: Internet banking security has an influence on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

H4a: Internet banking privacy has an influence on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

H5a: Perceived ease of use has an influence on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

H6a: Perceived quality has an influence on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

H7a: Perceived usefulness has an influence on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand.

Research Methodology

The quantitative research utilized a primary data collection approach. Initially, the questions used in the questionnaire tested the reliability of each variable with a sample of N=45 respondents to ensure accuracy before proceeding to the complete sample of 413 respondents. Respondents were chosen through a mix of convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and purposive sampling in this study. The questionnaire used a Five-Point Likert Scale to allow participants to express their opinions.

The researcher applied statistical tools to analyze the data from target respondents to summarize it based on appropriate processes and accuracy through correlation analysis and multiple linear regression.

For the question part, the researcher comprised four parts: screening, demographic information, general information about KPLUS, and the opinions of respondents on KPLUS.

The Results of Reliability

Pretesting Questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha in the reliability test. The questionnaire tested the reliability of each variable with a sample of N=45 respondents to ensure accuracy, relevance, and error reduction before progressing to the full sample of 413 respondents.

The study by Hair, Jr (2015) offers a rule of thumb for interpreting Cronbach alpha values. In assessing reliability, an alpha value below 0.6 is generally considered to be unacceptable. Conversely, if the alpha value exceeds 0.6, the outcome represented by the questionnaire in this context is acceptable (Hair et al., 2015).

Table 1: The result of reliability testing from the pretesting questionnaire N=43

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha score	No. of Items	Reliability
Customer Trust (CT)	0.735	4	Acceptable
Corporate Image (CI)	0.711	4	Acceptable
Corporate Reputation (CR)	0.868	5	Good
Internet Banking Security (IBS)	0.860	5	Good
Internet Banking Privacy (IBP)	0.917	5	Excellence
Work Environment	0.901	5	Excellence
Perceived Ease of Use (PEU)	0.878	5	Good
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	0.94	5	Excellence

This reliability test was applied before collecting data from an additional 413 respondents, including customer trust, corporate image, corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, perceived ease of use, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness, resulted in values of 0.735, 0.711, 0.868, 0.86, 0.917, 0.901, 0.878, and 0.94, respectively. These values were obtained through reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha. The results indicate that all questions related to the variables produced acceptable

values, as the alpha values exceeded 0.7. Consequently, the overview of the questionnaire was deemed clear and comprehensible for respondents. Additionally, respondents demonstrated a willingness to participate in the questionnaire for this research.

Results of the study

The researcher has organized the presentation of data and the discussion of results into four sections. These sections include descriptive analysis of

demographic frequency characteristics, descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation of dependent and independent variables, correlation analysis, and hypothesis testing.

Descriptive Analysis

The result of this study reveals that among all 413 respondents, 225 were female, accounting for 54.48 percent. Moreover, the majority of respondents were in the 25- 35 age group, comprising 253 respondents or 61. 26 percent, 257 respondents' education level were bachelor's degree, comprising 62. 23 percent. For occupation, more than half respondents were employed, accounting for 223

respondents or 54 percent. Also, 139 respondents or 33.66 percent used KPLUS to transfer money. Plus, there were 175 respondents who had been using KPLUS for more than 5 years, comprising 42. 37 percent. Lastly, among the total of 413 respondents, 220 used KPLUS due to personal interest, accounting for 53.27 percent.

Table 2: Summary of Mean and Standard Deviation of All Variables in This Research

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Customer Trust	413	4.0935	.8770	Agree
Corporate Image	413	4.1979	.5984	Agree
Corporate Reputation	413	4.0973	.8640	Agree
Internet Banking Security	413	4.0697	.8411	Agree
Internet Banking Privacy	413	4.1453	.8588	Agree
Perceived Ease of Use	413	4.1462	.6054	Agree
Perceived Quality	413	4.0785	.8465	Agree
Perceived Usefulness	413	4.0673	.8393	Agree

Table 2 presents a summary of the mean and standard deviation of all variables investigated in this research, consisting of both dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable, customer trust, exhibited a mean value of 4.0935 with a standard deviation of 0. 8770. Regarding the independent variables, seven variables were considered: corporate image, corporate reputation, internet banking security, and internet banking privacy, as well as perceived ease of use, perceived quality, and

perceived usefulness. Their respective mean values were 4.1979, 4.0973, 4.0697, 4.1453, 4.1462, 4.0785, and 4.0673. The mean values for all independent variables indicated an agreement among respondents, falling within the range of 4.0673 to 4.1979. By examining standard deviation values, each variable showed values of 0.5984, 0.8640, 0.8411, 0.8588, 0.6054, 0.8465, and 0.8393 respectively. To be noted, corporate reputation exhibited the highest standard deviation values among the independent variables with the value of 0.8640.



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Hypothesis Testing

Table 3: *Model Summary from Multiple Regression Analysis*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.944 ^a	.890	.888	.29304
a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Usefulness, Corporate Image, Internet Banking Security, Perceived Quality, Perceived Ease of Use, Corporate Reputation, Internet Banking Privacy				

According to Table 3, the adjusted R square value was 0.888, indicated that 88.8 percent of customer trust can explain by the independent variables of this study, consist perceived usefulness, corporate image, internet banking security, perceived

quality, perceived ease of use, corporate reputation, internet banking privacy. Thus, another 11.2 percent of customer trust could be explained by other independent variables.

Table 4: *The Summary Results of Multiple Linear Regression*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.177	.142		-1.245	.214		
	Corporate Image	-.031	.026	-.021	-1.176	.240	.831	1.204
	Corporate Reputation	.144	.036	.142	3.953	.000	.210	2.756
	Internet Banking Security	.453	.056	.434	8.119	.000	.095	2.559
	Internet Banking Privacy	.296	.041	.290	7.236	.000	.169	2.924
	Perceived Ease of Use	.156	.042	.108	3.678	.000	.316	3.163
	Perceived Quality	.033	.028	.032	1.199	.231	.382	2.617
	Perceived Usefulness	-.010	.019	-.010	-.536	.592	.821	1.218
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Trust								

Table 4 illustrates significant results for both the significant values and beta coefficients, employing the "p-value" to examine factors influencing factors on customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand. A significant level below 0.05 indicates that independent variables impact the dependent variable, while a level above 0.05 suggests no such influence. Upon analysis, corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use exhibit statistically significant influence on customer trust,

with respective p values of 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000 and 0.000, all below the 0.05 threshold. Conversely, corporate image, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness do not show a statistically significant impact on customer trust, as its p-value is 0.240, 0.231, and 0.592 exceeding the 0.05 threshold.

Based on the standardized coefficients in terms of the beta value of the four independent variables in Table 4, factors were identified as influencing customer trust: internet banking security, internet



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banking privacy, corporate reputation, and perceived ease of use with the value of 0.434 or 43.4 percent, 0.29 or 29 percent, 0.142 or 14.2 percent, and 0.108 or 10.8 percent respectively.

The variance inflation factors for all independent variables, namely sales perceived ease of use, internet banking privacy, corporate reputation, perceived quality, internet banking security, perceived usefulness, and corporate image. The respective VIF values were 3.163, 2.924, 2.756, 2.617, 2.559, 1.218, and

1.204. Consequently, it can be inferred that all independent variables did not pose an issue with multicollinearity, as their VIF values were below 5.

Consequently, the researcher decided to reanalyze the results excluding these independent variables, as it did not influence customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand based on its significance value. The results of the second multiple regressions are presented in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5: Model Summary from Multiple Regression Analysis (2nd time)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.943 ^a	.890	.888	.29295
a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Ease of Use, Internet Banking Privacy, Corporate Reputation, Internet Banking Security				

According to Table 5, the adjusted R-squared stayed at the same level after removing the corporate image, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness, at 0.888. This value can be expressed as a percentage, equating to 88.8 percent, indicating that customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand was influenced by the

four independent variables examined in this study: perceived ease of use, internet banking privacy, corporate reputation, internet banking security. Conversely, the remaining 11.2 explains that customer trust could be influenced by other independent variables.

Table 6: The Summary Results of Multiple Linear Regression (2nd time)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.273	.101		-2.699	.007		
	Corporate Reputation	.140	.036	.138	3.871	.000	.212	2.707
	Internet Banking Security	.486	.051	.466	9.480	.000	.112	2.942
	Internet Banking Privacy	.298	.041	.292	7.286	.000	.169	1.914
	Perceived Ease of Use	.139	.039	.096	3.596	.000	.379	2.640
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Trust								

Table 6 presents the results of significant values, beta coefficients, and variance inflation factors. For the significant values or p-values of corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use indicated that these independent variables were influencing factors of

customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand, with their p-values being less than 0.05. This implies that corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use influence customer trust in the second round of



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running the SPSS program for multiple linear regression.

For the beta coefficient results, the researcher focused on significant independent variables influencing customer trust which were internet banking security, internet banking privacy, corporate reputation, and perceived ease of use with the value of 0.466 or 46.6 percent, 0.292 or 29.2 percent, 0.138 or 13.8 percent, and 0.096 percent, respectively. These values suggest that a one-unit increase in an independent variable corresponded to a certain

percentage increase in customer trust based on their beta coefficient values.

The variance inflation factor values for internet banking security, corporate reputation, perceived ease of use, and internet banking privacy were 2.942, 2.707, 2.640, and 1.914 respectively. Multicollinearity issues arise when independent variables have a variance inflation factor exceeding 5. Since the VIFs for these four independent factors were below this threshold, it can be concluded that there was no significant multicollinearity problem among them.

Refer to the results of this study, is modified the conceptual framework, as presented below:

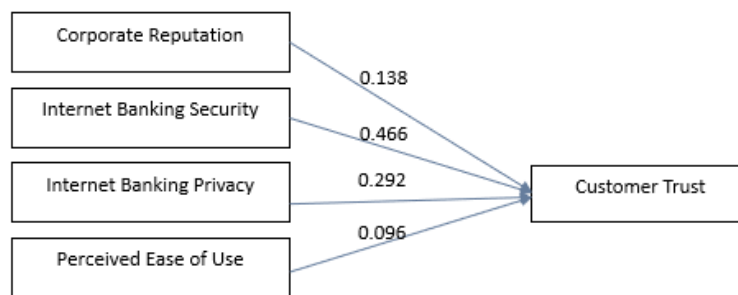


Figure 2: *Influencing Factors of Customer Trust towards KPLUS in Thailand Model*

Customer Trust = $-.273 + 0.140$ (Corporate Reputation) + 0.486 (Internet Banking Security) + 0.298 (Internet Banking Privacy) + 0.139 (Perceived Ease of Use)

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the factors that influence customer trust in KPLUS in Thailand. Based on the results presented above, it was identified that corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use significantly influence customer trust in KPLUS in Thailand. Consequently, this discussion will provide a summary of these four independent variables and compare them with findings from previous studies.

Moreover, the research revealed that only four factors significantly influenced customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand:

corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use, with a p-value less than 0.05.

On the other hand, three factors with a p-value less than 0.05 did not have significantly influence customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand: corporate image, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness.

Finally, the research revealed that only four factors significantly influenced customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand: corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use. Potential errors in the sampling procedure were identified, as the researcher utilized the non-probability sampling method. This method is



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considered less effective than probability sampling. Additionally, the researcher determined the sample size based on personal judgment and some respondents were also employed by KASIKORNBANK, introducing a potential bias in the responses. These factors collectively contribute to the absence of influence by corporate image, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness on customer loyalty in this study.

Recommendation

The influencing factors affecting customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand encompass corporate reputation, internet banking security, internet banking privacy, and perceived ease of use. However, corporate reputation, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness emerged as the weakest factors, showing no statistically significant influence on the dependent variable in this study. Therefore, the researcher offers the following recommendations.

Firstly, KASIKORNBANK should prioritize enhancing internet banking security, identified as the most influential factor in this study. KASIKORNBANK should undertake improvements in KPLUS, assuring customers of the application's capability to securely handle financial transactions. This includes providing concrete measures, such as implementing advanced encryption protocols or two-factor authentication, could be employed to reinforce internet banking security. Implementing these recommendations can lead to greater trust among customers and it should be maintained through continuous updates and monitoring of security protocols.

Secondly, KASIKORNBANK should prioritize internet banking privacy as the second most important factor influencing customer trust. Strategies such as transparent privacy policies, secure data handling practices, and regular communication about privacy measures can contribute to building and maintaining trust in this aspect.

The third factor influencing customer trust towards KPLUS in Thailand is corporate reputation. Therefore, KASIKORNBANK should concentrate on building a positive reputation and promoting the

widespread recognition of KPLUS as a trustworthy application throughout the country. This could involve strategic marketing campaigns, public relations efforts, and ensuring positive customer experiences.

Furthermore, the results suggest that perceived ease of use could be enhanced, given its lowest mean score among other items. To address this, KASIKORNBANK should focus on improving the user interface, providing clearer instructions, and streamlining processes to create a more user-friendly experience.

Although corporate image, perceived quality, and perceived usefulness did not have a significant influence on customer trust, maintaining a standard level is crucial. Negative perceptions of the company or dissatisfaction with services could lessen customer trust. Therefore, the company should proactively make sure that these variables are at a satisfactory level. To enhance these variables, KASIKORNBANK should come up with specific actions such as improving service quality, addressing negative feedback, and promoting the utility of KPLUS could contribute positively to customer trust.

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Factors influencing purchase intention toward “BYD-Build Your Dream” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok.

Jutamas Joysa ¹, Seongdok Kim ²

Abstract

Propose: This research studied factors influencing purchase intention toward “BYD-Build Your Dream” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok to analyze significant factors that BYD need to focus on Thailand market segment. This study aims to examine factors influencing purchase intention toward “BYD” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok to be the guideline for BYD company in order to achieve selling target and maintain the highest market share in electric vehicles market in Thailand. The theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Theory of PEST analysis were applied to find the preliminary significant factors towards BYD purchase intention. **Research design, data and methodology:** Researcher applied Convenience Sampling Method and Snowball Sampling Method in this study. This study was quantitative research which applied Cronbach's Alpha, Descriptive Analysis, Correlation Analysis, and Multiple Linear Regression to analyze the level of influencing of independent variables (Attitude, Subjective Norm, Environmental Concern, Government Policy, Charging Infrastructure) to dependent variable (Purchase Intention). The questionnaire has been distributed to people who work in organizations located in Bangkok and are interested in purchasing electronic vehicles in the future and received valid answers from 400 respondents. **Results:** The result of this study can be summarized that government policy positively impacts charging infrastructure and charging infrastructure also positively impacts purchase intention towards “BYD” Electronic Vehicle. Not only charging infrastructure factors, but the result also indicated that attitude, subjective norm are the factors which showed positively impact towards “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention. On the other hand, environmental concern and government policy have no significant towards “BYD” Electronic Vehicle. **Conclusion:** The result of this study can highlight the significantly key point that BYD should consider if BYD would like to maintain the status of Thailand market leading. Moreover, BYD can extend the result of this study to applied with the company strategy, marketing strategy, and stakeholder strategy for increasing BYD competitive advantage. **Keywords :** BYD, Electric Vehicle, Attitude, Subjective Norm, Environmental Concern, Government Policy, Charging Infrastructure, Purchase Intention

JEL Classification Code: M10, M30, Q56

1. Introduction

The adoption of EVs is expected to lead to a significant reduction in global pollution in the coming years. As more and more EVs are on the road, People in the world can expect to get a cleaner and healthier environment (*Environmental Benefits of EVs*, 2022). Electric vehicles (EVs) offer several sustainability advantages compared to traditional internal combustion

engine (ICE) vehicles (*Electric Vehicles and the Environment*, 2023). The adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) has been steadily increasing worldwide, driven by

several key trends and factors (International Energy Agency, 2023)⁶

EVs sales are increasing rapidly and expected to account for a significant share of the global vehicle market in the coming years. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), global EV sales reached 6.6 million in 2022, up from 2.5 million in 2020. This represents a growth rate of over 100%. The IEA forecasts that global EV sales will reach 14 million at the end of 2023, 20 million in 2025 and 50 million in 2030. By 2030, EVs are expected to account for 30% of all new vehicle sales globally (IEA, 2023).

BYD or Build Your Dream, which was founded in February 1995, is a high-tech business dedicated to using technological advancements to improve people's lives. After more than 27 years of rapid expansion, BYD has created over 30 industrial parks on six continents and played an important role in industries such as electronics, automobiles, renewable energy, and rail transit (*About BYD | BYD TH*, n.d.). BYD provides full zero-emission new energy solutions with a focus on energy acquisition, storage, and application. Its turnover surpasses CNY 200 billion and it is listed on both the Hong Kong and Shenzhen stock exchanges (*About BYD | BYD TH*, n.d.). BYD made an enormous impact in Thailand in September 2022 when it obtained an agreement to establish its first production hub in Southeast Asia ("China's BYD Signs Land Deal to Build First EV Plant in Thailand," 2022).

According to best-selling EV in Thailand 2022 information, Ora Good Cat, Chinese BEV, acquired best-selling EV with approximately 4,000 units sold, the second is MG EP approximately 2,393 and the third is

MG ZS EV 805 units (Archawametheekun, 2023). On the other hand, the first six months of 2023 Thailand best-selling EV, BYD is coming to be the new EV market leader with selling volume approximately 11,171 units, follow by Neta approximately 5,955 units and Tesla approximately 5,095 units (Revealing the top 10 EV car sales in the first half of the year, BYD leads with 11,000 units., 2023)

2. Research Objective

Regarding to Thailand selling EV in 2022 and first half of 2023 information, the market leader of EV producer has been rapidly changed and rather uncertainly because electric vehicle trend is still in early stages in Thailand. Therefore, there is an opportunity for new manufacturers to gain share in the market. This information can be assumed that Thailand's EV market will be fast expanding in coming year.

The objective of this study is to examine factors influencing purchase intention toward "BYD" Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok to be the guideline for BYD company in order to achieve selling target and maintain the highest market share in electric vehicles market in Thailand.

2. Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this study is to analyst factors influencing purchase intention toward "BYD" Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok. Regarding to previous study, researcher found three theories that have significant importance to determine variables of this study including Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) which developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in 1967, provides

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valuable insights into human behavior and the factors that influence human decisions and behavioral intentions. TRA hypothesizes that Attitudes and subjective norms influence behavioral intention, with attitudes being based on behavioral beliefs and subjective norms being based on normative beliefs (Tu & Yang, 2019; Malik & Yadav, 2020; Dutta & Hwang, 2021; Shakeel, 2022), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Icek Ajzen in 1985 that is designed to help understand and predict human behavior, especially in the context of decision-making and behavioral intentions (Park et al., 2018; Dutta & Hwang, 2021; Hasan, 2021; Mohammadreza, 2021), Theory of PEST analysis which is a strategic management tool used to analyze and evaluate the external macro-environmental factors that can affect an organization's performance and decision-making. PEST stands for Political, Economic, Social, and Technological factors (Francis Aguilar, 1967; Vasileva, 2018).

According to TRA and TPB, these two theories mentioned that Attitude and Subjective Norm influence behavioral intention. Therefore, these factors are chosen as independent variables for this study. Moreover, theory of PEST analysis stated importance of political, economic, social and technological factors on organization's performance. This study matches Political as a government policy, Social as an environmental consciousness, and Technological factors as charging infrastructure. These factors suit to be included as independent variables. In addition, the researcher reviewed ample research articles that supported relationship between chosen independent variables and dependent variable as discussed in the next section.

2.1. Attitude

Attitude, in the context of social psychology and research, refers to a relatively enduring and evaluative disposition or mental state that influences an individual's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, group, issue, or situation. Attitudes can be positive, negative, or neutral, and they

encompass a range of emotions and cognitive elements that shape our responses and actions (Svenningsson et al., 2021). Previous research has defined the main three components of human experience which led to personal attitude including affection, cognition, and behavior (Breckler, 1984). According to previous studied of Tu & Yang (2019), Dutta and Hwang (2021), Shakeel (2022) and Yeğın and Ikram's (2022), the results of these studies demonstrate that attitude has significant influence on purchase intention of human.

2.2. Subjective Norm

The subjective norm refers to an individual's perception of the social pressure or influence from significant others, such as family, friends, colleagues, or society, regarding whether they should engage in a particular behavior or follow a specific course of action (Yeğın & Ikram, 2022). Regarding to previous study indicated that subjective norm is influenced from perceived pressure to take the action or decision by observing from the surrounding society environment (Rhodes et al., 2002). Relate to TPB theory, various previous studies such as Tu and Yang (2019), Dutta and Hwang, (2021), Hasan (2021), Shakeel (2022) found that subjective norm is the important variable that affects purchase intention behavior.

2.3. Environmental Concern

Environmental concern is a complex construct that encompasses a range of attitudes, emotions, and beliefs about the environment. Environmental concern can be defined as the degree to which an individual is worried or concerned about the environment and its problems, and the willingness to take action to protect the environment (Fransson & Gärling, 1999). Regarding previous studies about electric vehicle purchase intention including Malik and Yadav (2020), Brinkmann and Bhatiasavi (2021), Jayasingh, S., Giriya, T., & Arunkumar, S. (2021), Lee, J., Baig, F., Talpur, M. A. H., & Shaikh, S. (2021), Yeğın and Ikram (2022), the researchers found that the result of these previous

studies show that environmental concern has significant influence toward electric vehicles purchase intention.

2.4. Government Policy

Government policy is a course of action or inaction chosen by a government in order to achieve a specific goal. Policies can be created at any level of government, including local, state, and federal. Government policies are often developed in response to public problems or concerns and implemented through a variety of mechanisms, including laws, regulations, programs, and incentives (Public Policy – Atlas of Public Management, 2013). Brinkmann and Bhatiasavi (2021), Dutta and Hwang (2021), Pailwar (2022), Shakeel (2022) studied about factors influencing electric vehicles purchase intention and found that government policy is the one factor that significant influence toward electric vehicles purchase intention.

2.5. Charging Infrastructure

Charging infrastructure of electric vehicles (EVs) and sustainable transportation, refers to the network of physical installations and components that enable the charging of electric vehicles. It includes charging stations, power supply equipment, connectors, and related technologies that facilitate the transfer of electrical energy from the grid to the EV's battery. Charging infrastructure is a critical component of the electric vehicle ecosystem, as it directly impacts the adoption and usability of electric vehicles (Ali & Naushad, 2022). The result of previous studies from Bai and Tan (2021), Jayasingh, S., Girija, T., & Arunkumar, S. (2021), Kim, S., Choi, J., Yi, Y., & Kim, H. (2022), Pailwar (2022) implied that charging infrastructure is the important factor that influence purchase intention of consumers.

2.6. Purchase Intention

Purchase Intention refers to consumer behavior which is an individual's expressed willingness or plan to buy a particular product or service in the future. It is a crucial concept in understanding consumer decision-

making processes and predicting future sales. Regarding the Theory of reasoned action (TRA) indicated that Purchase intention is influenced by a variety of factors, including attitudes, Subjective norm, Perceived behavioral control (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). While attitude belongs to the assessment of products, intention refers to an individual's drive or determination with regards to their willingness to engage in a specific behavior (Shahbaz Shabbir et al., 2009).

3. Literature Review

Several studies in many countries have found that attitudes have a significant influence on Electric Vehicles (EVs) purchase intention. Previous studied of Yeğin and Ikram's (2022) research about "Consumers' Electric Vehicle Purchase Intentions in Turkey" indicated that attitude has a significant impact on Electric Vehicle Purchase Intentions. The result of this study highlighted in the part of positive attitude toward functional efficiency, price, performance of Electric Vehicle (Yeğin & Ikram, 2022). The study "Consumers Purchase Intentions of Green Electric Vehicles in Taiwan", Dutta & Hwang (2021) found that attitude has significant affect toward Electric Vehicles (EVs) purchase intention. The main factor that inspires the positive attitude is mass media in Taiwan (Dutta & Hwang, 2021). In addition, researcher found other previous studied which are also support this relationship including Park, E., Lim, J., and Cho, Y. (2018), Tu and Yang (2019), Malik and Yadav, (2020), Jayasingh, Girija, & Arunkumar (2021), and Shakeel, (2022).

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is significant influence of attitude on purchase intention toward "BYD" Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok.

A number of studies have found that subjective norms have a significant influence on purchase intention. Regarding Dutta and Hwang (2021)'s study

also mentions to subjective norm which referred the TRA that Subjective norm has the directly influence to the increasing of good intention for Electric Vehicles adoption (Dutta & Hwang, 2021). Moreover, the result of Tu and Yang (2019) studied also support the relationship between Subjective Norm and Purchase Intention. The result of this study shows that the opinions of the external subjective norm such as the opinion of experts, the opinion of society are more motivate consumer purchase intention. The evidence of Hasan, 2021, Malik & Yadav, 2020, and Jayasingh & Girija & Arunkumar (2021) studies result also determined the positive value of relationship between Subjective Norm and Purchase Intention.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is significant influence of subjective norm on purchase intention toward “BYD” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok.

The study of Indian environmental concern toward green vehicle purchase intention implied that Indian consumers realize about environmental problems and support the green vehicle such as Electric Vehicle (EV) adoption (Malik & Yadav, 2020). Another of Indian student's Electric Car Purchase Intention study result have agree with Malik & Yadav, 2020 that environmental concern of Indian people influence EV purchase intention (Pailwar, 2022). These two previous studies aligned with the study about “Public Intentions to Purchase Electric Vehicles in Pakistan” that examine the influence of environmental concern toward Electric Vehicle (EV) purchase intention. Pakistan takes seriously concern about environmental awareness and be voluntary to preserve the environment by using sustainable transportation (Lee et al., 2021). Researcher have discovered more others study that have the same result to support the more strongest of this relationship consist of Dutta & Hwang (2021), Hasan (2021), Brinkmann & Bhatiasavi (2021), and Jayasingh & Girija & Arunkumar (2021). These studies result confirmed

that Environmental Concern have significant influence toward EV Purchase Intention.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is significant influence of environmental concern on purchase intention toward “BYD” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok.

The study of “Purchase Intention for Electric Vehicles Among Young Adults in Thailand” implied that Thai government supports the purchase of EVs can play important role to conduct policies to support automotive sector and EV consumers for example reducing excise taxes for EVs that are produced in the country (KPMG, 2018). The automotive sector is heavily influenced by environmental and infrastructure politics (Kissinger, 2017). By lowering excise taxes on EVs made in Thailand, for instance, the Thai government supports the purchase of EVs (Brinkmann & Bhatiasavi, 2021).

Hypothesis 4 (H4): There is significant influence of government policy on purchase intention toward “BYD” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok.

Charging infrastructure has a substantial influence on Electric Vehicle (EV) purchase intention. The availability, accessibility, and convenience of charging options play a pivotal role in shaping consumers' decisions to embrace EVs (Pailwar, 2022). The significant problem that Metais, M.O., & Jouini, O.a, & Perez, Y.a, & Berrada, J.b and Suomalainen, E.b (2022)'s study indicated that one of the most significant barriers to EV adoption is “range anxiety.” This term describes the fear that an EV's battery will run out before reaching a charging station. Limited charging infrastructure exacerbates this anxiety, dissuading potential buyers who worry about getting stranded without access to charging (Metais et al., 2022). The study of Dutta & Hwang (2021) and Jayasingh & Girija & Arunkumar (2021) show that Charging Infrastructure also influences Perceived behavioral control related to TPB Theory which is the theory leading to purchase

intention (Dutta & Hwang, 2021; Jayasingh et al., 2021). The result of previous study about “Public Intentions to Purchase Electric Vehicles in Pakistan” support the relationship between charging Infrastructure and Purchase Intention. The result of this study examines that the purchase intention might be reduced when consumers are not confident in charging infrastructure (Lee et al., 2021). The study about influencing factors of EV purchase intention in China also concur that the convenience of charging facilities has positive impact Electric Vehicle (EV) purchase intention (Bai & Tan, 2021; Hasan, 2021; Malik & Yadav, 2020).

Hypothesis 5 (H5): There is significant influence of charging infrastructure on purchase intention toward “BYD” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok.

4. Research Framework

The conceptual framework was presented in Figure 1. which is developed based on previous study and theoretical literatures. There are five independent variables including attitude, subjective norm, environmental concern, government policy and charging infrastructure.

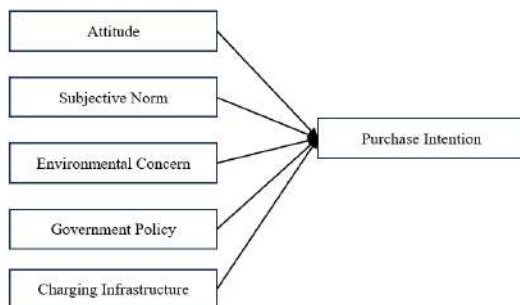


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

5. Research Methods

This study is conducted using primary and secondary data collection methods. Regarding the primary data collection method, the researcher acquired raw information directly from original sources which came from target respondents. This research's secondary data collection process is mainly based on literature review (TPB, TRA, PEST) and previous journal articles as discussed in Section from 2.1 to 3.

This study utilized survey which is used to quickly gain general details about the population of interest to help prepare for a more focused, in-depth study using cross sectional data. Several quantitative analyses are used including Reliability Analysis, Descriptive Statistic Analysis, and Multiple Linear Regression to achieve research objective. The first section is about screening question which are ‘Do you have any intention to purchase “BYD” electric vehicle in the future?’ and ‘Are you currently working in an organization located in Bangkok city?’ in order to screen qualified respondents based on research scope. Secondly, demographic information includes gender, age, education level, income, price of the car in order to describe general characteristics of the respondents. The third section includes scale items measuring all five independent variables and one dependent variable. .

Table 1: Operationalization of Variables

Variables	Item No.	Measurement Items	Measurement Scale	Sources
Attitude (AT)	AT 1	I believe that electric vehicles would be helpful to the environment in the long term.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Dutta and Hwang, (2021)
	AT 2	I believe that I will be satisfied if I use environmental-friendly vehicle.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher



Variables	Item No.	Measurement Items	Measurement Scale	Sources
	AT 3	I believe that driving an electric would reduce my cost in the long term.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	AT 4	I believe that "BYD" electric vehicles will become more popular than other internal combustion engine brand in the future.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	AT 5	I believe that people will react positively when they see an "BYD" electric vehicle on the road.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Malik and Yadav, (2020)
Subjective Norm (SN)	SN 1	Close people around me encourage me to buy "BYD" electric vehicle.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	SN 2	Close people around me encourage me to use environmentally friendly electric vehicle instead of an internal combustion engine vehicle.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Han, (2015)
	SN 3	I always talking with my close	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Jorgensen, (2015)

Variables	Item No.	Measurement Items	Measurement Scale	Sources
		people about news of "Tesla" electric vehicle.		
	SN 4	People around me are considering buying "BYD" electric vehicle as a next vehicle.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Hasan, (2021)
	SN 5	People around me who already own "BYD" electric vehicle and recommend me to buy an "BYD"	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
Environmental Concern (EC)	EC 1	To protect the environment, people should change their behavior to reduce climate change effect.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Kim et al, (2018)
	EC 2	I concern that climate change will affect my health and my family health in the long term.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	EC 3	I believe that the environmental problems will become a serious	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Wang et al, (2016)



Variables	Item No.	Measurement Items	Measurement Scale	Sources
		problem in the near future.		
	EC 4	I think internal combustion engine vehicle using is the one factor to increasing of air pollution in the country.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Pailwar, (2022)
	EC 5	I prefer to purchase sustainability and eco-friendly product.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Pailwar, (2022)
Government Policy (GP)	GP 1	I believe that government's incentive policy such as tax incentives on buying electric vehicle can increase EV consumption volume in the country.	I believe that government's incentive policy such as tax incentives on buying electric vehicle can increase EV consumption volume in the country.	Dutta and Hwang, (2021)
	GP 2	I believe that government's financial incentive policy such as loan interest rate of buying electric vehicle increases can increase EV consumption	I believe that government's financial incentive policy such as loan interest rate of buying electric vehicle increases can increase EV	Dutta and Hwang, (2021)

Variables	Item No.	Measurement Items	Measurement Scale	Sources
		volume in the country.	consumption volume in the country.	
	GP 3	I think the government incentive about research and development in EV technologies will develop EV manufacturing in Thailand.	I think the government incentive about research and development in EV technologies will develop EV manufacturing in Thailand.	By researcher
	GP 4	I believe that the government incentive about EV infrastructure such as charging area will increase more consumer confident about EV.	I believe that the government incentive about EV infrastructure such as charging area will increase more consumer confident about EV.	By researcher
	GP 5	I can decide to purchase an electric vehicle instead of internal combustion engine vehicle easier if I get incentive benefit from government.	I can decide to purchase an electric vehicle instead of internal combustion engine vehicle easier if I get incentive benefit from government.	By researcher



Variables	Item No.	Measurement Items	Measurement Scale	Sources
Charging Infrastructure (CI)	CI1	I think that the wide range of EV charging stations can influence consumers buying EVs.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	CI2	The number and coverage of EV charging stations is the main factor that I concern about EV purchasing.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	CI3	Currently, I can accept the charging speed of EV technology.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Pailwar, (2022)
	CI4	I think that EV charging at home is important, and I can accept the cost of home charging installation.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	CI5	I prefer the charging facility at my working place and community mall.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Dutta and Hwang, (2021)
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	I prefer to purchase an electric vehicle in the near future.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	PI2	I will recommend people around me to purchase "BYD"	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher

Variables	Item No.	Measurement Items	Measurement Scale	Sources
		electric vehicles instead of conventional vehicles.		
	PI3	I think that "BYD" are more attractive than other electric vehicles brand.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher
	PI4	I'm interested about campaign or promotion of "BYD".	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	Jayasingh et al., (2021)
	PI5	I perceived that the price of "BYD" is appropriate for the quality.	Interval Scale (Likert 1-5)	By researcher

The researcher employed non-probability sampling methods which are convenience sampling method and snowball sampling. Because of the limited time available for data collection, researchers aspire to use a non-probability sampling method. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, the minimum sample size is 384 for 1 million population. The sample size of this study has 400 people who work in organizations located in Bangkok, based on the number of employees in Bangkok 5,642,757 people (Population Number Classified by Labor Status and Gender by Province, 2022., 2565) exceeding minimum sample size of 384. The method biases to increase the response rate, social desirability bias, and common method bias were not dealt which are limitation of the current study.

The pilot test result from 30 respondents uses Cronbach's Alpha methodology to evaluate the five independent variables which are attitude, subjective

norm, environmental concern, government policy, and charging infrastructure. The results determined that Cronbach's Alpha scale of attitude is 0.672, scale of subjective norm is 0.731, scale of environmental concern is 0.714, scale of government policy is 0.851, and scale of charging infrastructure is 0.705. The evaluation of a dependent variable which is purchase intention is 0.818. The overall result of construct's internal consistency shows that the research's questionnaire has reliability to be accepted regarding a general accepted rule is that α of 0.6-0.7 indicates an acceptable level of reliability, and 0.8 or greater a very good level. (Hulin, Netemeyer, & Cudeck, 2001).

Table 2: n = 30

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Item
Dependent Variable		
Purchase Intention	0.818	5
Independent Variables		
Attitude	0.672	5
Subjective Norm	0.731	5
Environmental Concern	0.714	5
Governance Policy	0.851	5
Charging Infrastructure	0.705	5

The survey questionnaire data were collected 400 people who are working in organizations located in Bangkok. The questionnaires were distributed via google form.

6. Result and Discussion

6.1. Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Data

According to the questionnaire that the researcher has distributed to target respondents who are working with an organization located in Bangkok and interested in the electronic vehicle adoption. Questionnaires were

conducted by 444 respondents which participated 111% of sample size, 44 invalid respondents eliminated. Therefore, 400 valid respondents 90.91% of sample size are used for data analysis.

The number of total respondents 400 respondents including Male 35.5% of all respondents, Female 64.5% all respondents. The larger age range of target respondents is 20 – 30 years old from 246 respondents or 61.5% of all respondents. From survey, highest education level of 306 target respondents calculated to 76.5 % of 400 respondents is bachelor's degree. The majority of 400 target respondents separate to respondents who have income between 50,001 – 80,000 THB calculated to 37.0%, followed respondents who have income between 20,001 – 50,000 THB 28.5% of all target respondents, respondents who have income between 80,001 – 100,000 THB 12.0% of all target respondents, 11.3% of all target respondents have income lower than 20,000 THB, 11.3% of all target respondents have income more than 100,000 THB. According to the survey, the majority of respondents with 241 respondents or 60.3% of all target respondents looking for a car price between 600,000 – 1,000,000 THB, the second of respondents with 131 respondents or 32.8% looking for car price between 1,000,001 – 1,500,000 THB, 6.9% of respondents looking for car price more than 1,500,000 THB.

Table 2: Show the frequency distribution and percentage of demographic information from sample size 400 respondents as follow:

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	142	35.5 %
Female	258	64.5 %
Total	400	100%
Age		
20 - 30 years old	246	61.5 %
31 - 40 years old	131	32.8 %
41 - 50 years old	20	5.0 %
Over 50 years old	3	0.8 %
Total	400	100%
Highest Education Level		



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Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percent
Lower than bachelor's degree	23	5.8 %
Bachelor's degree	306	76.5 %
Master's degree	70	17.5 %
Higher than master's degree	1	0.3 %
Total	400	100%
Income		
Lower than 20000 Baht	11.3 %	11.3 %
20,001 - 50,000 Baht	28.5 %	28.5 %
50,001 - 80,000 Baht	37.0 %	37.0 %
80,001 - 100,000 Baht	12.0 %	12.0 %
More than 100,000 Baht	11.3 %	11.3 %
Total	400	100%
Price of the car that target respondent looking for.		
600,000 - 1,000,000 Baht	241	60.3 %
1,000,001 - 1,500,000 Baht	131	32.8 %
1,500,001 - 2,000,000 Baht	22	5.5 %
More than 2,000,000 Baht	6	1.5 %
Total	400	100%

6.2. Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Data

The results among 400 respondents have highest mean of attitude is "I believe that I will be satisfied if I use environmental-friendly vehicle." which is 4.35. conversely, the lowest mean is "I believe that "BYD" electric vehicles will become more popular than other internal combustion engine brand in the future." which is 3.85. The highest standard deviation of attitude is "I believe that "BYD" electric vehicles will become more popular than other internal combustion engine brand in the future." which is 0.798. The lowest is "I believe that I will be satisfied if I use environmental-friendly vehicle." which equals 0.662.

The highest mean of subjective norm is "Close people around me encourage me to use environmentally friendly electric vehicle instead of an internal combustion engine vehicle." which equals 4.00. However, the lowest mean is "I always talking with my close people about news of "BYD" electric vehicle.", and "People around me are considering buying "BYD"

electric vehicle as a next vehicle." which equals 3.33. The highest standard deviation of subjective norm is "People around me who already own "BYD" electric vehicle and recommend me to buy an "BYD"." which is 0.987. Inversely, the lowest is "Close people around me encourage me to buy "BYD" electric vehicle." which is 0.789.

The highest mean of environmental concern is "I believe that the environmental problems will become a serious problem in the near future." which equals 4.62. However, the lowest mean is "I prefer to purchase sustainability and eco-friendly product." which is 4.05. The highest standard deviation of environmental concern is "I prefer to purchase sustainability and eco-friendly product." which is 0.746. Inversely, the lowest is "I believe that the environmental problems will become a serious problem in the near future." which is 0.577.

The highest mean of government policy is "I believe that the environmental problems will become a serious problem in the near future." which equals 4.62. However, the lowest mean is "I prefer to purchase sustainability and eco-friendly product." which is 4.05. According to the standard deviation, the highest is "I prefer to purchase sustainability and eco-friendly products." which is 0.746. Inversely, the lowest is "I believe that environmental problems will become a serious problem in the near future." which is 0.577.

The highest mean of charging infrastructure is "I believe that I will make the decision to buy EV easier if Thailand has more widely range of EV charging stations." which equals 4.47. However, the lowest mean is "I believe that I will make the decision to buy EV easier if charging technical of EV has more speed than currently." which is 4.14. According to the standard deviation, the highest is "I believe that I will make the decision to buy EV easier if charging technical of EV has more speed than currently." which is 0.874. Inversely, the lowest is "I believe that I will make the

decision to buy EV easier if Thailand has more widely range of EV charging stations.” which is 0.625.

6.3. Hypothesis Testing Result

The analysis result by multiple linear regression which find significant influence of Attitude, Subjective Norm, Environmental Concern, Government Policy, Charging Infrastructure on purchase toward “BYD” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok. Regarding all hypotheses, attitude (H1), subjective norm (H2), charging infrastructure (H5) analysis result present the significant level or called P-value from this study is less than 0.001, according to the P-value should be less than 0.05. Therefore, the result can be implied that null hypothesis of these 3 hypotheses was rejected. On the other hand, environmental concern (H3) and government policy (H4) analysis results show that the significant level or called P-value from this study are 0.306, and 0.292 as sequence. P-value of these 2 hypotheses become more than 0.05. Therefore, the result can be implied that null hypothesis could not be rejected.

The result of standardize coefficient result indicates that purchase intention toward “BYD” will be increased 32.39% if attitude increases 1 unit as referred in β result equal to 0.3239, purchase intention toward “BYD” will be increased 43.51% if subjective norm increases 1 unit as referred in β result equal to 0.4351, and purchase intention toward “BYD” will be increased 15.70% if charging infrastructure increases 1 unit as referred in β result equal to 0.1570. Furthermore, the regression analysis result indicated that this model has variance 58.2% at 95% of confident level as described with R-square from analysis has 0.582 and this model was significant with P-value less than 0.05.

In summary, the result of this study can be summarized that there is a significant influence of attitude (H1), subjective norm (H2), charging infrastructure (H5) on purchase intention toward “BYD”

Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok but there is no significant influence of environmental concern (H3) and government policy (H4) on purchase intention toward “BYD” Electronic Vehicles of office workers in Bangkok. In addition, the result from the value of variance inflation factor (VIF) this multicollinearity is 2.10 for H1, 1.53 for H2, 1.76 for H3, 2.05 for H4, and 1.88 for H5. These 3 VIF are less than 5, indicated that no issue occurred in multicollinearity.

Table 3: Indicate the result of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Variables	B	SE B	β	p	VIF
Attitude	0.3884	0.0566	0.3239	<.001	2.10
Subjective Norm	0.4308	0.0400	0.4351	<.001	1.53
Environmental Concern	-0.0568	0.0553	-0.0443	0.306	1.76
Government Policy	0.0560	0.0531	0.0492	0.292	2.05
Charging Infrastructure	0.1856	0.0528	0.1570	<.001	1.88

Noted: $R^2 = 0.582$, $Adjusted R^2 = 0.577$, $*p < 0.05$.
Dependent Variable = Purchase Intention

6.4. Discussion

The analysis result of this study indicated that subjective norm is the strongest driver which significantly influenced “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention. The significant value of relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention is less than 0.001 ($P < 0.001$) which met the criteria that significant value must less than 0.05. In addition, the standardized coefficient (β) of subjective norm factor towards “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention is 0.435 which is the highest score among other factors. It means purchase intention will be increased 43.5% if subjective norm increase 1 unit. The result of this study agreed with Dutta & Hwang, (2021) which study

Consumers Purchase Intentions toward Green Electric Vehicles of Taiwanese found that subjective norm is the factor that has positively influenced purchase intention of Electric Vehicle with significant value less than 0.001. The result of Tu & Yang, (2019) presented the significance of subjective norm factors that impact to purchase intention. The result of study found that subjective norm has positive influence on behavioral intentions which determine that the ability of consumers to access the resources needed to purchase electric vehicles has the strongest influence on their behavioral intention.

The relation between Attitude and “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention is the second strongest relationship in this study. The result of the study supported previous research findings. Yeğin and Ikram (2022) indicated that attitude has a positive and significant effect on Electric Vehicle Purchase with significant value lower than 0.001. To conform with this study, the previous study of Park et al., (2018) also indicated that three factors can motivate driver's intention to use Electric Vehicle including satisfaction, usefulness, and attitude which has the significant value between attitude and intention lower than 0.001.

The last factor that influences “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention is Charging Infrastructure. The analysis result determined that Charging Infrastructure is the factor that impact on “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention as the third level of significant from all variables in this study. The result of previous study about Indian EV purchasing intention has conformity result of this research. The previous result showed that Indian target respondent prefer Charging Convenience to motivate their Electric Vehicle purchasing intention with the significant value lower than 0.05 (Pailwar, 2022). In addition, the study about Electric Vehicle purchase intention of target respondent in Suwon City, Korea presented that Charging Infrastructure and service can directly contribute to making the decision to purchase an electric vehicle of Suwon people with significant value lower than 0.001 (Kim et al., 2022).

In summary, the result of this study that aligned with previous studies proving that Attitude, Subjective Norm, and Charging Infrastructure significantly influenced “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention.

On the other hand, the result of these two factors found that Environmental Concern and Government Policy have no significance on “BYD” Electronic Vehicle purchase intention. The finding of this study does not correspond with previous studies which found that Environmental Concern and Government Policy have positive significant on electric purchase intention (Malik & Yadav, 2020, Brinkmann & Bhatiasavi, 2021, Jayasingh et al., 2021, Lee et al., 2021, Yeğin & Ikram, 2022, Dutta & Hwang, 2021, Pailwar, 2022, Shakeel, 2022). According to the study result which against previous studies of secondary data, the researcher analyzed that the environmental safety trend is the normalized behavior of people in the world nowadays but it's not the main factor that motivates consumer purchase intention in some countries that have different standards of living. Moreover, Subsidization from government policy may not be sustainable. Therefore, Electric Vehicle purchase intention may depend on other important factors than Environmental Concern and Government Policy.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The electric vehicle (EV) market in Thailand is still in early stages, presenting a unique set of challenges and opportunities. BYD has set its sights on this budding market in Thailand and has official entered in Thailand market since August 2022 (Princewill, 2022). The recommendation that research would like to suggest BYD to succeed in the early stages of Thailand's EV market which is aligned with the study result consist of three focus areas including localization focus to build positive customer experiences, customer-centric approach to build the trust and loyalty, and technological innovation to explore the new



opportunity and come over competitors in the market, strategic of partnerships to improve market condition.

Regarding the study result, the subjective norm and attitude are the highest factors that influence “BYD” Electronic Vehicles purchase intention. To conduct positive perspective from subjective norm, BYD can focus more on product localization. This entails customizing products and services to align with the specific preferences and needs of the Thai consumers. Local production facilities must be established to reduce costs, enhance community engagement, and ensure a seamless experience for the Thai customer. Furthermore, BYD should focus on local material sourcing and workforce employment to contribute positively to the Thai economy while solidifying its reputation as a responsible corporate entity. This recommendation reinforces BYD's project about established EV plant in Thailand (“China's BYD Signs Land Deal to Build First EV Plant in Thailand,” 2022). Moreover, customer-centric is the significant strategy to conduct the subjective norm and increase the good attitude toward BYD brand. A good experience of after-sales service, competitive warranties, and complimentary ownership experience should be important keys of BYD's approach. BYD can provide better customer experience including comprehensive warranty package, the convenience of access service centers, timely and efficient maintenance services. In addition, to come over competitors in the market, BYD should continue to develop their technology and innovation to explore opportunities including the new usable and attractive function, energy storage solutions, faster charger technology.

Lastly recommendation about charging infrastructure, BYD can use the strategic partnerships with local businesses, government agencies, and influential stakeholders to improve the charging infrastructure in Thailand and come over market conditions. For example, investment with Thai company who involved with EV charging infrastructure to develop EV charging station in Thailand to coverage in all areas.

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A process model for creating a brand in Japanese small business

Yuhsuke Inagaki¹, Shintaro Katsura²

Abstract

Purpose: This paper examines the process through which small firms with few management resources build their brands. We have considered small firms in the manufacturing industry for this case study. Building an in-house brand involves management strategy, business planning, and management evaluation in Phase 1; product development in Phase 2; customer development and distribution in Phase 3; and human resource development in Phase 4. Through this study, we have presented a specific framework for brand building and corporate growth.

Keywords : small business, creating own brand, environmental change, value creation

JEL Classification Code (up to 3-5): L10, L20, M10

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and objectives

The business environment of small firms is severe. To seize business opportunities, managers must deal with many management issues. Small firms have fewer resources than large firms and thus smaller budgets for their businesses. In the case of a subcontractor and original equipment manufacturer (OEM), they face many restrictions, and it is difficult for them to take the initiative in production volume, quality, and price. Small firms' own brand creation plays a major role in their development.

The history of research on brand building is relatively short. For example, most of the research in the field of brand management and the theories developed are about large corporations and multinational companies. As large companies have abundant management resources, theories about large

companies cannot be directly applied to small companies. Since 2000, research has gradually focused on brand building in small and medium-sized

enterprises (SMEs). However, medium-sized firms, which are similar to large firms, cannot be compared to small firms.⁷

There are few studies about the process through which small firms go through to build their own brands to survive. In many cases, the president of the company leads all decision-making in small firms because of the president's strong influence. Therefore, qualitative research based on participant observation and semi structured interviews with the president and employees can easily capture the actual management situation. The purpose of this paper is to examine the process through which small firms with few management resources build their own brands. Based on the findings, we also present a framework for small firms to build their own brands. We also hope to make practical

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recommendations about improving the profitability of small firms.

2. Definition and characteristics of small business

The definition of small-scale enterprises under Japan's Small and Medium Enterprise Basic Law is a company with 20 or fewer employees in the manufacturing and other sectors and a company with five or fewer employees in the commerce and service sectors.

There are two characteristics of small businesses in Japan. The first is that the president has a strong influence over the organization and makes almost all decisions. In addition, they have few management resources and specialize in a particular field of business. The president of a small business prioritizes immediate production, sales, and other daily operations. The president can assess the company's situation based on the operating status of the plant and office. The second is strategy and tactics. The president excels in tactics and deals with business issues quickly. However, they are not good at developing strategies and business plans to deal with medium- to long-term management issues. This is because small companies place the highest priority on operations that respond to customer demands.

3. Literature review

Research on brand building has been conducted in the field of brand management (Aaker, 1996). In brand management research, there are many theories about large companies with abundant management resources and few theories about SMEs (Keller, 2003; Krake, 2005; Juntunen et al., 2010). In recent years, there have been several studies on the process and evaluation of branding in SMEs. Juntunen et al. (2010) presented a case study on brand building based on the growth stage of two SMEs. Centeno et al. (2013) investigated a

conceptual model of SME brand building by conducting interviews with 30 SMEs. Kennedy and Wright (2016) analyzed the case studies of 10 Irish microenterprises and their brand development process.

Some studies have also evaluated the branding of SMEs. Yin Wong and Merrilees (2005) evaluated the components of SME branding strategies by conducting eight case studies. Berthon et al. (2008) presented the differences between SMEs and large organizations based on their brand management practices. Spence and Essoussi (2010) evaluated brand management in SMEs by conducting interviews and a literature review. Igata et al. (2018) evaluated and analyzed the branding of SMEs from the perspective of Kansei Engineering.

Nonaka (2007) states that the essence of knowledge-creating firms is the tacit knowledge of employees and utilization of subjective insights, intuition, and ideals. The author emphasizes the importance of learning Japanese knowledge creation techniques for organizations seeking to compete on knowledge. Teece (2018) highlights that there is a requirement to study the interrelationship between the business model's impact on organizational design and dynamic capability of firms, which constrains the feasibility of their strategies. In particular, an in-depth understanding of business model innovation, adoption, and change is important for dynamic capability. Traoré et al. (2021) examined knowledge brokerage strategies among knowledge and technology transfer organizations (KTTOs) by examining data with respect to 212 Canadian KTTOs. Hepp (2022) examines the dynamics of technological change, industrial clusters and firms.

The president of an SME has a large influence on the organization and leads many management decisions. Therefore, many qualitative studies are based on semistructured interviews with and participant observation of the presidents of SMEs. In addition, there are few SME brand management studies on Japanese firms. Furthermore, there are no process studies on small Japanese firms' brand building. Therefore, this paper examines the process of building one's own brand by conducting a case study of



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Japanese small firms. We clarify the actual situation under which small firms create value through learning and growth. We also present a dynamic framework that categorizes the process of building one's own brand into four stages.

4. Method

In SMEs, especially small businesses, the president has a great deal of influence over the organization and often leads management decision-making. Small firms are also more sensitive to information leaks. Although information leaks can have a significant impact on their earnings, they are not proactive to information disclosure. Therefore, it is difficult to grasp the actual management situation through quantitative analysis of a questionnaire survey.

Qualitative research that is based on semistructured interviews with presidents and employees is likely to grasp the actual management situation. There are few previous studies on small firms. In this paper, we conduct semistructured interviews with presidents and employees, as well as participant observation, over a 6-year period. We believe that a case study is an effective research method for clarifying the causal relationship between corporate behaviors under certain circumstances.

The case study focuses on two small Japanese firms whose performance declined because of changes in the business environment. We identify a process model that small firms can use to build their own brand for value creation. The subjects of the study are the following two small firms. Case A is a small apparel company with 19 employees. Although it was a subcontractor, it started building its own brand and enhanced its product planning and development capabilities. Case B is a small company that manufactures wooden interior goods. The company was able to build its own brand and is now selling its products directly to customers.

5. Case study

5.1. Company A

5.1.1. Business overview

Company A is a small apparel company in Japan with 19 employees. The company applies elaborate embroidery to stretchy fabrics, such as socks and leggings. The company was founded in 1966. In 1982, the company was incorporated, and its main factory was built. The current president joined the company in 1999 and became president in 2009. The company has the technology that applies precision embroidery to highly elastic fabrics. There are approximately 1,000 products available. It can produce approximately 7,000 to 9,000 pieces of high-precision embroidery in fixed positions per day. The company uses its own production tools and systematically updates its production equipment. The company's embroidery is of high quality. The company's quality is supported by the high technical skills of its local craftsmen.

The company's production technology has three characteristics. The first is the technology to embroider along the longitudinal stripes of stretchable fabrics. The second is the technique of stretching the frame of the sock before embroidery to achieve high precision. The third is the technology for transferring embroidery paper designs to digital data. The company uses a cell production system. One person oversees the entire process, from sock framing to embroidery and inspection.

5.1.2. New product development and efforts to build its own brand

In 2016, the company experienced a decline in branded embroidery orders and the company's revenues due to weak demand in the luxury branded apparel industry as a whole.



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In March 2017, the company developed a new management plan that addressed several key issues. The most important element was the development and sales promotion of new products. The company's employees love embroidery work. They are highly motivated to contribute to the embroidery business and voluntarily work to improve operations. In recent years, there has been almost no employee turnover. The president values the relationship of trust with employees. The president has been promoting good management and factory improvements by incorporating employees' opinions offered at staff meetings.

A planning meeting was initiated to create the company's original design embroidery. During the meeting, themes are set and opinions are exchanged. Prototypes of new products that employees would like to create are developed. The prototypes are completed through repeated exchanges of opinions and evaluations. The company's product design is inspired by the facial expressions and body movements of animals.

In March 2018, the company created its own website and released its embroidery designs. Orders for embroidery of socks and hats for schools and sports clubs are increasing. In September 2018, the company exhibited its original products in a comprehensive exhibition. The products were original socks and leggings with multiple types of embroidery. The visitors' response was positive. In November 2018, the company participated in one of the largest business meetings in Japan, which was well received. This was the turning point in building the company's own brand. In December 2018, the company further developed its products by starting an embroidery project that focused on the story of its products. The company labeled its own products with materials, brand names, and prices.

In November 2018, the company had another meeting with a leading Japanese retailer. As a result, in May 2019, the company's products were displayed on the sales floor of that leading retailer and sales began. Embroidery processing is subject to fluctuating

demand. The lead time is short, the number of setups increases, and it is difficult to adjust supply.

In October 2020, the company registered its trademark as "Ohanashi Socks" (Ohanashi means story in Japanese). In February 2021, the company enhanced the design and aimed for a high-quality, low-cost product. In March 2022, the product was sold in many stores in a chain that specializes in socks.

5.2. Company B

5.2.1. Business overview

Company B is a small company with 12 employees. The company's business area is the manufacture and sale of wooden interior furniture. It is an OEM with high-mix, low-volume production. The company's main products are wooden-framed mirrors, hanger racks, and magazine racks. The company manufactures its products in its own factory using solid wood as raw material.

The current president's father founded the woodworking factory in 1959 to manufacture shovels and hardware handles; the current president joined the company in 1981. The company operates molding machines and painting robots. The company has been supplying products to medium-sized furniture wholesalers. In recent years, the company has developed its own brand, and since 2016, it has also been operating an online store to sell its products directly to customers.

5.2.2. New product development and efforts to build its own brand

In 2012, the company experienced a downturn in business performance. To recover, the company started an OEM business. The company produced from one piece to match the frequency of customer orders. However, it did not generate profits. Since February 2016, the president's wife has been running the company's online sales store. Sales were low at first,



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but the online store now accounts for about half of the company's sales.

The company's factory uses an integrated production system—from raw material processing to product finishing. The company is committed to quality control. The company is also very attentive to its customers, which has earned the company the support of its customers. Customers can freely select products from a variety of sizes, colors, shapes, and materials. Custom-made products are also available. The company is improving the management of its online store by analyzing customer visitation trends, onsite behavior, and purchase results.

On the top page of its online store, the company communicates its manufacturing philosophy to customers. Recently, the company has been using social network sites to enable real-time information exchange. In 2016, the company participated in a small exhibition to promote its own-brand products. In 2017, the company registered its own-brand products as a trademark. In March 2018, the company exhibited at Japan's largest lifestyle products exhibition for the first time. In April 2017, the son of the president and two younger employees began a factory improvement circle. They are working on the company's product specifications, work standards, and cost control. Both the company's OEM and own-brand online store businesses are doing well. The company's employees are enthusiastic about factory improvements, which help the company produce high-quality products. There have been few customer complaints about product quality.

In April 2018, the company raised its product prices after a major Japanese logistics company significantly increased its shipping costs. As a result of this price increase, orders from the OEM business declined. However, orders for its own-brand online store business increased. In addition, the company revamped its general catalog of wooden interior products and promoted them to customers. Since June 2018, a product planning and development project has been promoted by the president's son, two young employees,

and outside experts. In addition to developing new products and building its own brand, the company also aims to achieve efficient distribution and sales. In the new product development, the company pursued product functionality.

In September 2018, the company exhibited a wooden-framed interior mirror improved by the president's son at a general-type exhibition, and in February 2019, the company exhibited it again at a lifestyle products exhibition. The company's management and employees promoted the company's appeal. In 2019, the company began to realize the results of building its own brand; earnings from the OEM business have improved a bit, and the online store sales business is performing well. One of the future management issues is the efficient operation of these two businesses. One of its goals is to build an integrated system of order receipt, production, and sales.

6. Considerations

6.1. Changes in the business environment and the responses of the two companies

From its establishment until around 2000, Company A was supplying subcontracted elaborate embroidery for brand-name products because department stores and apparel companies were performing well. From around 2000, the company increased the number of suppliers because of the deteriorating performance of department stores. The company embroidered on thin fabrics, stretchable fabrics, and large pattern fabrics. The company also worked on delicate and sophisticated embroidery and produced a wide variety of products in small quantities. The company also developed embroidery techniques to achieve high quality, quick delivery, and low cost. In recent years, the popularity of Japanese socks has recovered slightly. Knit manufacturers and sporting goods stores became customers of the company. The company is now involved in the embroidery of patches and hats as well as well-designed embroidery. The



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company has developed a management plan and aims to improve profitability by building its own unique brand.

When Company B was founded, it was a woodworking factory that produced shovel handles and other parts. After Japan's recession, the Japanese furniture industry was restructured. Since 2010, the company has been mainly producing wooden interior products. They produced and sold their own high-quality products with short delivery times. In recent years, the company faced high costs due to shipping fee hikes by logistics providers. The online store sales business run by the president's wife was performing well, accounting for 50% of company-wide sales. The company's products are custom-made to order, allowing customers to freely select sizes and colors. The company's products have become its own brand and support the company's performance.

6.2. Building the brands of the two companies

This section examines the process that the two companies used to build their brands.

6.2.1. Phase 1: Business strategy, planning, and evaluation

In the case of Company A, its performance went stagnant around 2016. Orders for branded embroidery were declining due to diversifying consumer needs. To overcome this business crisis, the company formulated a new management plan in March 2017. In this plan, the president positioned new product development and the promotion of sales as mid- to long-term management issues.

Company B had engaged in OEM business in response to its weak performance in 2012. It then decided to build its own brand to improve profitability. The company was in crisis owing to sluggish performance. In accordance with the new management plan, the president's wife began running the company's own online shopping store in February 2016 in an attempt to support the company's earnings.

6.2.2. Phase 2: In-house product development

In the case of Company A, it planned and proposed its original embroidery products to its customers. The company proposed high-quality, advanced, and special embroidery. The company also proposed embroidery on patches and hats, which was not available before. Moreover, the company held planning meetings for the development of its products. To create original design embroidery, the meeting members exchanged opinions and identified issues based on the theme. They made prototypes and repeatedly exchanged and evaluated opinions to improve the quality. The embroidery designs were inspired by animal faces and body movements. In October 2020, the company obtained a trademark: "Ohanashi Socks." In February 2021, it planned a well-designed, high-quality, low-cost product.

Company B originally had a reputation for the quality of its products. With the increase in Internet sales, consumer purchasing behavior changed. The company devised a compatible way to offer its products online. Online customers of the store can freely select their preferred size, color, mold, and material. Custom-made product sizes were also made available. The first in-house product offered a wide variety of sizes in unique colors. The second in-house product offered a high-end product that took advantage of the material's characteristics as solid wood. Subsequently, we proposed several new products made of different types of solid wood, making it easy for customers to choose. The company is developing new customer relationships by offering products that are small and inexpensive enough to be used on desks. In addition to its mainstay wooden narrow-frame mirrors, the company is currently planning new products that utilize wood scraps.

6.2.3. Phase 3: Distribution and customer development

In the third stage, based on the in-house product development in the previous stage, the companies proceeded with customer and distribution development. Company A exhibited its original products at a comprehensive exhibition in September 2018. The



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products were well received by visitors and gave the company confidence in its new planning design and embroidery techniques. The company also had business meetings with leading retailers and mail-order businesses. This was the turning point in building its own brand. The representative of a leading retailer placed an order for the company's products. The company proceeded with the planning and development of storytelling with exquisite embroidery.

In February 2019, the company exhibited its first branded product—Story Socks—at Japan's largest trade fair for lifestyle products. Story Socks received high acclaim for its design and quality. The company exchanged information with visitors and exhibitors. The products have been sold at leading retailers and sock specialty chains in Tokyo and Osaka since 2019. The branded products did sell, although at a higher price than conventional products.

Company B also exhibited at a small-scale lifestyle products exhibition in 2016 to increase awareness of its products, and in 2017, it registered its own-brand products as a trademark. Moreover, in March 2018, it exhibited at Japan's largest lifestyle products exhibition for the first time. In addition, the sales floor of the online store's direct sales site was improved. The placement and layout of products on the web were significantly revised. The introduction of new products and web advertisements greatly increased the number of customers. The company provides friendly customer service for customers needing assistance. This includes e-mail support and a telephone consultation service. The company is also working to gain new customers by opening stores on major web shopping sites such as the Rakuten Market.

6.2.4. Phase 4: Human resource development

The fourth step is human resource development. This involves the training of management and employees and the associated improvement activities.

In the case of Company A, the president held a meeting to determine the employees' understanding of the management plan—from formulation to operation.

He believes that it is important to communicate carefully every day. Whenever he is unsure of a decision, he checks the management plan. He wants to increase the company's value by creating new products. The planning and development of new products and participation in exhibitions and business meetings provide the employees with independent opportunities to learn and grow, which are reflected in management improvements. This creates a vigorous cycle of corporate growth. The participants learned the key points of finishing their own branded products, such as applying for registered trademarks, labeling product materials and brands, setting prices, and understanding costs.

In Company B, the president's son and two young employees started a factory improvement initiative in April 2017. They have been working diligently on their product specifications, work standards, and cost controls. The company's branded business area is online store sales, and it is performing well.

The company is able to produce high-quality products because the president and employees are enthusiastic about improving the factory. There have been few complaints from customers regarding the quality of the products. The company is studying improvement plans for the online store based on daily customer trends and other data, and employees are learning through implementation and verification.

6.3. Process through which small companies build their own brand

This paper examines the brand building process based on a case study of two companies. The process of building a small company's own brand can be summarized as follows.

First, the top of Figure 1 is the starting phase. The first phase is business strategy, business planning, and business improvement. In both companies, the impetus for building their own brands was the crisis caused by poor performance. There were changes in the business environment, such as the global recession, disasters, changing consumer needs, and the spread of the Internet. They have developed management strategies



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and plans and have transformed their businesses in response to changes in the business environment. Moreover, the companies have been building their own brands.

The second phase is in-house product development. A planning meeting is held with both inside and outside stakeholders of the company to gather opinions. They make prototypes and go through a trial-and-error process to commercialize their products. The companies' in-house product development and quality improvement efforts are closely related to building their own brand. In addition to their historical background, the companies make their own products while reaffirming the "feelings" and "values" embedded in the products they offer.

In the third phase, based on the in-house product development in the second phase, the companies proceed with customer development and distribution development. They then participate in exhibitions and business meetings and seek evaluations of your products from the participants. Moreover, they promote information exchange to understand the needs of customers. If there is an order from a company, they respond to it. They also open a store at exhibition events. The information obtained here can become a turning point in the company's growth.

The fourth phase, human resource development, involves the education of management and employees. Education is provided through practice and execution in the management strategy and planning, new product development, and customer development and distribution development phases.

Moreover, improvement activities, such as 3S (sorting, setting-in-order, and shining: Japanese methods for factory improvement) and factory development, are also promoted. Because small companies have few management resources, daily work practice is often the avenue for training. Moreover, it is important to be aware of the experience and knowledge that can be gained from new product and customer development from the management plan and view it as an opportunity for growth.

The next step in Phase 4 is to return to Phase 1. In the process of advancing from Phase 1 to Phase 4, the knowledge and experience learned by management, employees, and the organization are fed back to Phase 1. Thus, the management strategy and plan are reviewed to improve management. In any phase of this cycle, it is essential to constantly review the company's own brand building process. The first and most important step in building one's own brand is to provide one's own "thoughts" and "values." Without the company's "feelings" and "values," its products and services will not penetrate customers with high supply levels.

The next most important aspect is communication. This includes internal communication between management and employees and among employees, as well as communication with customers and suppliers. As the cycle of the brand building process is repeated, communication with all stakeholders deepens through the "thoughts" and "values" that are incorporated into the company's products and brand. This knowledge is also fed back to the organization. As employees and the organization learn more through repeated cycles of the brand building process, trust is created. This includes the trust created by the business track record and trust in the quality of the company's products. Moreover, as the cycle continues and employees and the organization learn more, profitability increases. As the company provides customers with products and services that incorporate the company's aspirations and values, communication is deepened and trust is created, which will inevitably reflect in the company's business performance. Finally, there is motivation. As these cycles permeate the organization, employees become more motivated. This leads to a desire to contribute to the company and a sense of belonging.

This four-step process of building a company's own brand and its repeated cycles are concrete steps for small companies with limited management resources to be successful in building their own brands. The function of each of these steps needs to be consciously executed. The cycle is also repeated consciously. With each repetition, the level of building the company's



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brand increases, and the learning level of the organization deepens. Along with the learning level, management, employees, and the organization will grow.

7. Conclusions

Compared with research on large firms, there is little research on small and medium-sized firms and even less on small firms. Small firms have very few management resources, and their presidents are often highly influential and lead decision-making. Few studies have presented a specific development framework based on a small company's brand building process. Although most of the existing studies on brand building for SMEs include medium-sized enterprises, it is difficult to apply them to micro and small enterprises.

In addition, only a few studies have pointed out the specific functions of brand building and the relationships among these functions. There is no study about the creation of value and credibility through learning that is realized by building a company's own brand or motivating the members of the organization. Therefore, we have presented a specific framework for the process of brand building and corporate growth.

Only a few academic studies have also focused on the process that Japanese small firms use to build their own brands. Because of the uniqueness of small firms, where managers are highly influential and make most decisions, we employ qualitative research that is based on semi structured interviews with managers and participant observation.

We then attempted to construct an inductive theory through case studies. In doing so, we referred to Japanese management theory and knowledge creation theory. Further elaboration of the theory is needed in the future.

The two companies used for the case study have progressed through each stage of building their own brands, learning and growing through this cycle repeatedly. By consciously repeating the four steps, from the management strategy, management planning,

and management improvement stages through the in-house product development stage to the customer development and distribution development stages and then to the human resource development stage, the organizations have become places where they learn from each other and grow together. Both management and employees are gaining confidence in their ability to contribute to society through the value creation of their own products for which they have built their own brands. Small companies with limited management resources are required to change to proactive and strategic management and to grow into an organization that deepens learning by building its own brand.

A limitation of this study is that it does not examine its application to other industries. A future study can apply the framework of the process model for building a company's own brand to small companies in the service industry. Future work can also apply the model to international firms and firms in other countries.

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Factors Influencing Generation Z's Apparel Purchasing Decisions Towards Livestream Shopping in Bangkok, Thailand

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to evaluate the factors influencing generation Z on apparel purchasing decision towards livestream shopping. The five factors were used in this study which included perceived usefulness, trust, perceived quality, influencer, and perceived enjoyment. This study conducted in Bangkok, Thailand using non-probability method based on convenience and snowball method by distributing electronic questionnaires via Microsoft forms. The total of 420 samples used in this study are generation Z who born between 1997 to 2009, lived in Bangkok for 1 year, and have experience in livestream shopping within 1 year. In the research result, it showed that perceived usefulness has no significant influence on purchase decision, and there is not a significant influence of trust on purchase decision as well. However, there are 3 factors which have positive relationship with purchase decision. The result showed that perceived quality influences on purchase decision, influencer indicates a positive influence on purchase decision. Lastly, there is a significant influence of perceived enjoyment on purchase decision towards livestream shopping. Together, these three independent variables could explain 13.5% of the variation in purchase decision towards livestream shopping, with perceived enjoyment having the most significant influence on purchase decision towards livestream shopping at 24.8%.

Keywords: Livestream Shopping, Perceived Usefulness, Trust, Perceived Quality, Influencer, Perceived Enjoyment.

1. Introduction

In the evolving area of e-commerce and digital marketing after covid-19 pandemic, a remarkable trend has emerged, attracting the attention of Generation Z in Thailand, Live commerce. This innovative merging of live streaming and online shopping has been considered as the way consumers engage with the brand and product, providing an immersive and interactive virtual shopping experience.

Generation Z, referred to as Gen Z, is the consumers born between mid-1990s and early 2010s, representing an important portion of Thailand's population. This generation is recognized to be technologically-savvy, preference for authenticity, and desire for instant gratification (Ipsos, 2022). Therefore, Live commerce has seamlessly

aligned with their personal. According to data from YouGov RealTime Omnibus which is an international online research data and analytics technology UK company in 2022, it is revealed that the current user of livestream on Tiktok and Instagram platform is higher across younger consumers, especially in Gen Z, where more than 76% and 87% are on Tiktok and instagram respectively. Moreover, the top activity from generation z spending time on the online platform is watching live broadcasts, such as from online sellers (37 percent), following the influencers (36 percent) and follow the news. Consumer users also consider that the platform could help them to find the interesting information, watching entertainment, and the smallest proportion of users using it for content posting.

Live commerce has become increasingly popular in Thailand industry with well-known brands utilizing it as an essential marketing and sales channel. While Thailand e-commerce market is already flourishing, live commerce goes beyond by combining entertainment and shopping on a platform.

In recent years, apparel trends have grown up and remained a high proportion area with large number of international and domestic investments in Thailand. According to the apparel market in Thailand report in 2022, The market was 216,420 Million Baht which increase average of 7 percent from last year (2021) and is projected to grow 6% per year from 2023 until 2027, especially in online channel, it has 20.5 percent point growth from 2017 to 2022, while the offline channel continually decreased by 79.5%. Moreover, the apparel category searched by Generation Z in Thailand has 55 percent of total categories towards online platforms. (Euromonitor, 2023).

Therefore, this study aims to focus on the factors influencing Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions toward livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand. The purpose of this study is to examine the factors influencing customer apparel purchase decisions toward live-stream shopping. Thus, the objective is to understand the relationship between the related factors and purchase decisions while users are using the live stream for shopping.

1.1. Research Objectives

There are 2 research objectives which are

- To describe the apparel purchase decision toward live stream shopping in Generation Z.
- To describe the factors influencing on purchasing decision toward live stream shopping in Generation Z.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Purchase Decision

According to the previous study, the purchase decision of customers is defined as the way in which customers conscientiously consider the aspects of a certain product, brand, and service, choose and buy

the products that can meet the customer needs (Liu, Z.C., & Bai, J., 1999).

As claimed by Tan (2017), the purchase decision stages in traditional e-commerce, started with the needs of customers, searching for the information, and then making the purchase decision. Compared to the live streaming e-commerce model, it rearranges the primary structure of purchase decision stages by using the social influencer, live streaming e-commerce and other online platforms.

2.2. Live Streaming Shopping

Live Streaming shopping is a technology of e-commerce integrated with the actual-time reaction between live streamer and viewer (Cai & Wohn, 2019). Live streaming shopping is a part of online activities and transactions which related to live streaming platforms. Live streaming platform consists of live streaming technology and tools which enhance the virtual environment that offers a sudden response, entertainment, social activities and businesses. In term of environment, there is necessary space to build a virtual space for host to stream and offers the respondent channel to watch and interact with the host. (Xu, 2020). The main component of live streaming shopping is the "live streamer", who has influenced people to follow on during live time and is the content creator who attracts the number of followers.

2.3. Perceived Usefulness

As claimed by Lim et al.'s (2016), perceived usefulness refers to how customers perceived a product to be useful in their perception. From the perspective of online channels, perceived usefulness can be described as the feeling that customers can increase the value and benefit when they are shopping whether by using an application, website, or platform. There are several advantages that relate to the perceived value on online purchasing. They can maximize time savings, cost during shopping and transaction (Phetnoi et al., 2021) In addition, perceived usefulness can be described as consumers feel that technological assistance and performance can be enhanced (Saripah, Putri, and Darwin, 2016). The perception

of perceived usefulness as the basis for the assumption customers' acceptance of technological tools, which perceived usefulness has significant impact on online shopping decision (Hsu, Lin and Chiang, 2013).

2.4. Influencer

In the fashion market, purchase decisions from customers are affected by product information from many references such as blog reviews, celebrities, online, and advertising. Moreover, fashion purchase is required more detailed attachment from customers. Now, social influencers, KOL, celebrities, bloggers, and reviewers are defined as “The most dynamic force in fashion marketplace” They can influence customer purchasing decisions based on their experience, capability, and position, and are often realized to be experts in their area by customers. Social influencers have a big deal of influence on customer purchasing decisions and can impact which trend does become and must-have fashion items since customers tend to duplicate their way and believe that they are the professionals within product areas. Therefore, most of the customers are influenced by social influencers. (Siti, 2020).

2.5. Enjoyment

The factor that can affect customer purchasing decisions towards live streaming shopping is Enjoyment. This can make the customers get when shopping online with they can also enjoy the favorableness of their home. Research from Childers (2001), illustrated that the enjoyment effects on purchase decisions towards online channel. Nowadays, customers do not only get goods or services from online channel, but also can perceive a source of enjoyment. Enjoyment is claimed as the customer feeling of fun, interesting, and excitement during shopping (Kim & Ammeter, 2018). Enjoyment also impacted on customer trust. The study of Rouibah et al (2016) reveals that perceived enjoyment significantly affects customer trust. When people feel fun, interested, and excited with something during shopping, resulting in increasing trust.

2.6. Trust

Trust has always been a crucial element in affecting customer purchasing decision. Trust has emerged role in e-commerce, especially in transactions as customers would not purchase from online channels if they do not trust the seller. (Kim, Ferrin, & Rao, 2008). Nonetheless, trust that arises in online shopping occurs because customers cannot validate the product directly (Dachyar & Banjarnahor, 2017). Trust becomes a factor that needs to be reviewed by the seller since it is involved with the customer purchase decisions (Tanjung, Elfa, & Andreas, 2018). Customers who believe or trust purchasing decision (Murwatingsih & Apriliani, 2013). Customers decide to buy the products from the online channel as the sellers are reliable (Putra, Rochman & Noermijati, 2017). The higher trust will increase in the seller will decide to purchase the products (Irawan, 2018).

2.7. Product Quality

As claimed by Kotler (2001), product quality is described as the attribute of products and services that have the capability to satisfy the stated or customer needs. It is also the ability of products to function effectively and it is a necessary element for marketing areas to advertise and sell the products (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Therefore, product quality can be summarized as the function of products to meet customer requirements. It included the product characteristics of permanence, reliability, accuracy, utilization, and other elements. According to Wijaya et al. (2022), product quality is the overall integration of product traits which are outcomes from marketing, engineering, and production, that produce the product to meet customer expectations.

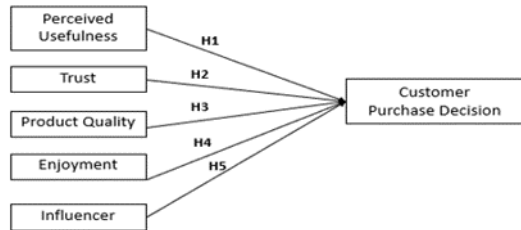


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Due to increasing number of submissions, rigorous blind peer review process of minimum 3 referees, and an issue of publication space in each issue, the average overall time from submission of the manuscript to publication and print from now on takes 2-3 months. AUJR Journal accepts submissions on a rolling basis, and publish accepted articles on the first-in first-out method. Electronic submission

3. Research Hypothesis

According to the proposed conceptual framework, the researcher determines six hypotheses to identify the factors of perceived usefulness, trust, product quality, perceived enjoyment, and influencer influencing purchasing decisions towards Livestream shopping.

- H1: Perceived usefulness has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand.
- H2: Trust has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand.
- H3: Product quality has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand.
- H4: Influencer has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand.
- H5: Perceived enjoyment has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand.

4. Research Methodology

The researcher designed only electronic questionnaires through online survey form as it is convenience for interviewee and data collection. The researcher also had contacted to distribute the survey to reliable respondents in Z' generation from Bangkok, Thailand. Snowball and convenience sampling method were contributed for sample selection. To begin with, Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the questionnaire's reliability and measuring items in the questionnaire whether it is unclear or not. A small group of more than 40 samples were conducted a pilot to ensure the questionnaire's reliability and to see that any uncertainty about measuring items in the questionnaires. Secondly, the multiple regression (MLR) was used to analyze the effect of each independent variable on dependent variable. The researcher conducted this study through individual sending survey to respondents and reliable person that has experience in live streaming shopping within 1 year, therefore the survey would be collected from working space, online shopping community, institution, and others which has the Z's generation with the sample of 420 respondents to ensure that the number of samples was significant and sufficient in case there are some error in data which is collected.

4.1 Result of Reliability Test

Table 1: The Value of Reliability Analysis of Each Item

Variables/Masurement Items	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Perceived Usefulness	5	0.746	Acceptable
Trust	4	0.775	Acceptable
Product Quality	5	0.704	Acceptable
Influencers	5	0.793	Acceptable
Enjoyment	5	0.797	Acceptable
Purchase Decision	5	0.908	Excellent

The results supported the constructs' internal consistency, showing that the questionnaire is reliable enough for respondents to be utilized to value must be 0.60 or above to be considered acceptable.

5. Result of the study

According to 420 respondents who passed the part of the screening question section from the questionnaires that were conducted through an online channel by the researcher.

A total of 420 respondents who were born between 1997-2009, live in Bangkok, Thailand for 1 year, and had experience in live shopping. According to data collection, the result presented demographic factors which included gender, age, education degree, spending on live shopping per month, frequency of live shopping, and the most online channel to visit. The largest proportion of respondents are female 57.4 percent, and the range of age between 24-26 years, accounting for 55 percent. 86 percent of total respondents have Bachelor's degree. Most of respondents spend about 3,000-5,000 baht per month on online shopping and have the frequency of shopping 4 days per week as the percentage of 43.6 and 40.5 subsequently.

From table 2, adjusted R square value is 0.141 which can interpret that 14.1 percent of the variation influence on purchase decision toward live streaming shopping in Bangkok, Thailand which can be described as perceived usefulness, trust, product quality, influencer, and enjoyment. Nevertheless, there are another 85.9 percent of the variation influence on purchase decision towards live streaming shopping in Bangkok, Thailand which can be explained by another independent variable.

Table 2 - Model summary from Multiple linear regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.389 ^a	.151	.141	.77382

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Perceived usefulness, Influencer, Trust, Product quality

Table 3 - ANOVA from Multiple linear regression

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	43.981	5	8.796	14.690	.000 ^b
Residual	247.304	413	599		
Total	291.285	418			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Perceived usefulness,

Table 4 – Multiple Linear Regression Result

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 Perceived usefulness	0.134	0.099	0.062	1.348	0.178	0.981	1.019
Trust	0.103	0.066	0.088	1.558	0.12	0.638	1.568
Product Quality	0.171	0.083	0.117	2.055	0.041	0.635	1.574
Influencer	0.122	0.043	0.131	2.84	0.005	0.97	1.031
Enjoyment	0.299	0.059	0.241	5.097	0	0.921	1.085

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

According to 4 table, the significant value or p-value used to analyze whether the factors are statistically significant on the purchase decision or not. The significant value of five variables has three variables which are product quality, influencer, and enjoyment which are less than 0.05, so they can imply that product quality, influencer, and enjoyment have a significant influence on purchase decision. In contrast, the variable of perceived usefulness and trust are not significant influence on purchase decision toward live streaming shopping.

Table 5 – Model summary from Multiple linear regression

(2nd round)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.376 ^a	.141	.135	.77547

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Influencer, Product quality

Table 6 - ANOVA from Multiple linear regression

(2nd round)

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	41.168	3	13.723	22.820	.000 ^b
Residual	250.162	416	.601		
Total	291.331	419			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Influencer, Product quality

Table 7 – Multiple Linear Regression Result (2nd round)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1							
	(Constant)	1.047	.321	3.297	.001		
	Product quality	.255	.068	.174	.3780	.969	1.042
	Influencer	.126	.043	.135	.2921	.004	.971
	Enjoyment	.307	.058	.248	.5283	.000	.938

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

According to 5 table, the second-round result presented that adjusted R square value is 0.135 which can interpret that 14.1 percent of the variation influence on purchase decision toward live streaming shopping in Bangkok, Thailand which can be described as perceived usefulness, trust, product quality, influencer, and enjoyment. Nevertheless, there are another 85.9 percent of the variation influence on purchase decision towards live streaming shopping in Bangkok, Thailand which can be explained by another independent variable.

According to 7 table, the significant value or p-value used to analyze whether the factors are statistically significant on the purchase decision or not. The significant value of product quality, influencer, and enjoyment which are less than 0.05, so they can imply that product quality, influencer, and enjoyment have a significant influence on purchase decision towards live streaming shopping in Bangkok, Thailand.

Moreover, the beta of standardized coefficient or (β) of three independent variables, first of addition unit is product quality presented the influence towards purchase decision will increase 17.4 percent at β value is equal 0.174. Second, a single addition of unit is influencer showed the influence on purchase decisions will increase by 13.5 percent at β value is equal to 0.135. Lastly, the single addition of unit enjoyment showed the influence on purchase decisions will increase by influence on purchase decisions will increase by 24.8 percent at β value is equal to 0.248.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The result presented that the most of generation Z who have experience in live shopping in Bangkok, Thailand concerned about enjoyment in term of shopping environment the most and purchase decision toward liveshopping had relationship with

three variables which were perceived quality, influencer, and enjoyment and

two variables that had not relationship with dependent variable which were perceived usefulness and trust.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Perceived usefulness has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand

Based on the data collection of perceived usefulness influencing on purchase decision towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand. Researcher found that the significant level is 0.178 which is higher than 0.05, so it could imply that perceived usefulness has no significant influence on purchase decision. This result can describe that most of respondents were not concerned about the perceived usefulness, especially in term of shopping effectiveness. Some online platforms are not friendly-users interface, leading to complexity and time wasting which result in bad experience for online shopping.

According to Holbrook and Batra (2001), the study found that perceived usefulness might not have influenced on purchase decision as this cognition determines the effect, resulting in customer behavior. Therefore, development of cognition would be induced on individual understanding of simulation, leading to respond for affective reactions. However, Zhou and Feng (2017), found that perceived usefulness would influence on perceived enjoyment which can influence on purchase decision toward livestreaming shopping.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Trust has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand

Referring to the result of this study, the collected data presented that trust has no significant influenced on purchase decision towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand because the significant value is more than 0.05. From the survey, respondents are most concerned on the information provided from livestream that is not plentiful and sufficient as online platform may have fake review and not clarify its content and information. This result also could be supported by Tang and chi

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(2005) in their research which found that there was no significant effect of trust on the purchase decision to shop online as customers who have already trust and familiar with online shopping, they do not directly do transaction because they are concerned some other factor first such as promotion or after services.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Perceived quality has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand

According to the result, perceived quality has an influence on purchase decision towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand. The significant value is 0.041 which is less than 0.05, therefore it would be implied that influenced on dependent variables. To support this result, the study from Nugraheni et al (2022), they also found that perceived quality has significant influence on live shopping in Tiktok. This study showed that perceived quality has advantage in term of product high quality for customers.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Influencer has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand

Referring to the result form survey, influencers have significant influenced on purchase decision towards livestream shopping. The significant value is 0.005 which is lower than 0.05 so this can clarify that influencer has a significant influence on purchase decision. The result can be explained that influencers have influenced on customers while they shop on live streaming channel. The apparel customers like fashion trend seekers are influenced by bloggers, celebrities or brand ambassadors, and they are defined as the most powerful force in the fashion market as they can impact purchase decisions based on their experiences, ability, and position (Siti & Setyo, 2020)

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Perceived enjoyment has significant influence Generation Z's apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping in Bangkok, Thailand

According to the survey result, there was a significant influence of perceived enjoyment on purchase decision. The significant value is <0.001

which can be concluded that perceived enjoyment has a significant influenced on purchase decision. Most of respondents agreed that live streaming channel can provided interesting and lively environment for shopping. This is in line with previous studies. Perceived enjoyment has been examined to influence on purchase decision (Childers et al., 2001). According to study from Ha and Stoel (2009), it showed that perceived enjoyment has influenced on purchase decision as customer who enjoy website ate more likely to purchase at the site.

6.1. Recommendation

Factors Influencing apparel purchasing decisions towards livestream shopping are be realized by online sellers. As digital era, customers purchase more via online channels and are familiar with online platform, especially in Z generation. Therefore, this study is suitable for online sellers to understand the factors that can influence customer purchase decision towards live streaming channel.

However, according to the result from this study, 14.1 percent of the variation influence on purchase decision which can be described as perceived usefulness, trust, product quality, influencer, and enjoyment. Nevertheless, there are another 85.9 percent of the variation influences on purchase decision towards live streaming shopping which can be explained by another independent variable so online sellers would be more concerned this issue before applied in practices.

The recommendation from this study for apparel's online sellers through livestreaming channel, as the result of this study, there are 3 variables which influence on customer purchase decision towards livestream shopping. These variables are perceived quality, influencer, and perceived enjoyment. Three variables have relationship with purchase decision, especially in perceived enjoyment. Perceived enjoyment has the highest value of beta which can determine the dependent variable. This is the variable which the online sellers should take focus on this area. Most of respondents agreed that shopping environment can influence them on purchase decision towards livestreaming so online sellers should create content or environment which can draw customer attention and enjoy while they are watching on live. Moreover, building engaging

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environment such as lucky draw activity would help customers feel enjoy and decide to purchase the product. In term of perceived quality, most of respondents are concerned about product variety and up to date fashion. Therefore, online seller would source the products in various design, colors, or sizes which reach to customer demand. Lastly, influencer is the one of factors that influenced on customer decision. Influencer can influence the customer opinion and perception so online sellers would hire the appropriate influencer to review their products for leading and convincing customers to purchase the products. However, trust is not the factors which

influence on purchasing decisions towards online platforms due to online fraud and payment risk so the seller should consider this issue and build trust for their customers by creating the high security system and protecting customers' privacy data to enhance customer trust and confidence through online shopping experience.

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Influencing Factors Led Local Consumer's Bang Sue District Revisits to Shopping Mall nearby: A Comparison between Wongsawang Shopping Mall and Gateway at Bang Sue

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Abstract

Purpose – This research aims to analyze the influencing factors that lead local consumers in the Bang Sue district to revisit nearby shopping malls: a comparison between Wongsawang Shopping Mall and Gateway at Bang Sue. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – The study employs both primary and secondary data collection methods to analyze the factors influencing local consumers' revisits to shopping malls in the Bang Sue district. The data were gathered from 394 respondents residing in Bang Sue district, expressing a desire to revisit Wongsawang shopping mall and Gateway at Bang Sue. The research incorporates three theoretical frameworks from previous studies to create a new conceptual framework. **Findings** – The research investigates the factors influencing residents of Bang Sue to revisit nearby malls, highlighting the significant impact of mall atmosphere on the overall mall experience and the influence of retail tenant mix. Mall experience, in turn, significantly affects the likelihood of revisiting a shopping mall, while the retail tenant mix has a notable influence on local consumers in the Bang Sue district revisiting nearby shopping malls. **Research Limitations/Implications** – The study underscores the significance of overall shopping mall factors in influencing customers to revisit nearby malls. A positive environment, encompassing aesthetics, cleanliness, lighting, and amenities, plays a crucial role. While tenant mix may not directly impact the mall experience, it remains vital for overall attractiveness. Limitations include a focus on revisiting customers in the Bang Sue district, potentially limiting generalizability to different locations and types of malls. Geographical and spatial differences may influence customer decision-making when revisiting malls.

Keywords: Mall Perception, Mall Atmosphere, Retail Tenant Mix, Mall Experience, Revisit Shopping Mall

JEL Classification Code – L81, L85, M20, M30

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of study

Shopping malls added entertainment, movie theaters, and restaurants in the late 20th century

(Chantarayukol, 2019). Malls now provide more than just shopping, thanks to consumer electronics and e-commerce. Malls now host social events, leisure activities, and professional meetings in addition to retail. The Thai Shopping Mall Association (TSCA) has organized 13 Thai retail enterprises under

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Shopping Mall 4.0 (Chantarayukol, 2019) to connect consumers and become Asia's leading mall operator. Enhancing the consumer experience with innovative layout ideas and areas for all mall generations is crucial. Technology helps clients customize retail offers, while zoning patterns meet the needs of different consumer segments. New malls incorporate "green" construction, electric cars, and public transportation (Chantarayukol, 2019). Retail space supply rose 4.8% to 94,000 sq. m. in 2021. Retailers slowed their expansion plans or reduced their floor area, while labor difficulties delayed numerous projects. A large share of the new supply was refurbished or upgraded spaces returning to the market (Klinchuanchun, 2022). Despite these obstacles, retail space supply reached 6.5 million sq. m., slightly exceeding demand of 6.2 million (Klinchuanchun, 2022). Bangkok will soon see the opening of a BT5 billion shopping center near Suvarnabhumi International Airport, Central Village, Emsphere, One Bangkok, and Bangkok Mall, Southeast Asia's largest mall (Chantarayukol, 2019). Property developers and mall managers employ updated and thorough consumer behavior data to improve their marketing strategies to fulfill distinct consumer requests in different places (Chantarayukol, 2019). Merrilees et al. (2016) found that 35 percent of mall visitors cited the mall atmosphere, including wide space, sitting, and a great atmosphere. A variety of shops was second with 26%. Products, particularly merchant names, and quality, were another attractor—21% of references. Location and ease followed. Bang Sue has grown from a train station to a thriving transit hub and economic center. Bang Sue is well-positioned for economic expansion to serve traditional and modern commerce due to its strategic location and expanding population. Its MRT/ BTS lines, expressways, buses, boats, and rail stations make it easily accessible. Gateway's renovation and opening at Bang Sue Shopping Center and Wongsawang Shopping Centre boost its tourism appeal by offering a wide range of shopping, dining, entertainment, and

leisure activities. Urban markets, fashion zones, home furnishings, and educational institutions make Bang Sue a lively place for inhabitants and guests to explore. This study examines the reasons that led Bang Sue residents to revisit local malls, comparing Wongsawang Shopping Center and Gateway at Bang Sue. This study tests hypotheses using a questionnaire. Mall impression, mall atmosphere, retail tenant mix, and mall experience all affect Bang Sue consumers' likelihood of returning to adjacent shopping malls. Local shoppers like a shopping experience and a range of products, which are important elements in returning to a neighborhood mall. This study compares Wongsawang Retail Center and Gateway at Bang Sue to show how local consumers' decisions to revisit nearby retail malls in Bang Sue District are affected.

1.2 Problem statements

In recent years, Thailand and the world have faced the COVID-19 pandemic, significantly impacting Thailand's economic landscape, including the retail industry (Klinchuanchun, 2022). Moreover, the business environment has undergone significant changes due to the increasing trend of online shopping and the pandemic's effects on consumer behavior. This shift has compelled landlords to adapt their management approaches and strategies to modernize and provide a more varied shopping experience that aligns with new developments and consumer needs (Klinchuanchun, 2022).

Chantarayukol (2019) emphasizes critical factors influencing the frequency of mall visits and time spent per visit, including one-stop shopping, convenience, and free services/ safe facilities. Shopping mall developers or managers need to understand and study the trends and specific categories of products and services that fulfill their customers' needs. A recent study found that people profile malls based on the social mix of their customers.

Post-pandemic, Mortimer et al. (2024) observed a change in consumer behavior. Consequently, the mall



atmosphere has a stronger influence on customers' functional experience, leading to revisits, while the social interaction value has a weaker impact on customer experience within shopping malls. Retailers should establish appropriate amenities in line with pandemic safety measures and social distancing guidelines to encourage customers to linger and make purchases within the store. These findings offer essential insights for store managers to tailor their retail assortment effectively, fostering repeat visits (Moharana & Pattanaik, 2023). This study aims to uncover the factors influencing the revisit of shopping malls by local consumers in the Bang Sue district, providing guidance for retail business marketing and strategies in the post-pandemic situation.

In a highly competitive environment, retail businesses and shopping centers face the risk of losing market share if the shopping mall fails to attract local customers effectively. This situation can result in market losses and reduced profitability. Therefore, this study holds significance for both retailers and retail developers, aiming to identify the factors influencing local consumers' decisions to revisit shopping centers in the Bang Sue district, enabling them to gain a competitive edge over their rivals.

1.3 Objectives of study

- (1) To identify the influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere toward revisiting shopping malls in the local consumer's Bang Sue district.
- (2) To identify the influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience toward revisiting shopping malls in local consumers' Bang Sue district.
- (3) To identify the influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix mall experience among revisit shopping malls in local consumers' Bang Sue district.
- (4) To identify the influence of mall experience on revisiting shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.

- (5) To identify the influence of retail tenant mix on the mall experience, revisit the shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.

1.4 Research questions

- (1) Does mall perception have a significant influence on the mall atmosphere toward revisiting shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district?
- (2) Does mall atmosphere have a significant influence on retail tenant mix and mall experience toward revisiting shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district?
- (3) Does mall atmosphere and retail tenant mix have a significant influence on mall experience among revisit shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district?
- (4) Does mall experience have a significant influence on Revisit Shopping Mall's local consumers' Bang Sue district?
- (5) Does the retail tenant mix effect on mall experience have a significant influence on the revisit shopping mall of the local consumers' Bang Sue district?

1.5 Significance of the study

Wongsawang shopping mall underwent renovations post-COVID-19, resulting in a gradual increase in local consumer revisits. In contrast, Gateway at Bang Sue, developed in 2019, has not met its target for customer revisits. The competition between these malls revolves around unique selling points aimed at attracting consumers. The act of local consumers revisiting shopping malls holds paramount importance in the retail industry, as it addresses the needs of the target demographic and capitalizes on the potential for return visits.

The concept of "revisit shopping mall" in this study pertains to local consumers in Bang Sue revisiting their nearby malls. Thus, the research aims to determine the factors that lead local consumers to revisit shopping malls.

Primarily, the findings of this study can assist mall developers, retailers, and real estate developers



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in comprehending the influencing factors and adapting to situations affecting revisit rates. Additionally, this study holds value for business owners, developers, and the retail industry, particularly considering Bangkok's rapid expansion in malls. It offers insights into influencing factors such as the environment, services, and tenant mix, which can aid in developing strategies to persuade local customers.

This research serves as a beneficial reference for future studies focusing on local consumer behavior in the Bang Sue district regarding revisits to shopping malls. It provides insight into influencing factors affecting revisit rates, including mall perception, mall atmosphere, retail tenant mix, customer mall experience, and the decision to revisit shopping malls nearby.

1.6 Scopes of the study

The study investigates the phenomenon of revisiting shopping malls, as highlighted by prior research, which underscores the significance of shopping mall experience, ambiance, and merchandise in extending visits and promoting repeat visits. The main aim of this research is to explore the factors influencing the revisitation of shopping malls among local consumers in the Bang Sue district. Drawing on insights from previous studies, the research formulates a model comprising five variables that affect revisiting shopping malls. These variables include three independent factors—mall perception, mall atmosphere, and retail tenant mix—and two dependent variables—customer mall experience and revisitation of shopping malls. The study particularly emphasizes the relationship between each variable, examines their impact on local consumers in the Bang Sue district, and conducts a comparative analysis between Wongsawang Shopping Mall and Gateway at Bang Sue.

The scope of the research encompasses uncovering the effects of revisiting nearby malls by residents in the Bang Sue district. The survey questionnaire was distributed between February 10th

and February 28th, 2024. Primary data manipulation involves a questionnaire survey targeting various individual local consumers, considering key demographic factors such as gender, age, and income. Additionally, the study incorporates insights from previous credible articles, journals, and reliable internet sources authored by prior researchers, providing citations and references to enhance rigor.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Theories related to each variable

2.1.1 Mall Perception

Consumer perception of malls encompasses both tangible and intangible elements, influenced significantly by management strategies and positioning (Kushwaha et al., 2017). Mall perception encapsulates various aspects such as style, diversity, service quality, and overall ambiance within the shopping environment (Khong & Ong, 2014). Additionally, factors like the behavior of staff, the overall retail environment, and the general quality of the shopping mall can profoundly affect consumer mood, thereby influencing the overall shopping experience (Michon et al., 2008).

In essence, mall perception reflects how consumers perceive and evaluate the overall environment and offerings of a shopping mall. It encompasses elements such as the aesthetic appeal, range of stores, level of customer service, and overall atmosphere within the mall premises. Positive mall perception can lead to increased foot traffic, longer dwell times, and higher levels of customer satisfaction, ultimately contributing to the mall's success in attracting and retaining patrons. Conversely, negative perceptions can deter potential customers and lead to reduced patronage and revenue. Thus, understanding and effectively managing mall perception is crucial for mall operators and retailers

seeking to optimize the shopping experience and enhance overall profitability.

2.1.2 Mall atmosphere

The concept of mall atmosphere encompasses a myriad of elements meticulously designed to engage and enthrall consumers' senses within the shopping environment (Pal & Srivastava, 2023). It constitutes an integral aspect influencing consumers' decisions to spend time within the mall premises, thereby playing a pivotal role in shaping their overall shopping experience (Santoso et al., 2018).

Moreover, scholars have identified a range of key components that collectively contribute to the creation of a distinctive mall atmosphere. These include ambient lighting, decorative elements, and merchandise displays carefully curated to appeal to consumers' aesthetic preferences and desires (Pal & Srivastava, 2023). Furthermore, the arrangement of these elements within the shopping center is crucial, as it directly impacts consumers' perceptions and emotions, thereby influencing their behavior and purchase decisions (Santoso et al., 2018).

Additionally, research suggests that the mall atmosphere is constructed through a combination of five core elements: ambiance, color scheme, decoration, background music, and architectural design (González- Hernández & Orozco- Gómez, 2012). Each of these components contributes to the overall ambiance and image of the mall, creating a unique and immersive shopping environment for consumers. Mall atmosphere plays a vital role in shaping consumers' perceptions and experiences within the shopping mall. By carefully curating and managing the various elements that contribute to the atmosphere, mall operators and retailers can enhance customer satisfaction, increase dwell time, and ultimately drive sales and profitability.

2.1.3 Retail tenant mix

The retail tenant mix stands as a cornerstone element recognized for its pivotal role in determining the success and viability of a shopping mall (Yiu &

Xu, 2012). The deliberate planning and curation of the tenant mix emerge as critical components essential for achieving retail success (Burnaz & Topcu, 2011).

The composition of retail tenants within a shopping mall significantly influences its overall appeal and attractiveness to consumers (Teller & Elms, 2010). The variety of products and services offered by tenants, along with the diversity and quality of stores present, play a paramount role in shaping consumers' perceptions and experiences within the mall environment. A well-balanced tenant mix not only caters to diverse consumer preferences but also enhances the overall shopping experience by offering a comprehensive range of options and amenities.

Furthermore, research indicates that an effective tenant mix strategy involves careful consideration of various factors, including tenant compatibility, brand positioning, and market demand (Burnaz & Topcu, 2011). By strategically aligning the tenant mix with the preferences and needs of the target consumer demographic, mall operators can create a vibrant and dynamic shopping environment that fosters customer satisfaction and loyalty. The retail tenant mix represents a fundamental aspect of successful mall management and retail development. By meticulously planning and curating the tenant mix, mall operators can enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of their shopping malls, ultimately driving foot traffic, sales, and overall profitability.

2.1.4 Mall Experience

The experience of visiting a shopping mall encompasses a multitude of activities, ranging from purchasing goods and services to engaging with staff and socializing with fellow shoppers (Junaid et al., 2023). Enhancing foot traffic within a mall hinges upon the cultivation of a robust mall image, influenced by various factors including accessibility, ambiance, pricing and promotions, and product variety (Merrilees et al., 2016).

Research indicates that consumers' perceptions of a mall's image are shaped by their experiences and interactions within the retail environment. Efforts to

enhance attributes that contribute to the mall's image are positively received by consumers, highlighting the importance of aligning these attributes with consumers' expectations and preferences (Santoso et al. , 2018) . Thus, understanding consumers' perceptions and preferences is essential for mall operators seeking to create a compelling and engaging shopping experience.

Moreover, scholars emphasize the importance of assessing the relevance and significance of these attributes in shaping consumers' perceptions of the mall's intended image. By aligning the mall's offerings and services with consumers' preferences and expectations, mall operators can effectively shape and reinforce the desired image, thereby enhancing the overall mall experience and attracting a larger customer base. The mall experience encompasses a range of factors that collectively contribute to consumers' perceptions and interactions within the shopping environment. By strategically focusing on enhancing attributes that promote a positive mall image and aligning these attributes with consumers' preferences, mall operators can create a compelling and memorable shopping experience that drives foot traffic and fosters customer loyalty.

2.1.5 Revisit to Mall

Revisit intention pertains to customers' inclination to return to the same retail store or shopping mall they previously visited (Kazancoglu & Demir, 2021). This intention is often influenced by customers' favorable evaluations of the shopping value provided by the store or mall. Positive evaluations contribute to the formation of beliefs about the store or mall, which in turn significantly impact customer satisfaction and, subsequently, intensify their intention to revisit (Moharana & Pattanaik, 2023).

As retail stores and shopping malls navigate the reopening phase following disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, understanding and leveraging factors that influence revisit intention become paramount. In this phase, as customers gradually return to in-store retailing, store managers are keen to increase foot traffic and enhance customer loyalty. A

satisfying shopping experience, characterized by factors such as excellent customer service, product variety, and a pleasant shopping environment, can significantly motivate customers to revisit the store or mall (Moharana & Pattanaik, 2023).

Furthermore, as consumers re-engage with physical retail spaces, their perceptions of safety, cleanliness, and adherence to health protocols also play a crucial role in shaping their revisit intentions. Store managers and mall operators need to prioritize implementing and communicating measures that ensure a safe and hygienic shopping environment to instill confidence among customers and encourage repeat visits. Understanding the dynamics of revisit intention is essential for store managers and mall operators seeking to enhance customer retention and drive repeat business. By prioritizing factors that contribute to positive shopping experiences and addressing customers' evolving needs and preferences, retail establishments can cultivate strong relationships with their clientele and foster long-term loyalty.

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 Mall Perception and Mall Atmosphere

Michon et al. (2008) conducted a study revealing that consumers' perceptions of the retail environment significantly impact their judgments of product quality. This suggests a direct link between the overall perception of the shopping environment and consumers' evaluation of the products offered within that environment.

The perceived value within the shopping experience extends beyond the mere availability of products and services. It encompasses a holistic assessment of various factors, including the ambiance of the mall, the diversity and quality of merchandise and services available, the level of social interactions facilitated within the mall, and the effectiveness of customer assistance provided. Consumers weigh these factors when forming their perceptions of the overall

shopping experience and the value proposition offered by a retail establishment.

It is widely acknowledged in the retail industry that customers are drawn to establishments that excel in delivering an all-encompassing value proposition. Retailers and mall operators strive to create environments that not only offer a diverse range of products but also provide a pleasant and engaging atmosphere for shoppers. By focusing on enhancing mall perception and atmosphere, retailers aim to attract and retain customers, ultimately driving sales and profitability.

Therefore, based on the findings of Michon et al. (2008) and the understanding of consumer behaviour in the retail context, the hypothesis has been formulated.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *There is no significant influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere toward revisiting shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.*

2.2.2 Mall Atmosphere and Retail Tenant Mix

The amenities and facilities within a mall, such as seating arrangements, flooring, elevators, and parking facilities, play a crucial role in shaping the overall shopping experience. These elements contribute to creating a comfortable and inviting atmosphere that attracts customers and influences their decision to visit the mall (Tandon et al., 2016). El-Adly (2007) emphasizes the importance for mall management to prioritize shopper comfort by providing amenities such as comfortable seating, ample parking space, ensuring mall security, and maintaining cleanliness.

Furthermore, in response to the evolving preferences of modern shoppers who seek entertainment and a pleasant shopping environment, mall managers must continuously strive to enhance the overall ambiance of the mall. Creating a welcoming and enjoyable atmosphere not only encourages shoppers to visit the mall more frequently but also encourages them to spend longer periods within the premises. This concept of the "mall essence factor" underscores the significance of providing an

environment that caters to the diverse needs and preferences of shoppers.

To fulfill the demands of shoppers and enhance the overall shopping experience, mall managers must also focus on curating the right retail tenant mix within the mall. A well-designed tenant mix enables shoppers to compare prices and quality across different stores, catering to their individual needs and budgets. Additionally, the concept of cross-shopping, where shoppers have access to multiple types of products from various retail tenants, enhances the overall attractiveness of the mall. Based on these insights, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is formulated:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *There is no significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience toward revisiting the local consumer's Bang Sue district.*

2.2.3 Mall Atmosphere and Mall Experience

The ambiance within shopping malls serves as a crucial determinant in shaping positive consumer experiences. Mall management teams possess the ability to manipulate various aspects of atmospherics to craft memorable interactions for customers. This process often involves controlling numerous tangible and intangible stimuli, including lighting, temperature, landscaping, background music, and pleasant scents. By adeptly organizing these atmospheric cues, mall managers can influence factors such as the duration of customers' mall visits, their likelihood of returning, and their intention to make future purchases (Tandon et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Keng et al. (2007) suggest that mall designers should consider not only customers' recreational shopping needs but also efficiency-related factors, such as time constraints. Accordingly, shopping mall management may opt to replace textual promotional messages with simple visual cues and signs to enhance communication with customers.

In addition to environmental factors, the presence of personnel with a highly responsive attitude is crucial. Hiring and training staff members who are

adept at serving on-the-go shoppers can increase convenience and resolve issues promptly. When combined, an exciting and friendly atmosphere, along with an integrated space design featuring a balanced mix of shop tenants, contributes to an enhanced shopping experience for consumers. Based on these considerations, Hypothesis 3 (H3) posits:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *There is no significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience among revisiting shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.*

2.2.4 Mall Experience and Revisit to Mall

Delivering a memorable experience within malls significantly enhances the likelihood of eliciting positive customer reactions, such as loyalty and intentions to revisit or recommend the establishment to others (Moharana & Pattanaik, 2023). Behavioral intentions, such as re-patronage intentions, willingness to prolong the shopping visit, and expenditure, are often built upon the cumulative customer experience throughout their journey within the shopping malls (Junaid et al., 2023).

A memorable customer experience not only fosters positive interactions between customers and service employees but also has a lasting impact on customers' future intentions (Lucia-Palacios et al., 2016). By providing exceptional service and creating engaging experiences, malls can cultivate strong relationships with customers, thereby increasing the likelihood of repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Based on these considerations, Hypothesis 4 (H4) posits:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *There is no significant influence of mall experience among revisit shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.*

2.2.5 Retail Tenant Mix and Mall Experience

The tenant mix within a shopping area holds significant importance for consumers, particularly for multi-purpose shoppers who seek a diverse array of

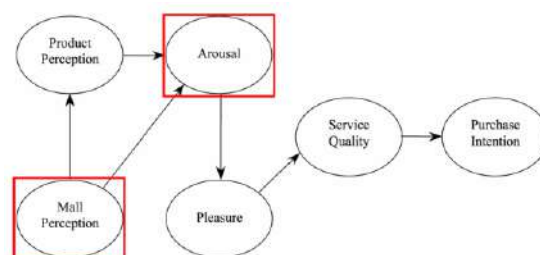
goods and services in one location (Glaeser et al., 2001). Visiting shopping malls that offer a wide variety of goods and services allows consumers to choose from numerous providers while saving on commuting and time costs (Teller & Elms, 2010). Rolbina et al. (2016) further support this notion by utilizing survey data from both consumers and retailers to confirm that the tenant mix of retail centers is tailored to specificities such as location and neighborhood. It's worth noting that the tenant mix is equally crucial for retailers as it directly impacts their business operations and success. Hypothesis 5 (H5) posits:

Hypothesis 5 (H5): *There is no significant influence of retail tenant mix on mall experience among revisit shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.*

2.3 Theoretical frameworks

2.3.1 The first theoretical framework in Figure 1 incorporates service quality into consumer mall shopping decision-making (Laroche et al., 2005). This empirical study explores mall perception, product perception, and arousal as influencing factors of purchasing intention. The research aims to examine the relationship between mall perception, mall atmosphere, service quality, and purchase intention. The research conducted a survey with a sample of 351 participants who were invited to fill in a self-administered questionnaire at a large shopping mall.

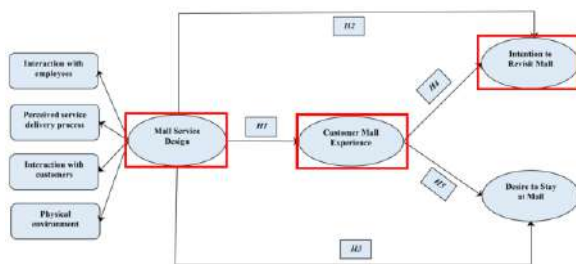
Figure 1. Incorporating service quality into consumer mall shopping decision making: a comparison between English and French-Canadian consumers.



Source: Laroche et al. (2005)

2.3.2 The second theoretical framework represents four elements of mall service design that lead to the intention to revisit the mall factor (interaction with employees, perceived service delivery process, interaction with customers, and physical environment). This theoretical framework stems from advancing customer experience through service design in mega mall shopping malls, which involves relationships provided in Figure 2 among mall design affected through mall experience and finally impacts on the intention to revisit the mall (Junaid et al., 2023).

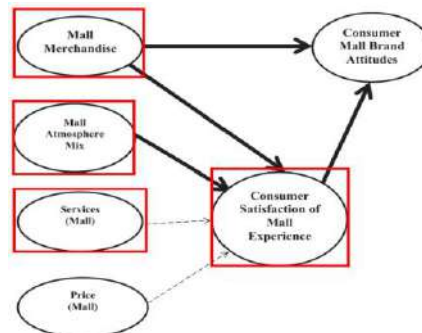
Figure 2. Advancing customer experience through service design in mega shopping malls.



Source: Junaid et al. (2023)

2.3.3 Merrilees et al. (2016) indicate the third theoretical framework illustrating the connection between mall service, mall atmosphere, and mall merchandise (tenant mix), and their effect on mall experience, contributing to mall image (mall branding) as shown in Figure 3. The research employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze samples from 755 surveys in total.

Figure 3. Mall brand meaning: an experiential branding perspective.

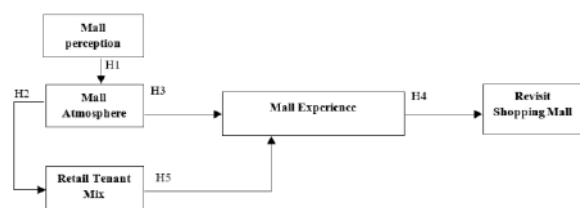


Source: Merrilees et al. (2006).

2.4 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is created on previous studies, theoretical concepts, and testing literature revealing the independent variable such as consumer behavior has influenced to revisit shopping malls. Another factor is consumer perception affects mall attractiveness towards shopping malls to revisit. The last independent variable is the retail tenant mix has an effect on consumer perception towards revisiting mall attractiveness. The conceptual framework determines the influence that led local consumers to revisit the shopping mall nearby as shown in Figure 4 below:

Figure 4. Influencing Factors Led Local Consumer's Bang Sue District Revisits to Shopping Mall Nearby: A Comparison between Wongsawang Shopping Mall and Gateway at Bang Sue



Source: Authors.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

The primary objective of this study is to discern the factors influencing local consumers in the Bang Sue district regarding their revisits to nearby shopping malls, with a specific focus on mall

perception, mall atmosphere, retail tenant mix, and mall experience. Additionally, the study aims to evaluate the impact levels of revisiting shopping malls and comprehend the factors driving local consumer behavior. Employing quantitative research methods, the analysis encompasses Cronbach's alpha, simple linear regression, multiple linear regression, and descriptive statistics to comprehensively evaluate each variable.

The target population for this study comprises local Thai residents in the Bang Sue district interested in revisiting Wongsawang shopping mall and Gateway at Bang Sue. According to the Bang Sue District Office (2023), the total local consumer population in the Bang Sue district is approximately 118,634 people. Calculations from calculator.net determined that a minimum sample size of 383 respondents is necessary to meet statistical constraints. However, to ensure robust data collection, the researchers opted for a sample size of 394 respondents using a non-probability convenience sampling method. All received response data were screened to align with the research objectives, as this method was deemed the most suitable due to the limited time available for data collection.

The questionnaire is structured into three sections, comprising a total of 29 questions. These questions are related to the five variables from the research conceptual framework, three screening questions, seven demographic-related questions, and one question measuring variables.

To ensure questionnaire reliability and identify any confusion or ambiguous items, a pilot test involving a small group of 50 samples was conducted using Cronbach's alpha. Simple linear regression (SLR) was applied to three distinct variable groups: the influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere, mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix, and the impact of mall experience on revisiting shopping malls. Multiple linear regression (MLR) was employed to investigate the combined influence of mall atmosphere and retail tenant mix on mall experience. This comprehensive research design allows for a

thorough exploration of the factors influencing local consumer behavior when revisiting shopping malls in the Bang Sue district.

To assess the content validity of the questionnaire items, the researchers employed the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) Index. One expert provided feedback on questions related to the research questionnaire, contributing to the content validity score. The IOC values for all questions exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.5, indicating that all questions are suitable for distribution to the respondents.

Furthermore, a pilot test involving 50 individuals was conducted to assess the reliability of the questionnaire variables and identify any discrepancies or errors. Cronbach's alpha, a widely used method for assessing consistency, was employed for reliability certification. The overall variables of the factors influencing local consumers in the Bang Sue district to revisit nearby shopping malls yielded a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.901. Specifically, for Mall Perception (MP) with 3 items, $\alpha = 0.829$; Mall Atmosphere (MA) with 4 items, $\alpha = 0.802$; Retail Tenant Mix (RT) with 5 items, $\alpha = 0.763$; Mall Experience (ME) with 3 items, $\alpha = 0.792$; and Revisit Shopping Mall (RS) with 4 items, $\alpha = 0.845$. The results from the pilot test with $n = 50$ respondents confirmed that all constructs exhibited internal consistency, with all values surpassing 0.6. This indicates that the questionnaire is reliable for further use and distribution to the target respondents. The reliability analysis results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The Value of Reliability Analysis of each Item and Variable in this Study ($n=50$)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association	N. of items
Mall Perception	0.829	Good	3
Mall Atmosphere	0.802	Good	4
Retail Tenant Mix	0.763	Acceptable	5



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Mall Experience	0.792	Acceptable	3
Revisit Shopping Mall	0.845	Good	4

4. Findings

4.1 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

The questionnaire, distributed to target respondents between February 10th and February 28th, 2024, elicited responses from 415 participants, surpassing the initial sample size by 108.35%. After excluding 21 responses, 394 eligible respondents, constituting 102.87% of the sample size, were used for data analysis. The research encompasses demographic information such as gender, age, income, occupation, preferred shopping mall, frequency of visits, and proximity to the mall, employing descriptive analysis to categorize the characteristics of the target individuals.

Gender: Out of the 394 total respondents, 202 were male, representing 51.3% of all respondents, while 191 were female, constituting 48.5%. One respondent did not specify their gender, making up 0.3% of the total respondents.

Age: The majority of target respondents, 95.7%, fall within the 20–30 age range (377 respondents). The 31–40 year age group comprises 3.8% (15 respondents), and the remaining 41–50 year age group accounts for 0.5% (2 respondents).

Occupation: Among the 394 respondents, private office workers constitute the majority at 40.6% (160 respondents), followed by government office workers, lecturers, university students, and business owners at 25.6% (101 respondents), 17.8% (70 respondents), 9.4% (37 respondents), and 6.1% (24 respondents), respectively. Only one respondent, around 0.3% of the total, is an employee.

Preferred Shopping Mall: Half of the respondents who revisit shopping malls prefer Wongsawang

shopping mall (50.8%), followed by Gateway at Bang Sue with 27.9%. Approximately 21.3% of respondents selected both shopping malls.

Income: The majority of respondents (50%) have an income between 50,001 and 80,000 THB, followed by 30.5% with an income between 80,001 and 100,000 THB. Those earning between 20,001 and 50,000 THB, as well as less than 20,000 THB, constitute 7.9% and 7.6%, respectively. A smaller percentage, 4.1%, earns more than 100,000 THB.

Frequency of Shopping Mall Visit: The survey reveals that 58.1% of respondents visit nearby shopping malls 4–7 times per month, followed by 28.9% revisiting less than 4 times per month. About 11.4% revisit 7–10 times per month, and only 1.5% visit more than 10 times a month.

Proximity to the Mall: Out of the 394 respondents, 53.8% live within 5 km of the shopping mall, while 40.1% reside 5–10 km away. Only 6.1% of respondents live farther than 10 km from the shopping mall.

4.2 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation

Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation was conducted to interpret the scores for the variables: mall perception, mall atmosphere, retail tenant mix, mall experience, and revisit shopping mall. The mean scores were interpreted according to the criteria adapted from Imsa-Ard and Pariwat (2020), as follows:

Strongly Agree (4.21 – 5.00): Indicates a strong agreement with the variable.

Agree (3.41 – 4.20): Suggests agreement with the variable.

Neutral (2.61 – 3.20): Implies a neutral stance towards the variable.

Disagree (1.81 – 2.60): Indicates disagreement with the variable.

Strongly Disagree (1.00 – 1.80): Signifies a strong disagreement with the variable.

These criteria serve as a framework for interpreting the mean scores and understanding the respondents' perceptions and experiences related to each group variable.

The mean and standard deviation of mall perception, presented in Table 2, were analyzed from responses obtained from 394 participants with no missing data. The highest mean, indicating the most favorable perception, was for the statement "The shopping mall has a positive reputation as part of local communication," with a value of 3.68. The second-highest mean, representing the next most favorable perception, was for the statement "The shopping mall has a perfect safe, and secure environment to provide customers with a better sense of experience," with a value of 3.64. Moreover, the largest standard deviation recorded was 1.16, indicating that the property owner's reputation in mall management contributes to a superior shopping experience.

For mall atmosphere, the mean and standard deviation, as shown in Table 2, were calculated based on responses from 394 participants with no missing data. The highest mean score for mall atmosphere was obtained for the statement "Layout and planning made me more understood and easier to navigate without getting lost," with a value of 3.59. On the other hand, the least significant interpretation was "The atmosphere and decorations in the shopping mall are energetic and full of life," which has a numerical value of 3.52. The largest standard deviation value, which was 1.13, corresponds to the statement, "There's a lot of comfortable common seating during shopping."

Regarding the retail tenant mix, the mean and standard deviation in Table 2 indicate results from 394 respondents, with no missing data. The highest mean for the retail tenant mix was "There's plenty of brand new food and beverage, so I do not go to another mall far away," which was equal to 3.67. On

the other hand, the least significant interpretation was "There are noteworthy international fashion brands in this mall," which has a numerical value of 3.56. The biggest standard deviation was observed for the statement "This mall is providing me a lot of banking brands and government services," with a value of 1.15.

The mean and standard deviation of mall experience, as shown in Table 2, reflect results from 394 respondents with no missing data. The highest mean score for mall experience was 3.57, indicating that "Mall provides two-way communication between consumers, malls, and tenant shops" was rated most positively by the respondents. On the other hand, the least significant interpretation was that the mall has consistently engaged in promoting seasonal events for local shoppers during the shopping season, with a score of 3.54. The biggest standard deviation was observed for the statement "Mall has always communicated seasonal event activities for the local consumer during the shopping period," with a value of 1.21.

For Revisit Shopping Mall, the mean and standard deviation in Table 2 indicate results obtained from 394 respondents with no missing data. The highest mean score for Revisit Shopping Mall was 3.7, corresponding to the statement "The location of the shopping mall is near my home." Conversely, the lowest mean score was 3.63, corresponding to the statement "The shopping mall provides parking lots to support customers' parking." The standard deviation for the given data is 1.13 for the statement "The shopping mall provides parking lots to support customers to park" and 1.08 for the statements "Public transport buses, metro, and BTS are available next to the shopping mall, bringing convenience to customers" and "Review and feedback from media led local consumers to revisit easily."

Table 2. Mean and Standard deviation (n=394)

Item No.	Measurement Items	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Mall Perception		3.65	1.12	Agree
MP1:	The property owner has reputation in mall management so they can provide a better shopping experience	3.63	1.16	Agree
MP2:	The shopping mall has a perfect safe and secure environment to provide customers with a better sense of experience	3.64	1.11	Agree
MP3:	The shopping mall has a positive reputation as part as local communication	3.68	1.1	Agree
Mall Atmosphere		3.56	1.08	Agree
MA1:	Mall environment and seasonal decorative are lively and vibrant	3.52	1.09	Agree
MA2:	Outdoor space with greenery made me feel comfortable and get me fresh after workhours	3.55	1.09	Agree
MA3:	There's lot of comfortable common seat during shopping	3.58	1.13	Agree
MA4:	Layout and planning made me more understood and easier to walk around doesn't get lost	3.59	1.02	Agree
Retail Tenant Mix		3.60	1.11	Agree
RT1:	There are significant about international fashion brands in this mall	3.56	1.12	Agree
RT2:	Supermarket is part of my life to get me here	3.63	1.12	Agree
RT3:	There's plenty of brand new of food and beverage so I do not go to another mall far away	3.67	1.09	Agree
RT4:	This mall is providing me lot of banking brands and, government services.	3.59	1.15	Agree
RT5:	This mall offers me with healthy and beauty shop and cinema for all gens	3.58	1.07	Agree
Mall Experience		3.55	1.16	Agree
ME1:	Mall always has advertising about promotion for both offline and online	3.55	1.13	Agree
ME2:	Mall has always communicated for seasonal event activities for local consumer during shopping period	3.54	1.21	Agree
ME3:	Mall provides two-way communicate between consumer, mall, and tenant shops	3.57	1.16	Agree
Revisit Shopping Mall		3.66	1.09	Agree
RS1:	The location of the shopping mall is near my home	3.70	1.1	Agree
RS2:	Public transport buses, metro and BTS are available next to the shopping mall, bringing convenience to customers	3.64	1.08	Agree
RS3:	The shopping mall provides parking lots to support for customers to park	3.63	1.13	Agree
RS4:	Review and feedback from media led local consumer to revisit easily	3.68	1.08	Agree

4.3 Hypothesis testing results

To analyze the hypothesis testing results, the research employs linear regression as a statistical analytical methodology to assess the significant impact between variables. This involves examining the significant influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere, the significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix, the significant

influence of both mall atmosphere and retail tenant mix on mall experience, and the significant influence of mall experience on revisiting shopping malls. For linear regression analysis, the researchers utilize both simple linear regression and multiple linear regression techniques with R-squared to evaluate the portion of the variance in the dependent variable explained by independent variables. Furthermore,



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following Ringle et al. (2015), a significant impact between the dependent and independent variables is considered valid when the variance inflation factor (VIF) is less than 5, and R-squared indicates the proportion of variance in the dependent variable determined by independent variables.

4.3.1 Result of Simple Linear Regression H1

The hypothesis under consideration is:

H₁₀: There is no significant influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere toward revisiting shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district.

H_{1a}: There is a significant influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere toward revisiting

shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district.

The simple linear regression (SLR) was conducted to test H1, indicating a significant influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere toward revisiting shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district. Table 3 presents the result, with an R-square of 0.138, signifying that 13.8% of mall atmosphere (MA) can be explained by mall perception (MP). At a significance level of 0.05, where the p-value of the variable is less than 0.05, mall perception (MP) exhibits a positive impact on mall atmosphere (MA) with a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.371.

Table 3. Result of Simple Linear Regression (SLR) for H1

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
Mall Perception (MP)	0.331	0.0418	0.371	7.92	<.001*	1	Rejected
R-Square				0.138			
Adjusted R-Square				0.136			

Note: *Beta coefficient is reported with p-value less than 0.05; mall atmosphere (MA) - dependent variable

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : the standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value |

VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

4.3.2 Result of Simple Linear Regression H2

The hypothesis under consideration is:

H₂₀: There is no significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience toward revisiting for local consumers in Bang Sue district.

H_{2a}: There is a significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience toward revisiting for local consumers in Bang Sue district.

The simple linear regression (SLR) was conducted to test H2, indicating a significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience toward revisiting for local consumers in the Bang Sue district. Table 4 presents the result, with an R-square of 0.124, signifying that 12.4% of retail tenant mix (RT) can be explained by mall atmosphere (MA). At a significance level of 0.05, where the p-value of the variable is less than 0.05, mall atmosphere (MA) has a positive impact on retail tenant mix (RT) with a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.352.

Table 4. Result of Simple Linear Regression (SLR) for H2

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
Mall Atmosphere (MA)	0.367	0.0492	0.352	7.45	<.001*	1	Rejected
R-Square				0.124			
Adjusted R-Square				0.122			

Note: *Beta coefficient is reported with p-value less than 0.05; retail tenant mix (RT)-dependent variable



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B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : the standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value |
VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

4.3.3 Result of Simple Linear Regression H4

The hypothesis in this study is:

H₄₀: There is no significant influence of mall experience on revisiting shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district.

H_{4a}: There is a significant influence of mall experience on revisiting shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district.

The simple linear regression (SLR) was conducted to test H4, indicating a significant influence of mall

experience on revisiting shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district. Table 5 presents the result, with an R-square of 0.171, meaning 17.1% of revisiting shopping malls (RS) can be explained by mall experience (ME). At a significance level of 0.05, where the p-value of the variable is less than 0.05, mall experience (ME) has a positive impact on revisiting shopping malls (RS), with a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.413.

Table 5. Result of Simple Linear Regression (SLR) for H4

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
Mall Experience (ME)	0.367	0.0408	0.413	8.98	<.001*	1	Rejected
R-Square				0.171			
Adjusted R-Square				0.169			

Note: *Beta coefficient is reported with p-value less than 0.05; revisiting shopping malls (RS)-dependent variable

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : the standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value |

VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

4.3.4 Result of Multiple Linear Regression H3, H5

The hypothesis in this study is:

H₀: There are no significant influence of mall atmosphere (H3) and retail tenant mix (H5) on mall experience in revisiting shopping mall of local consumer's Bang sue district.

H_a: There are significant influence of mall atmosphere (H3) and retail tenant mix (H5) on mall experience in revisiting shopping mall of local consumer's Bang sue district.

Table 6 presents the results of the multiple linear regression analysis for H3 and H5. The analysis reveals a significant influence of mall atmosphere (H3) on mall experience among revisit shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district, as indicated by the p-value of less than 0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis for H3 is rejected.

However, for H5, the analysis result shows that there is no significant influence of retail tenant mix on mall experience among revisit shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district, with a p-value of 0.792, which is more than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis for H5 is not rejected.

Furthermore, the regression analysis suggests that the model has an overall variance of 17.1%, and is statistically significant with a p-value less than 0.05. The R square for the analysis is 0.171, indicating that 17.1% of the variance in mall experience (ME) can be explained by mall atmosphere (MA) and retail tenant mix (RT). The confidence level of this model is 95%.

Additionally, the variance inflation factor (VIF) for both mall atmosphere and retail tenant mix is 1.14, suggesting that there is no issue with multicollinearity since the VIF is less than 5.



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Table 6. Result of Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) for H3, H5

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
Mall Atmosphere (MA)	0.7539	0.0483	0.6463	15.61	< .001*	1.14	Rejected
Retail Tenant Mix (RT)	-0.0122	0.0464	-0.0109	-0.264	0.792	1.14	Fail to reject
R-Square	0.171						
Adjusted R-Square	0.169						

Note: *Beta coefficient is reported with p-value less than 0.05; Mall Experience (ME)-dependent variable

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : the standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value |

VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Research Intentions

This study aimed to investigate the factors influencing local consumers in the Bang Sue district when revisiting nearby shopping malls, with a specific focus on comparing Wongsawang Shopping Mall and Gateway at Bang Sue. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

Mall Perception's Impact on Mall Atmosphere and Revisits: Does mall perception significantly influence the mall atmosphere, leading to the revisitation of local consumers in the Bang Sue district?

Mall Atmosphere's Effect on Retail Tenant Mix and Mall Experience: Does the mall atmosphere have a significant impact on retail tenant mix and mall experience, influencing the revisitation behavior of local consumers in the Bang Sue district?

Influence of Mall Atmosphere on Retail Tenant Mix Regarding Mall Experience: Does the mall atmosphere, specifically retail tenant mix, significantly affect the mall experience among local consumers revisiting shopping malls in the Bang Sue district?

Mall Experience's Role in Revisits: Does the mall experience play a significant role in influencing the revisitation behavior of local consumers in the Bang Sue district?

Retail Tenant Mix's Impact on Mall Experience and Revisits: Does the retail tenant mix significantly influence the mall experience, contributing to the revisitation behavior of local consumers in the Bang Sue district?

Through these research questions, the study aimed to provide insights into the complex interplay of factors influencing consumer behavior and revisitation patterns in the context of shopping malls in the Bang Sue district.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This quantitative study utilized data from residents of the Bang Sue district who frequently visit shopping malls situated between Wongsawang and Gateway (Bang Sue District Office, 2023) to estimate population and sample size. Therefore, the calculated sample size for this study is 383 respondents, as determined by calculator.net. Convenient sampling was employed to reach 383 respondents, and although the researcher anticipated 383 questionnaire responses, a total of 415 individuals participated. Ultimately, 394 questionnaire applicants remained, with 21 being dismissed.

Following the survey, a standardized closed-ended questionnaire was implemented for consistency and reliability. Raw data underwent analysis using JAMOV, with results displayed in figures and tables. The study employed IOC and Cronbach Alpha reliability tests, and the IOC validity from three experts exceeded 0.5, while Cronbach Alpha exceeded 0.7. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, indicated high reliability. Three data computation methods were employed, and hypothesis testing among the five variables was conducted using simple linear regression and multiple linear regression.



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Women constituted over half (51.3%) of the respondents, and the majority of local shoppers (97.7%) fell within the 20–30 age group. Private officers made up 40.6% of Bang Sue residents, and a significant portion claimed to frequent Wongsawang Shopping Mall (50.8%). Regarding income, 50.0% of local customers reported earning between 50,001 and 80,000 THB monthly. Most nearby shoppers visited malls 4–7 times each month (58.1%), and 53.8% of respondents resided within 5 km of a shopping mall.

The mean and standard deviation of variables served as survey instruments to influence Bang Sue District consumers to revisit the neighboring retail center. Mall revisiting had the highest mean and standard deviation ($\bar{x}=3.66$, $SD=1.09$), followed by mall perception ($\bar{x}=3.65$, $SD=1.12$), retail tenant mix ($\bar{x}=3.60$, $SD=1.11$), mall environment ($\bar{x}=3.56$, $SD=1.08$), and mall experience ($\bar{x}=3.55$, $SD=1.16$).

The study tested several hypotheses using simple linear regression (SLR) and multiple linear regression. Simple linear regression was employed to investigate how mall perception, environment, retail tenant mix, and mall experience impact mall revisiting. Multiple linear regression (MLR) was used to evaluate the significant level of mall atmosphere toward retail tenant mix on mall experience.

Hypothesis testing results for four independent variables—mall perception, atmosphere, experience, and revisit shopping mall—indicated values below 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The only exception, with testing outcomes exceeding 0.05 and resulting in a failure to reject the null hypothesis, was observed for the retail tenant mix as shown in Table 7.

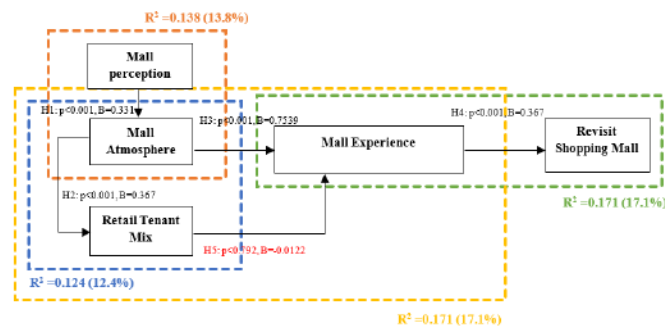
Table 7. Summary of the hypothesis testing results.

Statement of Hypothesis	p-value	Decision Results
H ₁₀ : There is no significant influence of mall perception on mall atmosphere toward revisiting shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district.	< .001*	Rejected Ho
H ₂₀ : There is no significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience toward revisiting for local consumers in Bang Sue district.	< .001*	Rejected Ho
H ₃₀ : There is no significant influence of mall atmosphere on retail tenant mix and mall experience among revisiting shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.	< .001*	Rejected Ho
H ₄₀ : There is no significant influence of mall experience on revisiting shopping malls for local consumers in the Bang Sue district.	< .001*	Rejected Ho
H ₅₀ : There is no significant influence of retail tenant mix on mall experience among revisit shopping malls in the local consumers' Bang Sue district.	0.792	Fail to reject

As illustrated in Figure 2 and Table 8, Mall Atmosphere (MA) exerts the highest influence, ranking 1st, on Mall Experience (ME) with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.754, as identified in Hypothesis 3 using Multiple Linear Regression (MLR). Retail Tenant Mix (RT) exhibits no significant influence, as it is not assigned a rank, on Mall Experience (ME) with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of -0.0122, as indicated by Hypothesis 5 using Multiple Linear Regression (MLR). Mall Perception (MP) holds a significant influence, albeit with no ranking, on Mall Atmosphere (MA) with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.331, as

suggested by Hypothesis 1 using Simple Linear Regression (SLR). Mall Atmosphere (MA) demonstrates a significant influence, also with no ranking, on Retail Tenant Mix (RT) with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.367, according to Hypothesis 2 using Simple Linear Regression (SLR). Mall Experience (ME) significantly influences, yet without a ranking, Revisit Shopping Mall (RS) with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.367, as established by Hypothesis 4 using Simple Linear Regression (SLR).

Figure 2. The Structure Model Results



Source. Authors.

Table 8. Summary strengths of influences factors on each dependent variable.

Independent Variable	Rank	Dependent Variable	Standardized Coefficient (β)
Mall Atmosphere (MA)	1 st	Mall Experience (ME)	0.646* (H3; MLR)
Retail Tenant Mix (RT)	-	Mall Experience (ME)	-0.0109 (H5; MLR)
Mall Perception (MP)	-	Mall Atmosphere (MA)	0.371* (H1; SLR)
Mall Atmosphere (MA)	-	Retail Tenant Mix (RT)	0.352* (H2; SLR)
Mall Experience (ME)	-	Revisit Shopping Mall (RS)	0.413* (H4; SLR)

5.3 Discussion based on Findings

According to the hypothesis testing results from the previous chapter, it can be concluded that mall atmosphere positively influences mall experience slightly toward revisiting shopping malls, which corresponds to the influence of mall atmosphere being

influenced by mall perception. Furthermore, the retail tenant mix has also been influenced by mall atmosphere factors. However, the retail tenant mix does not influence the mall experience in this study.



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Mall Atmosphere, Retail Tenant Mix and Mall Experience

Based on the analysis of the research results, it is evident that the mall atmosphere significantly and positively influences the mall experience concerning revisiting shopping malls. The analysis indicates that the significance value of both the mall atmosphere and mall experience is less than 0.001, which aligns with the conventional threshold of 0.05. Moreover, the standardized coefficients (β) for the mall atmosphere and mall experience are 0.646, suggesting that the relationship between these variables is the strongest among all independent variables in the study. This finding leads to the conclusion that the mall atmosphere exerts the most positive impact on the mall experience. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Santoso et al. (2018), who noted that the mall's built environment attributes elicit a strong positive response, indicating that the mall's image alone may not necessarily be the primary driver for consumers.

However, the outcome of the relationship between the retail tenant mix and mall experience, as per hypothesis 5, yields a significant value of 0.792. This indicates that, in this study, the retail tenant mix does not significantly influence the mall experience, as the value exceeds the target significance level of 0.05. In light of this negative result, further analysis of this hypothesis and the questionnaire of the retail tenant mix was conducted. The negative outcome may be attributed to factors such as the limited size of the shopping mall, its location, and the variety of tenants available. Additionally, it is plausible that the dependent variable affected by the retail tenant mix is the mall experience, suggesting that the mall experience may function as an independent variable in this research context. Consistent with the findings of Chantarayukol (2019), factors such as one-stop shopping, convenience, and free services/safe facilities significantly influence the visiting frequency and time spent per visit at shopping

malls. Therefore, it is conceivable that the retail tenant mix may directly influence revisiting shopping malls.

The R-square value of 17.1% indicates that this multiple linear regression model explains less than 17.1% of the variance in the dependent variable. This suggests that the model may not adequately fit the data, or there may be other factors influencing the outcome that are stronger than those considered in this model.

Mall Experience and Revisit Shopping Mall

The findings of this study elucidate the relationship posited in hypothesis 4, which examines the association between mall experience and revisiting shopping malls. The results indicate that mall experience significantly influences revisiting shopping malls. H4 reveals that the significance level derived from this study is less than 0.001, meeting the criterion for acceptance, as the target significance value should be below 0.05. Furthermore, the relationship between mall experience and revisiting shopping malls, as indicated by the standardized coefficients (β), is 0.413.

It is conceivable that both surveyed shopping malls are located in the suburban areas of Bangkok, characterized by residential and older town suburbs. Consumers in these locales may not be inclined to explore the product mix or convenience offered within a brief timeframe. Additionally, both shopping malls contend with spatial limitations due to urban zoning regulations in Bangkok. Consequently, they offer fewer rental spaces or shops compared to those located in the Central Business District (CBD), prompting local customers to patronize other malls that provide comprehensive services, allure, and effective customer communication both offline and online. Hence, the outcome of this study suggests that mall experience may not significantly influence revisiting shopping malls.

This conclusion diverges from the findings of a prior study by Junaid et al. (2023), which posited that



customer mall experience positively mediates the impact of service design on revisit intention and the desire to prolong one's stay.

Mall Atmosphere and Retail Tenant Mix

The relationship between mall atmosphere and retail tenant mix is significant, with a hypothesis significance level of less than 0.001. Given that the acceptable significance value is below 0.05, the significance value of this hypothesis meets the criteria for acceptance. However, the standardized coefficient (β) of mall atmosphere and retail tenant mix in this study is 0.352. This indicates that, in this study, the relationship between mall atmosphere and retail tenant mix is the third strongest, following mall experience and revisiting shopping malls. Therefore, the result of this finding suggests that mall atmosphere may not significantly influence revisiting shopping malls. This conclusion contradicts the findings of a previous study by Tandon et al. (2016), which suggested that mall facilities, encompassing elements such as seating arrangements, flooring, elevators, and parking, contribute to a pleasant shopping experience.

This result may be attributed to the relatively low R-square value of 12.4% for the simple linear regression model in this study, indicating that it may not be suitable for the data. It is possible that factors such as the overall feel, decor, or atmosphere of the mall are not significant determinants of which retail businesses choose to operate within it. Instead, other factors such as location, foot traffic, rental costs, target demographics, and marketing efforts may have a greater impact on the retail tenant mix.

Mall Perception and Mall Atmosphere

H1 investigates the relationship between mall perception and mall atmosphere, aiming to ascertain whether mall perception significantly influences mall atmosphere among revisiting shopping malls in the

Bang Sue district. The hypothesis testing results in Chapter 4 reveal that the significance level from this study is less than 0.001, meeting the criteria for acceptance given that the target significance value should be less than 0.05. Additionally, the relationship between mall perception and mall atmosphere, as indicated by the standardized coefficient (β), is 0.371. This suggests that in this study, the relationship between mall perception and mall atmosphere is moderately strong. However, the result of this finding may be attributed to the fact that mall perception is not a significant factor in influencing mall atmosphere. This conclusion diverges from the findings of Laroche et al. (2005), who concluded that consumers' moods evoked by their perceptions of the shopping mall environment and product quality influence their purchase intentions through their perceptions of service quality.

This result may indicate an inadequate strong relationship due to the R-square value of the simple linear regression model being 13.8%. This suggests that the simple linear regression model is not suitable for the data and that the outcome lacks strength and influence. It is plausible that the target demographic of the malls is highly localized residents, leading the property owner to prioritize renting space for investment over considering the mall-built environment. Furthermore, the location of both shopping malls in the northern part of Bangkok, surrounded by well-known shopping centers such as Central Ladproaw and The Mall Ngamwongwan, may contribute to this outcome.

5.4 Recommendations based on Findings

The researchers aim to provide recommendations to support the significant relationships observed among the research hypotheses. In the conclusions section, four significant relationships between variables were identified, influencing the revisitation of nearby malls by residents in Bang Sue. These included the significant influence of mall atmosphere on mall experience and



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retail tenant mix, the significant effect of mall experience on revisiting shopping malls, and the significant influence of retail tenant mix on local consumers in the Bang Sue district to revisit shopping malls nearby.

Given the research issue, it is crucial to address the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the retail industry, which has directly affected consumer behavior and encouraged shoppers to prefer shops close to their homes. However, in 2022, the supply of new communities in the suburbs of Bangkok is forecasted to reach its highest level since 2015 (Klinchuanchun, 2022). According to the hypothesis testing results, mall atmosphere emerged as the strongest variable influencing mall experience, leading to revisiting shopping malls.

Improving mall experience emerges as the second most influential factor in revisiting shopping malls. Shopping malls should enhance the overall shopping experience by implementing initiatives such as loyalty programs and exclusive events to reward and engage local consumers. Additionally, creating new strategic marketing communications and collaborating with local influencers can amplify brand messaging and increase visibility within the target market. Gathering feedback continuously is also essential to improve the mall experience over time.

Despite the relatively lower relationship observed between retail tenant mix and mall experience in this study, it remains an important factor in attracting customers. Mall developers should focus on diversifying the mix of retail tenants to cater to a wide range of consumer preferences and needs. This could involve promoting popular brands, introducing unique specialty shops, and incorporating entertainment and dining options to create a vibrant and attractive shopping experience. Given its ranking as the third strongest influence factor on mall experience, retail tenant mix deserves significant attention and should be a major concern for shopping mall developers.

5.5 Implications based on findings and theories

The factors influencing the revisitation of nearby shopping malls identified in this study, the ambiance of the shopping mall emerges as a crucial determinant. The research findings consistently underscore the significance of a positive and welcoming environment in influencing customer satisfaction and intention to revisit. Elements such as aesthetics, cleanliness, lighting, and amenities play pivotal roles in shaping the overall ambiance of the mall, aligning with the findings of Tandon et al. (2016), who suggested that mall facilities encompass various elements like seating arrangements, flooring, elevators, and parking, contributing to a pleasant shopping experience.

Although the tenant mix was not found to have a direct impact on the mall experience in this study, it remains a critical aspect of mall management. A diverse array of retailers and services contributes to the overall appeal of the mall and caters to the varied preferences of customers. Mall management should prioritize the tenant mix, considering factors such as uniqueness, variety, and alignment with customer demographics. By offering a blend of established brands, niche retailers, and experiential stores, malls can cultivate a dynamic and immersive shopping environment that fosters exploration and discovery.

5.6 Limitations of the study

The investigation into the limitations of this research revealed several factors that constrain the understanding of the influences on local consumers in the Bang Sue district when revisiting nearby shopping malls. Firstly, the scope of this study was restricted to customers who revisited shopping malls, which may not fully represent the broader population of mall visitors. Additionally, the research concentrated solely on shopping malls near the Bang Sue district, thereby limiting the comparability of the results with different locations or types of shopping malls. As a result,



geographical or spatial differences in exploration may exert distinct influences on decision-making processes when customers revisit malls.

5.7 Further Studies

Based on our findings and discussions, several important avenues warrant exploration in future research endeavors. Our conceptual model has highlighted the relationship between the retail tenant mix and its influence on the mall experience, thereby affecting the propensity to revisit shopping malls. Consequently, future studies should delve deeper into examining the interplay between these dependent and independent variables to offer more profound insights into consumer behavior and preferences.

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Investigating Factors Influencing the Purchasing Intention of Electric Vehicles among Rural Thai Consumers

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this research is to analyze the significant influence of environmental concern, social influence, performance expectancy, and attitude toward EV innovation on purchasing intention for EV cars. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – The research employs primary and secondary data collection methods to conduct an analysis of factors influencing EV car purchasing intentions. The data were collected from 390 respondents who are interested in EV cars and live in the upcountry of Thailand. This research references three theoretical frameworks from previous studies to develop a new conceptual framework. **Findings** – This research investigates the factors influencing the purchasing intention of Electric Vehicles among Thai people in upcountry areas. The findings of this research reveal that environmental concern, social influence, and performance expectancy are related to attitude toward EV innovation. Furthermore, attitude toward EV innovation directly influences EV car purchase intention. **Research Limitations/Implications** – The limitations of the research include several elements that constrain the factors influencing the purchasing intention of Electric Vehicles among Thai people in upcountry areas. The scope of this study is limited to the purchasing intentions of Thai people in upcountry areas. Additionally, this research focuses on individuals who have experience with electric cars and an interest in electric cars. **Originality/value** – This research focuses on the significant factors influencing the purchasing intention of Electric Vehicles among Thai people in upcountry areas.

Keywords – Environmental concern, Purchase intention, Social influence, Performance expectancy and attitude toward EV innovation

JEL classification code – O13, O18, O32

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of study

This study examines relevant factors influencing the electric car purchasing intention of Thai people in the upcountry toward EV innovation, social influence, performance expectancy, and environmental concern. The automotive industry has shifted towards electric cars. Electric cars are becoming more popular because they help reduce harmful emissions and make the air cleaner (Statista, 2023). This is important because a big chunk of the

pollution comes from vehicles driving in big cities (Statista, 2023). In 2023, research projects the electric car market to generate approximately \$457.60 billion in revenue (Statista, 2023), with an expected annual growth rate of around 17.02%. Nowadays, social influence has an impact on consumers. Social media, as well as other influences from friends and family, have a significant impact on what people buy. This is particularly important for electric car businesses because understanding how social influences work could help them sell to people who may not have

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initially planned to buy (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Park & Lessig, 1977; Bearden et al., 1989; Hsu and Lu, 2004; Kulviwat et al., 2009).

Moreover, studies have shown that people with a positive attitude toward EV innovation are more likely to change their purchasing intentions for electric cars. Since the performance of electric cars is important for consumers, there are two main concerns: driving range and recharge time. Most electric cars can travel more than 300 km on a single charge, with some models capable of traveling 400–500 km (Wilkinson, 2023). However, fully recharging the battery pack can take anywhere from 3 to 12 hours, though fast charging to 80% capacity can take as little as 30 minutes (Wilkinson, 2023). We aim to investigate how the decision to buy electric cars affects people who are interested in new technology. We hypothesize that individuals who are enthusiastic about trying new things are more likely to be interested in purchasing an electric car. Additionally, we seek to explore whether people's beliefs about the environmental benefits of electric cars influence their purchasing intentions. Understanding how these attitudes influence people's decisions to buy electric cars can help businesses develop effective marketing strategies, particularly in Thailand's upcountry. Therefore, the goal of this study is to investigate the significant factors influencing Thai people's intention to purchase electric cars in upcountry areas.

1.2 Problem statements

The electric vehicle (EV) market has experienced substantial growth, with a revenue of US\$457.60 billion in 2023 and an annual growth rate of 17.02%. Despite this growth, issues such as consumer perceptions of EV disadvantages, limited driving range, higher upfront costs, and inadequate charging infrastructure persist. These factors influence rural Thai consumers' purchasing intentions. Understanding the factors influencing the adoption of EVs among rural Thai consumers is crucial for promoting sustainable transportation practices and supporting the growth of the EV industry in

upcountry areas. As a result, this study aims to investigate the factors that influence rural Thai consumers' purchasing intentions for electric vehicles. By identifying these factors, electric car dealers and policymakers can develop effective strategies to promote EV adoption in rural areas.

1.3 Objectives of study

- (1) To assess the influence of environmental concern on attitude toward EV innovation and its impact on the purchase intention of EV cars.
- (2) To examine the influence of social influence on attitudes towards EV innovation and its effect on the purchase intention of EV cars.
- (3) To analyze the influence of performance expectancy on attitude towards EV innovation and its relationship with the purchase intention of EV cars.
- (4) To investigate the influence of attitude towards EV innovation on the purchase intention of EV cars.

1.4 Research questions

- (1) Does environmental concern significantly influence attitudes toward EV innovation and purchase intentions for EV cars?
- (2) Is social influence a significant factor in shaping attitudes toward EV innovation and the purchase intention of EV cars?
- (3) Does performance expectancy significantly affect attitudes toward EV innovation and purchase intentions for EV cars?
- (4) Is attitude towards EV innovation a significant predictor of purchase intention for EV cars among rural Thai consumers?

1.5 Significance of the study

This research holds significance in both academic and practical contexts for several key reasons. The study contributes to the academic literature by providing empirical evidence and insights into the factors influencing Thai people's purchasing

intentions for electric cars in upcountry areas. By systematically examining variables such as environmental concerns, social influence, performance expectancy, and attitude toward EV innovation, this research adds depth to our understanding of consumer behavior in the context of sustainable transportation. While previous studies have explored electric car adoption in various contexts, there is a notable gap in understanding the specific dynamics at play in upcountry regions of Thailand. This research addresses this gap by focusing specifically on this demographic group, shedding light on their unique preferences, perceptions, and challenges regarding electric vehicle adoption. As such, it contributes nuanced insights that complement and extend existing knowledge in the field.

The findings of this study have practical implications for policymakers, urban planners, electric car manufacturers, and other stakeholders involved in promoting sustainable transportation initiatives. By identifying influential factors shaping purchasing intentions, such as environmental concerns and social influence, this research provides actionable insights for designing targeted interventions, policy frameworks, and marketing strategies aimed at accelerating electric car adoption in upcountry areas. Sustainable transportation, including the widespread adoption of electric vehicles, is integral to achieving environmental sustainability and mitigating climate change. By elucidating the determinants of electric car purchasing intentions among upcountry residents, this study contributes to the broader goal of promoting sustainable mobility solutions. Its findings can inform efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and enhance overall environmental sustainability in Thailand and beyond.

The methodology and findings of this study serve as a foundation for future research endeavors in the fields of sustainable transportation and consumer behavior. Scholars may build upon this research by exploring additional variables, investigating different geographical contexts, or employing alternative research methodologies. By stimulating further inquiry and knowledge generation, this study

contributes to the ongoing scholarly discourse on electric vehicle adoption and sustainable mobility. This study's significance lies in its contribution to academic knowledge, its practical implications for policymakers and practitioners, and its alignment with broader sustainability objectives. By illuminating the factors shaping electric car purchasing intentions among upcountry residents, this research informs efforts to promote sustainable transportation solutions and advance environmental stewardship.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Environmental Concerns and Attitude toward EV Innovation

Environmental concern plays a pivotal role in the decision-making processes aimed at preserving natural environments and green spaces by opting for environmentally friendly products. Some individuals consider and aspire to uphold environmental values when comparing various choices (Roger & Rohini, 2017; Huang & Nuangjamnong, 2022). With the emergence of electric cars as a new innovation promoting sustainability, they have the potential to positively influence attitudes toward EVs in the transportation-sharing market (Haider et al., 2021). Environmental concern refers to public awareness of environmental pollution caused by driving cars, which emit exhaust. Individuals who are intensely concerned about environmental issues are inclined to maintain and protect nature for their well-being (Jaeyoung et al., 2021). Kropfeld et al. (2018) observed that environmentally concerned individuals tend to reduce the consumption of goods they believe have a substantial ecological impact. Changes in purchasing behavior become evident as environmental concerns continue to rise (Alessandro et al., 2023). Consequently, one of the significant factors influencing intentions to purchase electric vehicles, considered environmentally friendly products, could be influenced by customers' sustainable



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environmental awareness (Haider et al., 2021; Huang & Nuangjamnong, 2022). Yadav and Pathak (2016) assert that environmental concern has become a critical predictor of behavior regarding green items. Therefore, to explore the impact of environmental concern and attitudes toward EV innovation, the following hypothesis is presented:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is no significant influence of environmental concern on attitudes toward EV innovation among the purchase intentions of Thai people in the upcountry.

2.2 Performance Expectancy and Attitude toward EV Innovation

Personal beliefs entail the expectation that electric car technology will become integrated into everyday life. This belief is rooted in the anticipation of improved efficiency, as electric cars eliminate the need for gasoline, resulting in cost savings for travel (Manutworakit & Choocharukul, 2022). The characteristic definition of performance expectancy is the level of benefits that electric vehicles offer in response to consumers' needs in daily life, such as traveling to various places for work, leisure, or other purposes (Jaeyoung et al., 2021). Although innovative cars represent new technology, it has been suggested that investing primarily in electric cars yields better performance compared to conventional vehicles, according to current users (Haider et al., 2021). Additionally, Indra et al. (2022) found that individuals perceive electric vehicles as cost-saving and productivity-enhancing, which contributes to positive perceptions of the product. The performance of electric vehicles also plays a crucial role in clients' attitudes when selecting modern technology goods, contributing to the upward trend of electric car adoption (Haider et al., 2022). Attitude toward EV innovation is considered the main driving force of EV purchase intention in this study and refers to people's attitudes involving the assessment and decision-making responses toward products, brands, or judgments. This attitude serves as a predictor of

intention preceding actual behavior (Subhash et al., 2022). When an attitude stems from the innovative image of a product, it leads to the development of purchase intentions (Subhash et al., 2022). Concerns regarding EV innovation may arise due to uncertainties about adequate charging stations and repair facilities. However, considering the benefits such as nature conservation, travel cost savings, and the advantages of electric cars, these factors clearly influence attitudes toward EV innovation (Simona & Silvia, 2018). Conversely, negative customer satisfaction may lead to resistance in attitudes toward EV innovation, diminishing confidence in new choices (Nadine & Sebastian, 2013). Customers' attitudes toward electric cars tend to align with their perceptions of performance, based on observations of previous users and test results (Mohammed et al., 2023). Therefore, an individual's satisfaction can be gauged by the performance of the product, with better products eliciting more positive attitudes (Indra et al., 2022; Kapoor & Nuangjamnong, 2021). Consequently, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is no significant influence of social influence on attitudes toward EV innovation among the purchase intentions of Thai people in the upcountry.

2.3 Social Influence and Attitude toward EV Innovation

Social influence encompasses peripheral factors that can influence users' behavior and decisions, often manifesting through interactions with family and friends (Manutworakit & Choocharukul, 2022; Nuangjamnong, 2021). On the other hand, individuals can perceive themselves as environmentally friendly by using electric cars (Mohammed et al., 2023). Social influence can be defined as the extent to which individuals perceive acceptance and importance based on others' confidence in an innovation that has not occurred in the past (Haider et al., 2021). Influence from certain groups of individuals, such as friends,

relatives, and parents, can affect customers' decisions to prefer electric cars over gasoline cars (Manutworakit & Choocharukul, 2022). Furthermore, the use of electric vehicles for city transportation continues to yield positive results, indicating that this aspect remains a significant factor in purchasing intentions (Jaeyoung et al., 2021). Furthermore, social influence plays a pivotal role in shaping attitudes. When individuals perceive support for electric car usage from friends and influential figures, coupled with the widespread adoption of electric vehicles for transportation in some countries, it significantly impacts attitudes (Jaeyoung et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis is presented:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is no significant influence of social influence on attitudes toward EV innovation among the purchase intentions of Thai people in the upcountry.

2. 4 Attitude toward EV Innovation and Purchase Intentions

If an individual maintains a positive attitude toward electric cars and engages in resource conservation practices, they are likely to perceive these vehicles as valuable tools in both personal and social contexts within their daily lives. This perception is expected to influence their intention to purchase electric cars (Mohammed et al., 2023). Considering the multitude of situational and personality factors that can positively influence purchasing decisions (Roger & Rohini, 2017; Dowpiset & Nuangjamnong, 2021; Xu & Nuangjamnong, 2022), it is essential to acknowledge potential confounding factors. Johnstone and Hooper (2016), for instance, highlighted factors such as peer pressure, limited product information, and product availability as potential influencers. Purchase intentions refer to the willingness or feasibility with which a customer would decide to purchase an electric car, which are specific products that refer to the openness of ideas a person has about a certain product before actually purchasing it in the near future (Subhash et al., 2022). According to the

behavioral intentions of starting to use EV, in the context mentioned, "it is a very useful statistic" due to consumers' behavior changing all the time and being difficult to predict (Dk. & Nisal, 2019). Furthermore, EV's behavioral intentions have been clearly indicated as product factors and also individual or social factors of real behavior (Ade, 2021). Consequently, buyers are advised to gather comprehensive information to mitigate uncertainties (Roger & Rohini, 2017). Based on these premises, the following hypothesis is proposed:

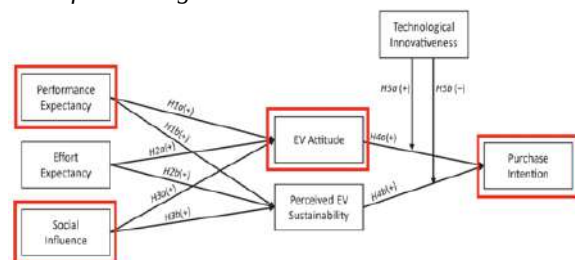
Hypothesis 4 (H4): There is no significant influence of attitude toward EV innovation and purchase intentions among Thai people in the upcountry.

2.5 Theoretical Frameworks

In the theoretical framework presented, four key stimuli are outlined as influential factors leading to purchase intention. These stimuli include performance expectation, effort expectation, social influence, and technological innovation. Derived from the study "Drivers of electric vehicle adoption: the moderating role of technological innovativeness," the framework elucidates the relationships depicted in Figure 1. Specifically, it highlights how performance expectancy and social influence interact through EV attitude, ultimately impacting purchase intention (Mohammed et al., 2023).

Figure 1.

Drivers of electric vehicle adoption: the moderating role of technological innovativeness

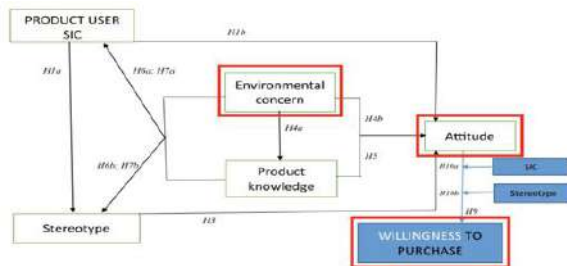


Source: Mohammed et al. (2023).

2.3.2 Roger and Rohini (2017) present the second theoretical framework, which focuses on the relationship between environmental concern and willingness to purchase. Illustrated in Figure 2, this framework explores the impact of various environmental factors on attitudes, ultimately influencing the willingness to purchase electric vehicles positively.

Figure 2.

Consumer attitudes towards electric vehicles: Effects of product user stereotypes and self-image congruence





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3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

This research aims to identify the factors influencing electric car purchase intentions among Thai people residing in upcountry areas, with a specific focus on environmental concern, social influence, performance expectancy, and attitude toward EV innovation. Additionally, the study aims to assess the degree of influence these factors have on electric car purchase intentions among this demographic. The research adopts a quantitative approach, employing statistical analyses such as Cronbach's alpha, multiple linear regression, simple linear regression, and descriptive statistics to analyze each variable.

The target population consists of Thai individuals residing outside Bangkok who have expressed interest in purchasing an electric car when deciding between a gasoline car and an electric car. The total population outside Bangkok was approximately 66.09 million as of 2022 (Workpoint Today, 2023). Given the large population size, the researchers employ a sample size estimation approach, determining that 385 respondents would adequately represent the population. However, we acknowledge that fluctuations in the number of Thai people in upcountry areas outside Bangkok may necessitate occasional adjustments to the sample size.

The questionnaire consists of three sections, each containing a total of 27 questions. These questions cover five variables outlined in the research conceptual framework, including three screening questions, 17 questions related to measuring variables, and seven questions concerning demographic aspects.

We employ a non-probability sampling method, specifically convenience sampling, to collect data, ensuring alignment with the research objectives within the limited time available for data collection. We conduct a pilot test with a small group of 50 participants to evaluate the reliability of the

measuring variables and assess comprehension, ensuring the questionnaire's reliability and clarity.

We utilize Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) to examine the combined influence of environmental concern, social influence, and performance expectancy on attitudes toward EV innovation. Additionally, we employ simple linear regression (SLR) to predict the influence of attitudes toward EV innovation on purchase intentions.

Furthermore, this study incorporates secondary data obtained from reliable sources, including articles, journals, books, and previous studies, to supplement the primary data collected through the questionnaire.

3.2 Validity and Reliability

The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index evaluates the content validity of the questionnaire items in this study. We tasked a single expert to review the questionnaire items in relation to the research objectives, providing comments and ratings for each item to determine its content validity score. For all items, the IOC scores exceeded 0.5, indicating a high level of congruence between the items and the research objectives, ensuring their suitability for distribution to the respondents.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire variables, a pilot test was conducted with 50 respondents selected for this purpose. Cronbach's alpha was employed as a technique for assessing consistency. According to Cronbach (1951) and Schweizer (2011), Cronbach's alpha (CA) is widely utilized by researchers to test reliability, and it offers a scale of interpretation where values greater than 0.6 are considered acceptable. Specifically, $\alpha > 0.9$ indicates excellent reliability, $0.8 < \alpha < 0.9$ indicates good reliability, $0.7 < \alpha < 0.8$ indicates acceptable reliability, $0.6 < \alpha < 0.7$ indicates questionable reliability, $0.5 < \alpha < 0.6$ indicates poor reliability, and $\alpha < 0.5$ indicates unacceptable reliability.

The reliability analysis was conducted for each variable in this study, with a sample size of 50 respondents. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were



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calculated to assess the internal consistency of the variables. The results indicate good reliability for all variables, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from .821 to .897. These values exceed the threshold of 0.6, suggesting satisfactory internal consistency for each variable.

Therefore, the pilot test results in Table 1 confirm that all constructs show internal consistency, indicating the reliability of the questionnaire for further distribution to the target respondents.

Table 1. *The Value of Reliability Analysis of Each Variable in this Study (n=50)*

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpreted	N. of items
Environmental concern	.897	Good	3
Attitude toward EV innovation	.867	Good	2
Social influence	.877	Good	5
Performance expectancy	.821	Good	3
Purchase intentions	.853	Good	3

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive analysis of Demographic Data

Target respondents interested in EV cars residing in Thailand's upcountry between February 2024 and March 2024 responded to the questionnaire, accounting for 110% of the sample size. We then excluded 50 respondents, leaving 390 eligible respondents, or 97.5% of the initial sample size, for data analysis. The questionnaire included inquiries about demographic information such as gender, age, income, nationality, frequency of visits to gas stations, expected car range, and preferred car brand. We descriptively analyzed these demographic variables to characterize the target respondents.

Table 2 illustrates the frequency distribution and percentage of demographic information from the sample of 390 respondents, as follows:

Gender: Among the 390 respondents, 220 were male (56.40% of all respondents), 168 were female (43.10% of all respondents), and 2 respondents did not specify their gender (0.50% of all respondents).

Age: The largest age group among the respondents was 31–40 years old, comprising 173 individuals (44.40% of all respondents). This was followed by the 20–30 age group with 106 respondents (27.20% of all respondents), the 41–50 age group with 68 respondents (17.40% of all respondents), and those over 50 years old with 43 respondents (11.00% of all respondents).

Income: The majority of respondents (41.0% or 160 individuals) reported an income between 20,001 and 50,000 THB, followed by 37.7% (147 individuals) with an income between 10,001 and 20,000 THB, 12.1% (47 individuals) with an income lower than 10,000 THB, and 9.2% (36 individuals) with an income exceeding 50,000 THB.

Nationality: All 390 respondents were Thai citizens (100% of all respondents), with no non-Thai citizens included in the sample.

Frequency of Visits to Gas Stations: The majority of respondents (51.0%, or 199 individuals) visited gas stations 8–12 times per month. This was followed by 27.2% (106 individuals) who visited gas stations less than 8 times per month, 19.0% (74 individuals) who visited gas stations 12–16 times per month, and 2.8% (11 individuals) who visited gas stations more than 16 times per month.

Expected Car Range: Most respondents (61.0%, or 238 individuals) expected their car to have a range of 501–600 km. This was followed by 21.8% (85 individuals) expecting a range of 401–500 km, 8.7% (34 individuals) expecting a range of 301–400 km, 3.3% (13 individuals) expecting a range of 100–300 km, and 5.2% (20 individuals) with other expectations.

Preferred Car Brand: Out of the 390 respondents, 29.7% (116 individuals) chose BYD as their preferred car brand, followed by TESLA with 26.9% (105



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individuals), ORA with 14.9% (58 individuals), MG with 13.8% (54 individuals), NETA with 8.7% (34

individuals) , and other brands with 6.0% (23 individuals).

Table 2. Demographic information analysis by using frequency distribution and percentage (n=390)

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	220	56.40%
Female	168	43.10%
Not Specified	2	0.50%
Total	390	100%
Age		
20 - 30 years old	106	27.20%
31 - 40 years old	173	44.40%
41 - 50 year old	68	17.40%
Over 50 years old	43	11.00%
Total	390	100%
Income		
Lower than 10,000 Baht	47	12.10%
10,001 - 20,000 Baht	147	37.70%
20,001 - 50,000 Baht	160	41.00%
More than 50,000 Baht	36	9.20%
Total	390	100%
Nationality		
Thai	390	100%
Non-Thai	0	0%
Total	390	100%
Entering gas station frequency		
Less than 8 times per month	106	27.20%
8 -12 times per month	199	51.00%
12 -16 times per month	74	19.00%
More than 16 times per month	11	2.80%
Total	390	100%
Distance expectancy		
100 - 300 km	13	3.30%
301 - 400 km	34	8.70%
401 - 500 km	85	21.80%
501 - 600 km	238	61.00%
Others	20	5.20%
Total	390	100%
Car brand		
TESLA	105	26.90%
BYD	116	29.70%
ORA	58	14.90%
MG	54	13.80%
NETA	34	8.70%
Others	23	6.00%
Total	390	100%

4. 2 Descriptive Analysis with Mean and Standard Deviation

The summary of the mean and standard deviation for each group variable consisted of environmental



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concern, social influence, performance expectancy, attitude toward EV innovation, and purchase intentions. The following criteria for evaluating the mean scores were adapted from Imsaard et al. (2021). The criteria for the interpretation of mean scores are as follows: 4.21 - 5.00 represents "strongly agree," 3.41 - 4.20 represents "agree," 2.61 - 3.40 represents "neutral," 1.81 - 2.60 represents "disagree," and 1.00 - 1.80 represents "strongly disagree."

The mean and standard deviation of environmental concern in Table 3 represent the results among 390 respondents, with 0 missing respondents. The highest mean of environmental concern was "An electric car will reduce pollution," which equals 4.04. On the other hand, the lowest mean was "Renewable energy is very important for me to choose an electric car," which equals 3.96. Furthermore, the highest deviation was "An electric car will reduce harmful emissions," which equals 0.818. Nevertheless, the lowest deviation was "An electric car will reduce pollution," which equals 0.755.

The mean and standard deviation of attitude toward EV innovation in Table 3 indicate the results among 390 respondents, with 0 missing respondents. The highest mean of attitude toward EV innovation was "An electric car system no longer needs gasoline," which equals 3.64. On the other hand, the lowest mean was "An electric car makes them a part of nature conservation," which equals 3.53. Furthermore, the highest deviation was "An electric car system no longer needs gasoline," which equals 0.907. Nevertheless, the lowest deviation was "An electric car makes them a part of nature conservation," which equals 0.874.

The mean and standard deviation of social influence in Table 3 show the results among 390 respondents, with 0 missing respondents. The highest

mean of social influence was "an electric car would be positive for society," which equals 3.58. In the meantime, the lowest mean was "Their family and friends would be upset if they did not adopt an electric car," which equals 2.96. For the standard deviation, the highest was "People who are important to them think that they should use an electric car," which equals 1.124. On the other hand, the lowest deviation was "Using an electric car would be positive for society," which equals 0.832.

The mean and standard deviation of performance expectancy in Table 3 provide the results among 390 respondents, with 0 missing respondents. The highest mean of performance expectancy was "Using an electric car would be more cost-effective," which equals 3.56. In contrast, the lowest mean was "Using an electric car enables them to reach their destination more quickly," which equals 3.02. Moreover, the highest deviation was "Using an electric car enables them to reach their destination more quickly," which equals 1.143. However, the lowest deviation was "Using an electric car would be more cost-effective," which equals 0.836.

The mean and standard deviation of purchase intentions in Table 3 present the results among 390 respondents, with 0 missing respondents. The highest mean of purchase intentions was "It is very certain to purchase an electric car in the future," which equals 3.46. Meanwhile, the lowest mean was "They expect to drive an electric car in the near future," which equals 3.46. For the standard deviation, the highest was "They expect to drive an electric car in the near future," which equals 1.060. Nevertheless, the lowest deviation was "It is very certain to purchase an electric car in the future," which equals 0.987.

Table 3. *The result of Mean and Standard Deviation*

Item No.	Measurement Items	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
EC1	Renewable energy is very important for me to choose an electric car.	3.96	0.771	Agree
EC2	Using an electric car will reduce pollution.	4.04	0.755	Agree
EC3	Using an electric car will reduce harmful emissions.	3.97	0.818	Agree
Environmental concern (EC)		3.99		Agree
AEI2	When I move to use an electric car, it makes me feel good because I am a part of nature conservation.	3.53	0.874	Agree
AEI3	Because the electric car system no longer needs gasoline, I could save more on travel costs.	3.64	0.907	Agree
Attitude toward EV innovation (AEI)		3.58		Agree
SI1	Using an electric car would be positive for society.	3.58	0.832	Agree
SI2	I would use an electric car if a number of other people use it.	3.45	0.891	Agree
SI3	People who influence my behavior think that I should use an electric car.	3.2	1.035	Neutral
SI4	My family and friends would be upset if I did not adopt an electric car.	2.96	1.109	Neutral
SI5	People who are important to me think that I should use an electric car.	3.05	1.124	Neutral
Social influence (SI)		3.25		Neutral
PE1	Using an electric car would be more cost effective.	3.56	0.836	Agree
PE2	Using an electric car enables me to reach my destination more quickly.	3.02	1.143	Neutral
PE3	Using an electric car will serve as a good alternative to conventional vehicles.	3.5	0.912	Agree
Performance expectancy (PE)		3.36		Neutral
PI1	It is very certain that I will purchase an electric car in the future.	3.46	0.987	Agree
PI2	I expect to drive an electric car in the near future.	3.21	1.06	Neutral
PI3	I intend to adopt an electric car because it is environmentally friendly.	3.39	0.953	Neutral
Purchase intentions (PI)		3.36		Neutral

4.3 Hypothesis Testing Results

To analyze the hypothesis testing results, the researcher utilized linear regression as part of the statistical analytical methodology. This method was employed to examine the significant impact among variables, including the significant influence of environmental concern on attitude toward EV innovation, the significant influence of social influence and performance expectancy on attitude toward EV innovation, and the significant influence of attitude toward EV innovation on purchase intentions. In conducting linear regression analysis, the researchers employed multiple linear regression analysis to assess the R-square, which indicates the proportion of variance in the dependent variables explained by the independent variables. Additionally,

this study utilized simple linear regression to evaluate the level of factors influencing purchase intentions. Ringle et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of analyzing the significant impact between dependent and independent variables in regression analysis, stating that independent variables should be considered acceptable if the variance inflation factor value is less than 5, with R-square indicating the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables.

4.3.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H2, H3

Statistical Hypothesis



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□₀: There is no significant influence of environmental concern (H1), social influence (H2) and performance expectancy (H3) on attitude toward EV innovation among purchase intentions of Thai people in upcountry.

□₁: There is a significant influence of environmental concern (H1), social influence (H2) and performance expectancy (H3) on attitude toward EV innovation among purchase intentions of Thai people in upcountry.

Table 4 presents the results of multiple linear regression analysis for hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, which examine the significant influences of environmental concern, social influence, and performance expectancy on attitudes toward EV innovation. The analysis reveals significant positive relationships between environmental concern ($\beta = 0.392$, $p < .001$), social influence ($\beta = 0.152$, $p < .001$), performance expectancy ($\beta = 0.419$, $p < .001$), and attitude toward

EV innovation. The standardized betas indicate the relative strength of these relationships, with performance expectancy having the strongest influence.

Additionally, the table provides information on the unstandardized coefficients (B), standard error (SE B), t-values, and p-values for each predictor variable. We also include the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to assess multicollinearity, and all VIF values fall below the acceptable threshold of 5, indicating no significant multicollinearity issues.

The overall model demonstrates substantial explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.682, suggesting that approximately 68.2% of the variance in attitude toward EV innovation can be explained by the combined influence of environmental concern, social influence, and performance expectancy. The adjusted R^2 value (0.680) indicates that this model's predictive ability remains robust even after accounting for the number of predictors.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p-value	VIF	Null Hypothesis
Environmental concern	0.467	0.0419	0.392	11.15	<.001*	1.5	Rejected
Social influence	0.149	0.0422	0.152	3.52	<.001*	2.26	Rejected
Performance expectancy	0.412	0.042	0.419	9.79	<.001*	2.23	Rejected

Note: $\square^2 = 0.682$, Adjusted $\square^2 = 0.680$, *p-value < 0.05. Dependent Variable = Attitude toward EV innovation.

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: The standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : The standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value | VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

4.3.2 Result of Simple Linear Regression of H4

Statistical Hypothesis

□₀: There is no significant influence of attitude toward EV innovation on purchase intentions among Thai people in upcountry.

□₁: There is a significant influence of attitude toward EV innovation on purchase intentions among Thai people in upcountry.

Table 5 presents the results of a simple linear regression analysis for hypothesis 4, which examines the significant influence of attitudes toward EV

innovation on purchase intentions. The analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between attitude toward EV innovation and purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.686$, $p < .001$). The standardized beta (β) indicates the strength and direction of this relationship, with a value of 0.686 suggesting a strong positive association.

Additionally, the table provides information on the unstandardized coefficient (B), standard error (SE B), t-value, and p-value for the predictor variable. We also include the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to



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assess multicollinearity, with a value of 1.00 indicating no significant multicollinearity issues.

The overall model demonstrates moderate explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.471, suggesting that approximately 47.1% of the variance

in purchase intentions can be explained by attitude toward EV innovation. The adjusted R^2 value (0.470) indicates that this model's predictive ability remains robust even after accounting for the number of predictors.

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypotheses 4

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p-value	VIF	Null Hypothesis
Attitude toward EV innovation	0.769	0.0414	0.686	18.58	<.001*	1.00	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.471$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.470$, *p-value < 0.05. Dependent Variable = Purchase Intentions

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: The standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : The standardized beta | t: t-value | p: p-value | VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Research Intentions

The research objectives and questions serve as fundamental focal points in this section. The analysis aims to explore the relationships among five variables influencing the intention to purchase electric cars among Thai people in rural areas. Here is an outline of the research questions:

Does environmental concern have a significant influence on attitudes toward EV innovation and, consequently, the intention to purchase EV cars?

Does social influence have a significant impact on attitudes toward EV innovation and, consequently, the intention to purchase EV cars?

Does performance expectancy significantly affect attitudes toward EV innovation and, subsequently, the intention to purchase EV cars?

Does the attitude toward EV innovation have a significant impact on the intention to purchase EV cars?

This research utilized a quantitative method based on data collected from Thai individuals residing in rural areas. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size table determined the sample size of 390 respondents, using a non-probability convenience sampling method for participant selection. We designed the questionnaire with closed-ended questions and

conducted reliability testing using the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) and Cronbach's alpha methods to ensure its validity and reliability.

Analysis of demographic data revealed that the majority of respondents were male (56.4%), aged between 31 and 40 years old (44.4%), with an average monthly income of 20,001 to 50,000 Baht (41.0%). Additionally, most respondents were of Thai nationality (100%), visited gas stations 8–12 times per month (51.0%), and expected a car range of 501–600 km (61.0%). The most preferred car brand among respondents was BYD (29.7%).

The mean and standard deviation of variables indicated that environmental concern had the highest mean ($\bar{x} = 3.99$, $SD = 0.682$), followed by attitude toward EV innovation ($\bar{x} = 3.58$, $SD = 0.815$), purchase intention for EV cars ($\bar{x} = 3.36$, $SD = 0.912$), performance expectancy ($\bar{x} = 3.36$, $SD = 0.830$), and social influence ($\bar{x} = 3.25$, $SD = 0.831$).

Table 6 summarizes the results of hypothesis testing conducted to investigate the factors influencing the purchasing intentions of electric vehicles (EVs) among rural Thai consumers. All p-values obtained from the hypothesis testing were less than 0.001, indicating strong evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The decision results column confirms that all null hypotheses were not true. This suggests that consumers in rural Thailand are very affected by

environmental concerns, social pressure, performance expectations, and attitudes toward new electric vehicles. These findings underscore the importance of considering these factors in promoting

EV adoption and developing effective strategies to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles in rural areas of Thailand.

Table 6. Summary of the hypothesis testing results.

Statement of Null Hypothesis	p-value	Decision Results
H1o : There is no significant influence of environmental concern on attitude toward EV innovation among purchase intentions of Thai people in upcountry.	<.001*	Rejected Ho
H2o : There is no significant influence of social influence on attitude toward EV innovation among purchase intentions of Thai people in upcountry.	<.001*	Rejected Ho
H3o : There is no significant influence of performance expectancy on attitude toward EV innovation among purchase intentions of Thai people in upcountry.	<.001*	Rejected Ho
H4o : There is no significant influence of attitude toward EV innovation on purchase intentions among Thai people in upcountry.	<.001*	Rejected Ho

The researchers aimed to classify the ranking among variables based on the strength levels of factors influencing EV car purchasing intention among Thai people in the upcountry. The strongest significant factor influencing purchase intentions is the attitude toward EV innovation ($\beta = 0.686$). In terms of the

dependent variable, attitude toward EV innovation, performance expectancy ($\beta = 0.419$) occupies the first rank, followed by environmental concern ($\beta = 0.392$) in the second rank, and social influence is positioned in the third rank ($\beta = 0.152$), as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Summary strengths of influencing factors of each dependent variable.

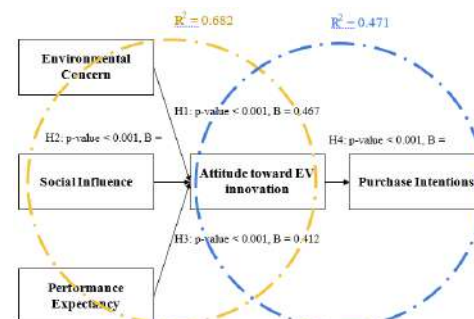
Dependent Variable	Rank	Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficient (β)
Purchase Intentions	-	Attitude toward EV innovation	0.686
Attitude toward EV innovation	2 nd	Environmental concern	0.392
	1 st	Performance expectancy	0.419
	3 rd	Social influence	0.152

5.2 Discussion based on Findings

Based on the hypothesis testing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that attitude toward EV innovation positively influences purchase intentions. In other words, the attitude toward EV innovation is influenced by environmental concern, social influence, and performance expectancy factors, as depicted in Figure 5.

Figure 5.

Structural Model Results



Source. Constructed by authors

Attitude toward EV innovation and Purchase Intentions

The findings of this study reveal a significant and positive association between attitudes toward EV innovation and purchase intentions. The analysis demonstrates that the significance level of the relationship between attitude toward EV innovation and electric car purchase intentions is less than 0.001, meeting the threshold significance level of less than 0.05. Furthermore, the standardized coefficient (β) for attitude toward EV innovation and purchasing intentions for electric cars is 0.686, indicating the strongest relationship among all independent variables in this study. Based on this result, it can be concluded that attitude, particularly influenced by environmental concern, is the most significant driver affecting the purchase intentions of Thai people living in upcountry areas outside Bangkok. This conclusion is consistent with previous studies, which also noted a strong significance between attitude and Thai people's purchasing intentions (Mohammed et al., 2023; Dowpiset & Nuangjamnong, 2021, Xu & Nuangjamnong, 2022).

The study suggests that a shift in attitude toward EV innovation may be a key factor influencing Thai people's purchasing intentions regarding electric cars. Citizens may increasingly realize the benefits of transitioning to electric cars instead of gasoline cars. In other words, drivers are relevant for purchase intentions by motivating a favorable attitude based on self-benefits, which is the most important aspect of their perceptions of EV sustainability (Mohammed et al., 2023).

The continuous evolution of electric car batteries has been ongoing, leading to more efficient and cost-effective batteries. This development could lower vehicle costs, making electric vehicles more accessible to a wider range of consumers. Additionally, advancements in battery technology could increase the driving range of electric cars, making them comparable to gasoline cars (Fayez, 2023).

In this simple linear regression model, it is indicated that the proportion of variance in electric car purchasing intentions, or R-square, impacted by

attitude toward EV innovation is 47.1%. This means that the model explains at least 47.1% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Environmental Concern, Social Influence, Performance Expectancy and Attitude toward EV innovation

The results of hypothesis 1 testing regarding the relationship between environmental concern and attitude toward EV innovation reveal a significant level of less than 0.001. This indicates that the significant value of this hypothesis, which should be less than 0.05, is acceptable. Therefore, it can be concluded that customers' attitudes toward electric car purchasing are influenced when they have confidence in the environmental aspects of electric cars. Additionally, the standardized coefficient (β) of environmental concern and attitude toward EV innovation in this study is 0.392. This suggests that among the variables in this research, the relationship between environmental concern and attitude toward EV innovation is the second strongest, following the relationship between attitude toward EV innovation and purchasing intentions. Supporting this conclusion, previous research by Roger and Rohini (2017) also found a similar relationship between environmental concern and attitude, emphasizing customers' belief in the environmental aspects of electric car purchasing. Customers' attitudes may diminish if they do not perceive a significant impact on environmental conservation or a reduction in emissions.

Meanwhile, the testing result of the relationship between social influence and attitude toward EV innovation from Hypothesis 2 also yields a significant value of less than 0.001. This indicates a significant attitude in this study, as the significant value exceeds the target of less than 0.05. From this result, the standardized coefficient (β) of social influence on attitude toward EV innovation is 0.419. The researchers can conclude that the relationship between social influence and attitude toward EV innovation is the least strong among all independent variables in the research. This finding aligns with

Mohammed et al. (2023), who highlighted the significance of social influence on Thai people's attitude toward EV innovation based on survey questionnaire analysis.

Moreover, the study of hypothesis 3 testing results in the relationship between performance expectancy and attitude toward EV innovation also indicates a significant level of less than 0.001. According to this significant value criterion, the hypothesis is accepted. Additionally, the standardized coefficient (β) of performance expectancy and attitude toward EV innovation is 0.152. Therefore, the result suggests that performance expectancy ranks third among the variables influencing the electric car purchasing intentions of Thai people outside Bangkok. This conclusion is supported by a previous study by Indra et al. (2022), which found that performance expectancy is a significant factor influencing electric car purchases in upcountry areas.

Analyzing the variance proportion, or R-square, of this multiple linear regression model, the R-square value is 68.2%. This indicates that the model fits the data well and has a strong influence on the outcome.

5.3 Recommendations based on Findings

In this section, the researchers aim to provide recommendations to support the significant relationships identified among the research hypotheses. The conclusions section highlighted four significant relationships between variables influencing the electric car purchasing intentions of Thai people in the upcountry, including the significant influence of environmental concern, social influence, and performance expectancy on attitude toward EV innovation and purchasing intentions of EV cars.

Attitude toward EV innovation and Purchase Intentions

To positively influence and change customers' attitudes, the study recommends that marketing management, sales clerks, or dealers intensify their advertising and service promotion efforts, whether online or onsite, to target every generation of

customers who show interest in and are likely to purchase an electric car in the near future. Innovative presentations of customer-relevant internal policies and the company's objectives regarding the sale of innovative cars, which are unfamiliar products in today's customer lifestyle, are also recommended. Highlighting the necessity of long-distance travel and the time-saving aspects of refueling can further persuade potential customers. Moreover, emphasizing the benefits or advantages of electric cars compared to gasoline cars, such as travel cost per kilometer, environmental conservation, and noise levels during operation, is crucial. Continuous training of sales staff is essential to ensure they are well-informed about these factors, as the cost of travel, environmental preservation, and performance expectations significantly affect customers' daily lives, contributing to cost savings, health considerations, and driving satisfaction.

Environmental Concern, Social Influence, Performance Expectancy and Attitude toward EV innovation

The study recommends that management enhance and support environmental concerns, emphasizing their personal and social benefits. While the zero carbon dioxide emissions of electric cars may not need detailed explanations, promotions should highlight other benefits that resonate with customers' situations. For example, electric cars offer a pleasant driving experience for picnics compared to gasoline cars, which emit odors and have negative health effects. Advertising should focus on highlighting these benefits to attract more customers across various demographics.

Regarding social influence, the study suggests providing incentives to motivate customers' attitudes toward purchasing electric cars. Peer influence, whether from family members, celebrities, or other influencers, plays a significant role in persuading potential customers. Therefore, companies and dealerships should tailor their advertising to resonate with every generation and collaborate with



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influencers to endorse electric cars as trustworthy and reliable choices.

Performance expectancy, being an internal aspect of electric cars, poses challenges in marketing. However, the study recommends focusing on technological advancements to enhance performance, such as improving the efficiency of electric motors to match gasoline cars' speed without compromising consumer experience. Additionally, advancements in battery technology to increase the driving range of electric cars can be highlighted to reassure potential customers about the practicality and reliability of electric vehicles.

These recommendations collectively aim to position electric cars as viable alternatives to conventional vehicles, addressing various concerns and preferences of potential customers.

5. 4 Implications based on findings and theories

The theoretical implications of the findings suggest the integration of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), risk perception, and the results percentage to forecast Thai people's interest in adopting electric cars as an innovation in the present. These key theoretical implications can be summarized and deduced as follows:

Firstly, the findings of this research contribute to a broader understanding of sustainable innovation acceptance and electric vehicle (EV) acceptance. Building upon the UTAUT model, the conceptual framework developed considers environmental concern, social influence, and performance expectancy as factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions regarding EVs (Indra et al., 2022).

Moreover, our research expands upon the conceptual model by incorporating perceived EV sustainability as a mediating attitudinal factor alongside EV attitude. Our findings emphasize the importance of this aspect in understanding consumers' technology acceptance decisions, as they seek to balance personal and societal benefits (Trang et al., 2020; White et al., 2019; White and Pelozo,

2009). This is particularly relevant in research focusing on consumer perceptions of sustainable technologies.

5.5 Limitations of the study

Despite the valuable insights gained from this research, several limitations must be acknowledged to provide a balanced interpretation of the findings.

Firstly, the study primarily focuses on the perceptions and intentions of Thai people residing in upcountry areas, excluding urban populations. This limited geographical scope may restrict the generalizability of the findings to a broader population.

Secondly, the research relies on self-reported data obtained through questionnaires, which are subject to response bias and social desirability effects. Participants may provide answers that they perceive as favorable or socially acceptable, leading to potential inaccuracies in the data.

Additionally, the study adopts a cross-sectional design, capturing data at a single point in time. As a result, it is challenging to establish causality or infer long-term trends from the observed relationships between variables.

Furthermore, the measurement of variables, such as environmental concern and social influence, may lack comprehensive depth and specificity. Different interpretations or understandings of these constructs among participants could influence the validity of the results.

Moreover, while efforts were made to ensure sample representativeness through sampling techniques, the sample size may still be relatively small compared to the target population. This could affect the statistical power of the analysis and limit the generalizability of the findings.

Lastly, the study's reliance on existing theoretical frameworks, such as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), may overlook other relevant factors or nuances specific to the context of electric vehicle adoption in Thailand.



In light of these limitations, future research endeavors should aim to address these shortcomings by employing larger and more diverse samples, utilizing longitudinal designs, and employing mixed-method approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing electric vehicle adoption in Thailand.

5.6 Further Studies

Based on the hypothesis testing results indicating the significant influence of environmental concern, social influence, performance expectancy, and attitude toward EV innovation on purchasing intention for electric cars, several avenues for future research emerge.

Firstly, given the increasing global concern about environmental issues and the urgent need to address climate change, future studies should delve deeper into the role of environmental concern in shaping attitudes and behaviors toward electric vehicle adoption. Specifically, researchers could explore how different messaging strategies and interventions aimed at raising environmental awareness influence consumers' perceptions and intentions regarding electric cars. Additionally, investigating the effectiveness of environmental policies and incentives in promoting electric vehicle adoption would be valuable.

Secondly, there is a need for comprehensive research on battery electric vehicles (EVs), particularly focusing on battery performance and its impact on consumer perceptions and adoption behavior. Studies could investigate aspects such as battery life cycle, charging infrastructure, range per charge, charging time, and maintenance costs, as these factors significantly influence consumers' decisions to adopt electric vehicles. Furthermore, understanding the role of social influence, particularly through electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on social media platforms, in shaping consumer attitudes and intentions towards EVs warrants further investigation. Researchers could explore how online reviews and user-generated content on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and

Twitter influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions regarding electric cars.

Moreover, future research should focus on the sustainable disposal and recycling of EV batteries to mitigate the environmental impacts associated with their end-of-life management. Investigating innovative recycling technologies and sustainable practices for battery disposal, such as those employed by Fortum in Finland, could provide valuable insights into addressing the environmental challenges posed by EV batteries.

Overall, future studies should adopt interdisciplinary approaches and utilize mixed-method research designs to comprehensively examine the multifaceted factors influencing electric vehicle adoption. By addressing these research gaps, policymakers, industry stakeholders, and consumers can make informed decisions to accelerate the transition toward sustainable transportation systems.

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Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Intentions on E-commerce Platforms: A Case Study of Generation Y Consumers in Bangkok, Thailand

Arnada Jamnong¹, Xiaocheng Tong², Taminee Shinasharkey³

Abstract

Purpose – This research aimed to analyze the factors influencing perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived value, online shopping experience, customer satisfaction toward online repurchase intention on E-commerce platform.

Design/Methodology/Approach – The research employed primary and secondary data collection methods to conduct an analysis among factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intention on E-commerce platform. The data was collected among 396 respondents of GenY people who live in Bangkok. The conceptual framework of this research was based on three theoretical frameworks of previous studies.

Findings – This research intended to investigate factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on E-commerce platforms. The findings showed that perceived value and online experience have a significant influence to customer satisfaction. Perceived ease of use along with perceived usefulness have relationships toward customer satisfaction. The impact on online repurchase intention was not obvious. Lastly, customer satisfaction directly influenced online repurchase intentions.

Research Limitations/Implications – The scope of this research focused only on online repurchase intentions of Gen Y in Bangkok. In addition, this research focused on people living in Bangkok, therefore it may not be applicable to different countries.

Keywords – perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived value, online shopping experience, customer satisfaction, online repurchase intention.

JEL classification code – M20, M21

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

This study was conducted to study factors affecting customer satisfaction and repurchase preferences on e-commerce platforms. Especially for Generation Y consumers in Bangkok. Customers can

purchase products through the website or mobile phone. Furthermore, purchasing products on an e-commerce platform often generates positive past experiences from previous purchases for customers, as well as smooth transactions (Chou et al., 2015). So, it can create a feeling of satisfaction and encourage customers to make repeat purchases (Chou et al., 2015).

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Over the past few decades, e-commerce has experienced substantial growth (Gupta et al., 2023). Because it is convenient and easy to reach. Consequently, e-commerce platforms are continually growing. As more and more consumers choose to use e-commerce, the e-commerce industry faces various challenges (Gupta et al., 2023). In addition, one of the challenges of e-commerce is maintaining a sustainable relationship between customers and platforms for as long as possible (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Because if the platform can retain customers, it will have an advantage over competitors. It also results in customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

People born between 1977 and 2000 make up Generation Y, also known as Millennials (Noble et al., 2009). People in this Gen Y group love technology and use the internet to increase convenience for a variety of purposes, including online shopping. Over the past two decades, Gen-Y consumers have become an important part of the global market (Noble et al., 2009). This may be partly due to the fact that this group of people has more purchasing power than other groups of consumers (Morton, 2002).

Understanding the factors that influence customer satisfaction and their repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms would be an important part of effective customer retention and could lead to the sustainable success of e-commerce businesses. Thus, the objective of this study is to examine the important factors that impact customer satisfaction and their motivation to repurchase online among Generation Y in Bangkok.

1.2 Problem statements

The global adoption of E-commerce has surged, particularly within the competitive landscape of the digital economy, leading to the evolution of online shopping experiences. In response to increasing consumer demand, E-commerce platforms are integrating streamlined interfaces, personalized

recommendations, and efficient logistics to enhance convenience and economize time and money for consumers. However, this rapid growth has brought forth unprecedented opportunities and challenges for the E-commerce industry.

While studies have extensively examined factors influencing initial online purchase intentions, scant attention has been given to understanding the drivers behind sustained repurchase behaviors among online customers (Okada & Sonehara, 2007). Existing research underscores the critical role of customer satisfaction in fostering repeat purchases, emphasizing the significance of user experience enhancement in bolstering repurchase intentions. Notably, studies by Chuan et al. (2010) have underscored the pivotal importance of trust in nurturing enduring customer relationships, as the absence of trust often leads to customer attrition. Moreover, research has delved into the impact of user interface design on purchasing enjoyment and the role of brand leadership in fostering customer loyalty and satisfaction through perceived value. These dynamics are particularly salient among Generation Y consumers in Thailand, who have grown up with ubiquitous internet access.

Despite the prevalence of Generation Y on E-commerce platforms, there exists a dearth of research elucidating the drivers behind their online repurchase intentions. Recognizing the crucial link between repurchase intentions, customer satisfaction, and long-term profitability, it becomes imperative to comprehend and enhance these intentions for the sustainability of online shopping. Thus, this study aims to investigate the primary determinants influencing Thai Generation Y consumers' satisfaction and repurchase intentions on E-commerce platforms, with a view to informing the enhancement of shopping apps to encourage repeat purchases among existing customers.

1.3 Objectives of study

The research explores the factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on E-commerce platforms among Generation Y



consumers in Bangkok, Thailand. Specifically, the objectives include.

(1) To identify the factors influencing perceived ease of use and its effect on customer satisfaction regarding online repurchase intentions among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

(2) To identify the factors influencing perceived usefulness and its effect on customer satisfaction regarding online repurchase intentions among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

(3) To identify the factors influencing perceived value and its effect on customer satisfaction regarding online repurchase intentions among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

(4) To identify the factors influencing the online shopping experience and its effect on customer satisfaction regarding online repurchase intentions among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

(5) To identify the factors influencing customer satisfaction and its effect on online repurchase intentions among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

(1) Does perceived usefulness significantly influence customer satisfaction towards the intention of online repurchase among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok?

(2) Does perceived ease of use significantly influence customer satisfaction towards the intention of online repurchase among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok?

(3) Does perceived value significantly influence customer satisfaction towards the intention of online repurchase among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok?

(4) Does the online shopping experience significantly influence customer satisfaction towards the intention of online repurchase among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok?

(5) Does customer satisfaction significantly influence the intention of online repurchase among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok?

1.5 Significance of the study

The significance of the study "Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Intentions on E-commerce Platforms: A Case Study of Generation Y Consumers in Bangkok, Thailand" lies in its critical examination of the factors shaping customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions among Generation Y consumers in the dynamic e-commerce landscape of Bangkok, Thailand.

Contributing to Understanding Consumer Behavior by delving into the specific determinants influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the intricate dynamics of consumer behavior within the Generation Y cohort. Understanding these factors can provide invaluable insights for businesses aiming to tailor their strategies to meet the evolving needs and preferences of this demographic.

The findings of this study can serve as a guide for e-commerce platforms operating in Bangkok, Thailand, helping them to optimize their platforms and services to enhance customer satisfaction and foster repeat purchases. Factors such as perceived ease of use, usefulness, value, and overall shopping experience can inform strategic decisions aimed at improving the online shopping journey for Generation Y consumers.

Customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions are pivotal for the long-term success and sustainability of e-commerce platforms. This study equips businesses with the necessary knowledge to implement targeted strategies that enhance customer retention and foster loyalty among Generation Y consumers by identifying the factors that drive these outcomes.

In the competitive e-commerce landscape of Bangkok, Thailand, understanding and effectively catering to the preferences of Generation Y



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consumers can provide a competitive edge. By uncovering the factors that influence customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions, businesses can differentiate themselves and position their platforms as preferred destinations for online shopping among this demographic.

This study adds to the existing body of academic literature on consumer behavior and e-commerce by providing empirical insights into the specific factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok, Thailand. It enriches scholarly discourse and serves as a reference point for future research in this field.

The study's significance lies in its potential to inform e-commerce strategies, enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, address market competition, and contribute to academic knowledge, ultimately benefiting both businesses and consumers in the dynamic e-commerce landscape of Bangkok, Thailand.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Perceived ease of use and customer satisfaction

Perceived ease of use plays a significant and advantageous role in influencing consumers' intentions to repurchase online (Zuelseptia & Engriani, 2018). Additionally, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are interconnected, as seamless shopping tools can enhance both the usability for new customers and the quality of decision-making (Kamis & Davern, 2005; Huang & Nuangjamnong, 2023). Salsabila (2021) observed a notable impact of perceived ease of use on online purchasing decisions on platforms like Shopee, alongside considerations of risks and benefits.

Furthermore, perceived ease of use significantly influences customer behavior within E-commerce systems, indicating that a higher level of ease in E-commerce operations correlates with heightened positive interest among users, subsequently

increasing their willingness to engage with the system (Budyastuti & Iskandar, 2018). Notably, the perceived ease of use emerges as a strong determinant in shaping the behavior of E-commerce systems (Budyastuti & Iskandar, 2018). Setyo and Prijanto (2020) presented findings illustrating the significant impact of ease of use on user satisfaction. Moreover, Keni (2020) asserted that both perceived ease and perceived ease of use play crucial roles in directly and indirectly influencing consumers' intentions to repurchase, thereby impacting customer satisfaction. Based on the foregoing, the following hypothesis is posited:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a significant influence of perceived ease of use on customer satisfaction among online repurchase intentions of Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

2.2 Perceived usefulness and customer satisfaction

Perceived usefulness significantly influences the decisions of Thai online shopping consumers, aiding online platforms in enhancing their websites to attract a larger customer base (Changchit et al., 2018). Moreover, perceived usefulness encompasses various dimensions such as website guidance, search engines, and personalized recommendations, all of which positively impact overall customer satisfaction in online shopping in Bangkok (Elango & Vongthaveerath, 2018). Additionally, perceived usefulness (PU), product search, the search process, and the online shopping experience significantly influence online shopping behavior (Ramayah & Suki, 2008). The perceived usefulness of online shopping has a positive impact on customer satisfaction, with variables such as website design, ease of purchase, ease of understanding, and ease of navigation playing crucial roles (Tandon & Sah, 2017). Within perceived usefulness, website features contribute positively to customer satisfaction; for instance, the inclusion of the "cash on delivery" payment method can enhance customer satisfaction

(Tandon & Sah, 2016). Khalifa and Liu (2007) underscored the importance of factors such as after-sales service, transaction efficiency, security, convenience, and cost savings in perceived usefulness, all of which influence customer satisfaction. Based on the aforementioned points, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a significant influence of perceived usefulness on customer satisfaction among online repurchase intentions of Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

2.3 Perceived value and customer satisfaction

The perceived value of customers in E-commerce is influenced by the online shopping experience, perceived product quality, and product price (Chen & Dubinsky, 2003; Wongsawan & Nuangjamnong, 2022). Sullivan and Kim (2018) observed that repeat purchase intention is significantly influenced by perceived value. In E-commerce settings, perceived value significantly influences customer satisfaction, which, in turn, predicts purchase intention, with customer satisfaction partially mediating this relationship (Hu, 2011). Customers are significant assets that businesses must strongly maintain, particularly in E-commerce platforms, to increase repurchase intentions (Mogea et al., 2022). The perceived value and satisfaction of customers are important elements that influence repurchase intentions (Mogea et al., 2022). Francisco et al. (2021) indicated that the perceived value of customers significantly affects their satisfaction. Abror et al. (2021) supported that customer perceived value and satisfaction precede other factors as well. Consequently, to explore the impact of perceived value and customer satisfaction, the following hypothesis is presented:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is a significant influence of perceived value on customer satisfaction

among online repurchase intentions of Generation Y in Bangkok.

2.4 Online shopping experience and customer satisfaction

Online shopping habits and experiences both positively impact repurchase intention, with after-sale service, transaction efficiency, security, convenience, and cost savings being key drivers (Khalifa & Liu, 2007). The online customer experience, including purchase frequency and perceived risk, influences satisfaction and repurchase intentions for both frequent and infrequent online shoppers (Martin et al., 2015). Thailand's Shopee customers are highly satisfied with the online shopping experience because the system's usability, privacy, efficiency, and responsiveness are excellent, but there is still room for improvement (Vannavanit & Kosakarika, 2019).

The trend of online shopping is continuously growing, presenting a significant opportunity for e-sellers to increase revenue and maintain customer interactions more easily (Pappas et al., 2013). Mofokeng (2021) noted that various businesses are beginning to explore advanced models of online shopping dimensions to enhance customer satisfaction. Therefore, one factor contributing to customer satisfaction is that online businesses need to provide a positive online customer experience to cultivate good relationships with customers (Mofokeng, 2021). Moreover, if a business can create a positive experience and satisfaction for customers, it can also influence repurchase behavior (Mofokeng, 2021). Meriç and Yildirim (2020) indicated that customer experience has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention and revisit intention, and consequently on repurchase intention as well. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): There is a significant influence of online shopping experience on

customer satisfaction among online repurchase intentions of Generation Y in Bangkok.

2. 5 Customers satisfaction and online repurchase intention

Customer satisfaction and online repurchase intention in e-commerce are influenced by various factors, including perceived price, purchasing process, safety, interaction, communication, and product delivery (Skordoulis et al., 2018). Qian et al. (2019) observed that Thai consumers' satisfaction with online shopping is influenced by factors such as product promotion price, product quality, and aesthetics. Additionally, factors like shopping time cost, product evaluation, and price play crucial roles. The satisfaction of customers during online purchases is significantly impacted by a well-designed and effective website (Zaki & Bhatti, 2020).

An essential determinant of e-commerce success is customers' intention to repurchase (Firmansyah & Ali, 2019). Customers must be satisfied with their previous purchases before they decide to buy again (Firmansyah & Ali, 2019). Therefore, satisfaction represents customers' emotional experiences reflecting how well an e-commerce seller meets their needs. Maintaining customer satisfaction can help retain the customer base and encourage repurchases (Firmansyah & Ali, 2019). However, building satisfaction scores to foster repurchases is a challenging task for many platforms (Ibzan et al., 2016). Hence, platforms should offer quality products and services to customers (Ibzan et al., 2016). Online repurchase intention can be significantly predicted by perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness (Chiu et al., 2009). Furthermore, online shopping experience and habits positively influence online repurchase intentions, with after-sales service, transaction efficiency, security, convenience, and cost savings serving as key driving factors (Khalifa & Liu, 2007). Customer satisfaction, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use all contribute to online repurchase intentions, with these factors, in turn,

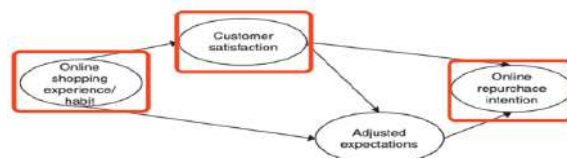
influenced by perceived value and shopping experience (Chen, 2012). Given that customer satisfaction is the main factor in creating satisfaction and has a positive effect on customers' repurchase intentions in the future (Ibzan et al., 2016), Maruli et al. (2023) indicated that the e-satisfaction variable has a more positive and significant effect on the repurchase intention variable than other variables not examined in their study. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5 (H5): There is a significant influence of customer satisfaction and online repurchase intentions among Generation Y in Bangkok.

2.6 Theoretical frameworks

2.6.1 The first theoretical framework (online shopping experience, customer satisfaction, and adjusted expectations) provides three elements that contribute to the online repurchase intention component. The relationship shown in Figure 1 between online shopping experience and customer satisfaction impacts online repurchase intention and is part of the theoretical framework from Factors Affecting Online Repurchase Intention (Lin & Lekhawipat, 2014).

Figure 1. Factors affecting online repurchase intention.

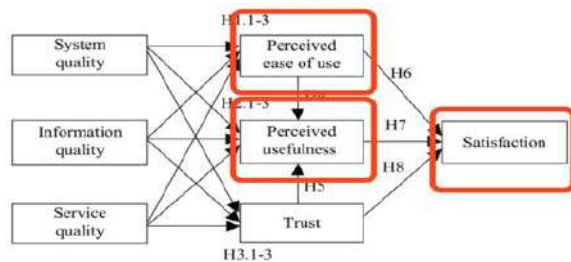


Source: Lin and Lekhawipat (2014)

2.6.2 The second theoretical framework from Examining the critical success factors of mobile website adoption. The primary source of data for this empirical analysis is to examine the critical success factors of mobile web site adoption to seek out for the factors influencing mobile websites. The research results indicated that consumer satisfaction

is greatly impacted by perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and trust (Zhou, 2021).

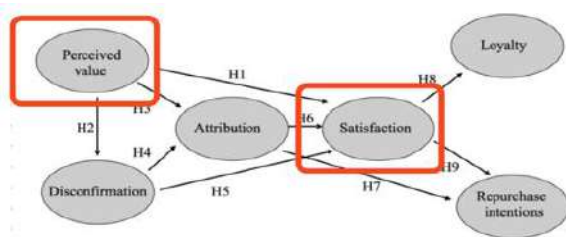
Figure 2. Examining the critical success factors of mobile website adoption.



Source: Zhou (2021).

2.6.3 Ha and Janda (2006) indicates the third theoretical framework from An empirical test of a proposed customer satisfaction model in e-services. The results show that the connection between them is related to perceived value. Also, this research shows that satisfaction has an effect on customer loyalty and repurchase intentions.

Figure 3. An empirical test of a proposed customer satisfaction model in e-services

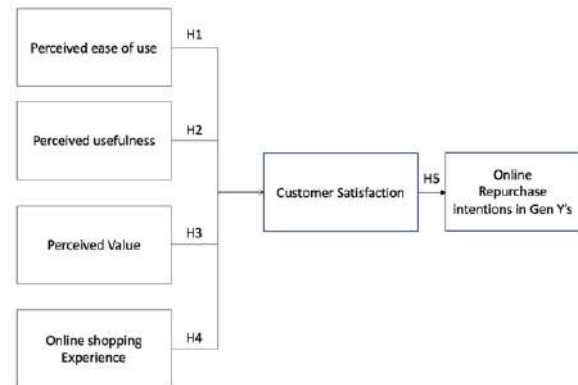


Source: Ha and Janda (2008)

2.7 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is adapted based on previous studies and theoretical concepts. It revealed the independent variables such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived value, and online shopping experience on mediating variables to customer satisfaction towards online repurchase intention. The conceptual framework determines the influencing that online repurchase intentions of Gen Y's as shown in the figure below.

Figure 4. Factors Influencing Online Repurchase intentions of Generation.



Source: Authors

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing statistical techniques such as Cronbach's alpha, simple linear regression, multiple linear regression, and descriptive statistics to analyze each variable type.

There are three sections to the questionnaire, totaling 34 questions. These questions correspond to six variables derived from a theoretical framework. They include 3 preliminary screening questions, 24 questions aimed at evaluating the variables, and 7 questions focused on gathering demographic information.

Initially, the methodology employed to assess the questionnaire's reliability involves the application of Cronbach's alpha to identify any potentially confusing or ambiguous measurement items. We conduct a pilot test with a preliminary group of 50 individuals to assess the reliability of the measurement variables and the clarity of the content.

Furthermore, we use simple linear regression (SLR) to investigate how customer satisfaction affects online repurchase intentions.

Subsequently, multiple linear regression (MLR) is employed to analyze the effects of four variable

groups: perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived value, and online shopping experience. Additionally, it assesses the impact of customer satisfaction on online repurchases.

3.2 Sampling

The target population for this study consists of local Thai residents residing in Bangkok, with a particular focus on individuals belonging to Generation Y. According to data from the Administrative Strategy Division (2022), the estimated number of Generation Y individuals residing in Bangkok is approximately 3,847,930.

We used sample size estimation techniques because studying the entire population was impractical. Calculator.net was utilized for this purpose. We determined the calculated sample size for the study to be 396 individuals, selected from Bangkok's Generation Y population.

We chose convenience sampling, a type of non-probability sampling strategy, as the sampling method for data collection. We meticulously analyzed each collected data point to ensure its alignment with the research objectives. The research team opted for a non-probability sampling approach due to the constraints posed by the study's timeframe. The research team deemed convenience sampling the most appropriate approach for the study due to the limited time available for data collection and the simplicity of the chosen methodology.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

The researchers utilized the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index to assess the validity of the questionnaire items. Three experts provided feedback on the questionnaire items to determine their content validity scores. The IOC scores for all relevant questions were found to be 0.5 or higher, indicating their suitability for distribution to the respondents.

To identify any anomalies or inaccuracies among the survey variables, a preliminary trial involving 50 participants was conducted in alignment with the

study objectives. Cronbach's alpha was employed to assess the reliability of the questionnaire.

In the preliminary study with a sample of 30 participants, Cronbach's Alpha yielded the following results: perceived ease of use, comprising four items, attained a score of 0.769; perceived usefulness achieved a score of 0.842; perceived value, consisting of four items, obtained a score of 0.794; the four items assessing online shopping experience recorded a score of 0.778; customer satisfaction, assessed through four items, scored 0.809; and the four items evaluating online repurchase intentions garnered a score of 0.828 (referenced in Table 3.5). Overall, the internal consistency of the constructs in the questionnaire developed for this study indicates a satisfactory level of reliability for future use, surpassing the minimum criterion of 0.60, as commonly recommended (Cronbach, 1951).

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

According to the survey distributed by the researchers to the online shopping population from February to March 2024, data analysis was conducted on a sample of 396 qualified individuals, representing 102.85% of the sample size. The survey encompassed inquiries of demographic data, including gender, monthly income, frequency of online shopping, monthly expenditure on online shopping, preferred online shopping platforms, age of initiation of online shopping, and categories of products acquired through online channels. The study employed a descriptive analysis of the demographic data to categorize the attributes of the intended audience.

Gender: Among the 396 total respondents, 105 (26.8%) identified as male, 275 (69.4%) as female, and 15 (3.8%) did not specify their gender.



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Income: The majority of the 396 target respondents reported income between 20,001 and 50,000 Baht, comprising 58.1% or 230 respondents. This was followed by 108 respondents (27.3%) with income between 50,001 – 80,000 Baht, 29 respondents (7.3%) with income between 80,001 - 100,000 THB, 28 respondents (7.1%) with income lower than 20,000 Baht, and 1 respondent (0.3%) with income exceeding 100,000 Baht.

Frequency of use of E-commerce: The survey revealed that the majority of respondents (57.6%) used E-commerce platforms approximately 4-7 times per month, followed by 25.5% using it less than 3 times per month, 10.4% using it around 7-10 times per month, and 6.6% using it more than 10 times per month.

Spending on E-commerce per month: The majority of respondents (68.7%) reported spending between 1001 – 5,000 Baht per month on E-commerce, followed by 13.9% spending less than 1000 Baht, 13.4% spending between 5,001 – 10,000 Baht, and 4% spending between 10,001 – 25,000 Baht per month.

E-commerce websites: Among the 396 target respondents, Shopee Thailand emerged as the most

popular E-commerce website, with 227 respondents (57.3%) using it, followed by Lazada Thailand with 147 respondents (37.1%). JD Central Thailand was used by 17 respondents (4.3%), while other E-commerce websites were used by 5 respondents (1.3%).

Shopping duration: The survey indicated that 57.6% of the respondents had been shopping online for 2-4 years, 23.2% for more than 6 years, 16.7% for 4-6 years, and 12.9% for 0-2 years.

In terms of the types of products usually purchased, among the 396 target respondents, clothing and accessories emerged as the most popular category, with 146 respondents, accounting for 36.9% of all target respondents. This was followed by beauty and personal care products, with 98 respondents representing 24.7% of the sample. Home and kitchen appliances were chosen by 63 respondents, constituting 15.9% of the target group, while electronics were selected by 59 respondents, comprising 14.9% of the sample. Additionally, books and media were chosen by 21 respondents, representing 5.3% of the target group, whereas groceries were preferred by only 9 respondents, making up 2.3% of all target respondents.

for "The checkout process is smooth and uncomplicated," with a value of 0.919.

4. 2 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation

4.2.1 Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Ease of Use

Among the items assessing perceived ease of use, the highest mean scores were observed for "The checkout process is smooth and uncomplicated" and "Platform online payment diversity," both scoring 3.84. In contrast, the lowest mean score was recorded for "Complete your purchase on your own, no help needed," which obtained a score of 3.77. Furthermore, the greatest standard deviation was associated with "Complete your purchase on your own," with a value of 1.03, while the lowest standard deviation was found

4.2.2 Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Usefulness

Regarding perceived usefulness, the item "Find products easily and operate smoothly" obtained the highest mean score of 3.87. Conversely, the lowest mean score was observed for "Believe that the prices for products and services are fair," scoring 3.80. In terms of standard deviation, the highest variability was noted for "Believe that the prices for products and services are fair," with a value of 1.3, whereas the lowest variability was found for "Find products easily and operate smoothly," with a value of 0.939.



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4.2.3 Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Value

The item "No need to go offline, save time" attained the highest mean score for perceived value, registering at 3.85. Conversely, the lowest mean score was observed for "Free freight insurance to protect after-sales service," scoring 3.70. In terms of standard deviation, the item "Multiple payment options to meet customer needs" exhibited the highest variability, with a value of 0.903, while the lowest variability was associated with "Free freight insurance to protect after-sales service," recording a value of 0.835.

4.2.4 Mean and Standard Deviation of Online Shopping Experience

The item "Efficient search engine and navigation mechanism" obtained the highest mean score for the online shopping experience, scoring 3.83. On the other hand, "Detailed product information and pictures" recorded the lowest mean score, with a value of 3.66. In terms of standard deviation, the highest variability was observed for "Efficient search engine and navigation mechanism," with a value of 0.968, while the lowest variability was found for "Easily return or exchange items," with a value of 0.909.

4.2.5 Mean and Standard Deviation of Customer Satisfaction

Among the factors influencing customer satisfaction, "Timely and accurate order status" received the highest mean score, scoring 3.77. Conversely, "Personal information and payment data security" obtained the lowest mean score, registering at 3.68. Regarding standard deviation, the item "Order arrived within the promised time" exhibited the highest variability, with a value of 0.982, while "Product reviews receive platform rewards" showed the lowest variability, recording a value of 0.913.

4.2.6 Mean and Standard Deviation of Online Repurchase Intentions

The item "Platform discounts or incentives affect repurchase" achieved the highest mean score for online repurchase intentions, scoring 3.93. Conversely, "Store has certified and guaranteed" obtained the lowest mean score, with a value of 3.85. Regarding standard deviation, the highest variability was noted for "The platform is stable, Trust it and repurchase," recording a value of 0.843, while the lowest variability was observed for "Store has certified and guaranteed," with a value of 0.801.

4.3 Hypothesis testing results

For the results of the analyst's hypothesis testing, the researchers applied linear regression from statistical analytical methodology to analyze the significant impact between variables such as the significant influence of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived value, and online shopping experience on customer satisfaction and the significant influence of customer satisfaction on online repurchase intentions. Regarding linear regression analysis, the researchers used a simple linear regression analysis with R-square to investigate the portion of variance in the dependent variable explained by independent variables. Moreover, this study also uses multiple linear regressions to examine the level of factors that influence customer satisfaction. Ringle et al. (2015) analyzed a significant impact between dependent and independent variables. Independent variables in regression analysis should be accepted if the value of the variance inflation factor is less than 5 with an R-square to indicate the portion of variance in the dependent variable that is determined by independent variables.

4.3.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H2, H3, H4

Statistical Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant influence of perceived ease of use(H1), perceived usefulness(H2), perceived



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value (H3) and online shopping experience (H4) on customer satisfaction among online repurchase intentions of generation Y in Bangkok.

Table 4.1 presents the results of multiple linear regression analyses conducted to investigate the relationships between perceived ease of use (PEOU), perceived usefulness (PU), perceived value (PV), online shopping experience (OE), and customer satisfaction. The dependent variable in all analyses was customer satisfaction.

For Hypothesis 1 (H1), which examined the influence of perceived ease of use (PEOU) on customer satisfaction, the regression coefficient (B) was 0.0614, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.0454. The beta coefficient (β) was 0.0671, indicating a positive relationship, although it was not statistically significant ($t = 1.352$, $p = 0.177$). Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis for H1.

Similarly, for Hypothesis 2 (H2) investigating the impact of perceived usefulness (PU) on customer satisfaction, the regression coefficient was -0.0121, with a standard error of 0.0482. The beta coefficient was -0.0125, suggesting a negligible negative

relationship, which was not statistically significant ($t = -0.252$, $p = 0.801$). Thus, we fail to reject the null hypothesis for H2.

In contrast, Hypothesis 3 (H3) examined the effect of perceived value (PV) on customer satisfaction. The regression coefficient was 0.2191, with a standard error of 0.0545. The beta coefficient was 0.2014, indicating a significant positive relationship ($t = 4.024$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, we reject the null hypothesis for H3.

Likewise, for Hypothesis 4 (H4) assessing the impact of the online shopping experience (OE) on customer satisfaction, the regression coefficient was 0.1091, with a standard error of 0.0490. The beta coefficient was 0.1097, indicating a significant positive relationship ($t = 2.225$, $p = 0.027$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis for H4.

Overall, the adjusted R-square value of 0.05262 suggests that approximately 5.26% of the variance in customer satisfaction can be explained by the combined influence of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived value, and online shopping experience.

Table 4.1: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Perceived ease of use (PEOU)	0.0614	0.0454	0.0671	1.352	0.177	1.03	Fail to Reject
H2: Perceived usefulness (PU)	-0.0121	0.0482	-0.0125	-0.252	0.801	1.02	Fail to Reject
H3: Perceived value (PV)	0.2191	0.0545	0.2014	4.024	<001*	1.04	Reject
H4: Online shopping experience (OE)	0.1091	0.0490	0.1097	2.225	0.027*	1.01	Reject
R-Square					0.0622		
Adjusted R-Square					0.05262		

Note: *Beta coefficient is reported with p-value less than 0.05; Dependent Variable = Customer satisfaction.

4.3.2 Result of Simple Linear Regression of H5

Statistical Hypothesis



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H5o : There is no significant influence of customer satisfaction on online repurchase intentions among generation Y in Bangkok.

Table 4.2 presents the results of a simple linear regression analysis conducted to investigate the relationship between customer satisfaction (CS) and online repurchase intentions. The dependent variable in the analysis was online repurchase intentions.

For Hypothesis 5, which examined the influence of customer satisfaction on online repurchase

intentions, the regression coefficient (B) was 3.388, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.1641. The beta coefficient (β) was 0.154, indicating a positive relationship. The coefficient was statistically significant ($t = 3.09$, $p = 0.002$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis for Hypothesis 5.

The adjusted R-square value of 0.0212 suggests that approximately 2.12% of the variance in online repurchase intentions can be explained by customer satisfaction.

Table 4.2: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypotheses 5

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H5: Customer satisfaction (CS)	3.388	0.1641	0.154	3.09	0.002*	1.00	Rejected
R-Square				0.0237			
Adjusted R-Square				0.0212			

Note: *Beta coefficient is reported with p-value less than 0.05; Dependent Variable = Online repurchase intentions

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Research Intentions

The emphasis on the research's objectives and questions is important. This section seeks to analyze six variables affecting relationships and factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms: a case study of Generation Y consumers in Bangkok, Thailand. There are five research questions present, as follows:

- (1) Does perceived usefulness have a significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the intention to make an online repurchase?
- (2) Does the perceived ease of use have a significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the intention to make an online repurchase?
- (3) Does the perceived value have a significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the intention to make an online repurchase?
- (4) Does the customer's online shopping experience have a significant influence on customer satisfaction

toward the intention to make an online repurchase?

- (5) Does customer satisfaction have a significant influence on the intention to repurchase online?

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study employed quantitative methods to gather data from Generation Y consumers residing in Bangkok who exhibit satisfaction and repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms. We utilized population estimates from the Administrative Strategy Division (2023) to determine the sample size, which yielded a calculated sample size of 385 respondents. We used the non-probability sampling method, specifically convenience sampling, to target 385 respondents, of whom 437 initially participated in the questionnaire. Ultimately, 396 respondents completed the questionnaire, while 41 were excluded.

A systematic questionnaire featuring closed-ended questions ensured consistency and dependability. We analyzed the raw data using JAMOV and presented the findings in figures and



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tables. Validity evaluation was conducted using the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) and Cronbach's alpha reliability tests, with the inter-rater reliability coefficient and Cronbach's alpha exceeding 0.5 and 0.6, respectively. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, were employed, and the data was analyzed using simple linear regression and multiple linear regression to test hypotheses among six variables.

Demographic analysis of the 396 respondents revealed that the majority were female (275, 69.4%), with a monthly income ranging from 20,001 to 50,000 THB (230, 58.1%). The highest frequency of e-commerce platform use was 4-7 times per month (288, 57.6%), and the most common monthly expenditure on e-commerce was between 1001 and 5000 Baht (272, 68.7%). Shopee Thailand was the preferred platform (227, 57.3%), with respondents typically engaging in e-commerce for 2-4 years (187, 47.2%). The most frequently purchased product category was clothing and accessories (146, 36.9%).

Mean and standard deviation calculations were conducted for variables related to customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms. The highest mean and standard deviation

were observed for online repurchase intentions ($\bar{x}$ =3.88, SD=0.82), followed by perceived usefulness ($\bar{x}$ =3.83, SD=0.98), perceived ease of use ($\bar{x}$ =3.81, SD=0.99), perceived value ($\bar{x}$ =3.80, SD=0.86), online shopping experience ($\bar{x}$ =3.75, SD=0.94), and customer satisfaction ($\bar{x}$ =3.71, SD=0.93).

Hypothesis testing using simple linear regression and multiple linear regression revealed that perceived value, online shopping experience, and customer satisfaction significantly influenced online repurchase intentions, with p-values less than 0.05. However, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness failed to reject the null hypothesis, as their testing results were above 0.05.

The strongest factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions were perceived value, online shopping experience, and customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction, in particular, had the strongest influence on online repurchase intentions, followed by perceived value and online shopping experience.

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the strengths of influence factors for each dependent variable, particularly focusing on online repurchase intentions and customer satisfaction.

Table 5.1: Summary strengths of influences factors of each dependent variable.

Dependent Variable	Rank	Independent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)
Online repurchase intentions.(OR)	-	Customer Satisfaction (CS)	3.388
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	1st	Perceived value (PV)	0.2191
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	2nd	Online shopping experience (OE)	0.1091

5.3 Discussion and conclusion based on Findings

The findings derived from both multiple linear regression (MLR) and simple linear regression (SLR) analyses shed light on the intricate dynamics between various factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on E-commerce platforms. These results provide valuable

insights into the behaviors and preferences of Generation Y consumers in Bangkok, Thailand.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The results from the MLR analysis revealed significant relationships between several independent variables and customer satisfaction. Perceived value and online shopping experience emerged as significant predictors, indicating that customers' perceptions of value and their overall

online shopping experiences play pivotal roles in shaping their satisfaction levels. Additionally, the analysis highlighted the crucial influence of customer satisfaction on online repurchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of ensuring high levels of satisfaction to drive repeat purchases (Li & Nuangjamnong, 2022; Mitchev & Nuangjamnong, 2021).

Furthermore, the insignificant relationships found between perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness with customer satisfaction suggest that while these factors may contribute to the overall online shopping experience, they do not directly impact customer satisfaction among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The SLR analysis focused specifically on the relationship between customer satisfactions and online repurchase intentions. The findings demonstrated a significant positive association between customer satisfactions and online repurchase intentions, indicating that satisfied customers are more likely to engage in repeat purchases on E-commerce platforms. This underscores the critical role of customer satisfaction as a precursor to future purchase behavior.

5.4 Implications and Recommendations

These findings have several implications for E-commerce platforms and marketers targeting Generation Y consumers in Bangkok. Firstly, prioritizing efforts to enhance perceived value and improve the overall online shopping experience can lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction and, consequently, increased repurchase intentions.

Additionally, while perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness may not directly influence customer satisfaction, they remain important factors in shaping the overall user experience. Therefore, E-commerce platforms should continue to focus on optimizing usability and functionality to enhance the overall shopping journey for customers.

Moreover, the strong positive relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions underscores the importance of ongoing efforts to monitor and improve customer satisfaction levels. This can be achieved through personalized marketing strategies, proactive customer support, and continuous optimization of product offerings and service quality.

This study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on E-commerce platforms among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok. By understanding these dynamics, E-commerce platforms can devise more effective strategies to attract and retain customers in this highly competitive market landscape.

5.5 Implications based on findings and theories

The findings suggest that perceived value plays a significant role in influencing customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms. To capitalize on this, businesses should focus on offering high-quality products and services at competitive prices. Additionally, they can implement loyalty programs, discounts, and promotions to further enhance perceived value and foster long-term customer relationships. Improving the Online Shopping Experience: Given the significance of the online shopping experience in driving customer satisfaction, e-commerce platforms must prioritize user-friendly interfaces, efficient navigation, and streamlined checkout processes. Incorporating features such as personalized recommendations, interactive product displays, and hassle-free returns can further enhance the overall shopping experience and encourage repeat purchases. Addressing

Customer satisfaction emerges as a key determinant of repurchase intentions, highlighting the importance of delivering exceptional customer service and support. To effectively address customer needs and concerns, e-commerce platforms should

invest in robust customer support systems, prompt complaint resolution, and proactive communication. By prioritizing customer satisfaction, businesses can foster loyalty and advocacy among Generation Y consumers.

While perceived ease of use and usefulness did not directly influence customer satisfaction in this study, they remain essential aspects of the online shopping experience. E-commerce platforms should continue to refine their interfaces, simplify the purchasing process, and provide valuable features and functionalities to enhance user satisfaction. By continually optimizing these factors, businesses can create a seamless and enjoyable shopping journey for customers.

Based on the findings, marketers should tailor their marketing strategies and communication efforts to resonate with the preferences and behaviors of Generation Y consumers. This may involve leveraging social media platforms, influencer marketing, and targeted advertising campaigns to reach and engage the target audience effectively. By understanding the unique characteristics of Generation Y consumers, businesses can develop more compelling marketing messages and promotions that drive customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Overall, the implications derived from the findings underscore the importance of prioritizing customer-centric strategies and continuous improvement efforts to meet the evolving needs and expectations of Generation Y consumers in the competitive e-commerce landscape. By aligning with these implications, businesses can enhance their competitive advantage and foster sustainable growth in the digital marketplace.

5.6 Limitations of the study

The study utilized convenience sampling to recruit participants, which may have introduced sampling bias and limited the generalizability of the findings. Future research could benefit from employing random sampling methods to ensure a more representative sample of the target population. The data collected relied on self-reported responses from

participants, which are subject to response bias and social desirability bias. Participants may have provided answers they deemed socially acceptable rather than their true opinions or behaviors, potentially impacting the accuracy of the results. The study adopted a cross-sectional design, capturing data at a single point in time. This design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between variables and does not account for potential changes in consumer behavior over time. Longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into the dynamic nature of customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms. The study relied on self-developed questionnaires, which may lack the rigor of established scales, despite efforts to ensure the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments. Future research could benefit from utilizing validated instruments to enhance the robustness of the measurements. The study focused specifically on Generation Y consumers in Bangkok, Thailand, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other demographic groups or geographical locations. Cultural and contextual differences could influence consumer behavior and preferences, necessitating caution when extrapolating the results to broader populations. Despite efforts to recruit a sufficient number of participants, the study experienced a relatively low response rate, which may have impacted the representativeness of the sample and introduced potential biases. To mitigate this limitation, future research could explore strategies for improving participant engagement and response rates.

5.7 Further Studies

Future studies could adopt a longitudinal research design to investigate the dynamics of customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms over time. Longitudinal studies would allow for the exploration of how these variables evolve and interact across different stages of the consumer journey. Conducting comparative



studies across different demographic groups, geographical locations, or e-commerce platforms could provide valuable insights into the variations in customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions. Comparing the experiences of diverse consumer segments could help identify factors that are universally influential and those that are context-specific. Complementing quantitative findings with qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups, could offer a deeper understanding of the underlying motivations and experiences driving customer behavior on e-commerce platforms. Qualitative inquiries could uncover nuanced insights that quantitative data alone may not capture. We could employ experimental research designs to investigate the causal relationships between various factors and customer satisfaction or repurchase intentions. By manipulating specific variables and observing their effects on consumer behavior, experimental studies could provide stronger evidence for causal claims. With the rapid advancement of technology in the e-commerce industry, future studies could explore the impact of emerging technologies, such as augmented reality, artificial intelligence, or virtual reality, on customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions. Investigating how these innovations reshape the online shopping experience could offer valuable implications for businesses. Given the cultural diversity of consumer preferences and behaviors, cross-cultural studies could examine how cultural factors influence customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions on e-commerce platforms. By comparing the experiences of consumers from different cultural backgrounds, researchers could uncover valuable insights into the role of culture in shaping online shopping behavior.

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The Factors Influencing Chinese Parents' Online Course Purchase Intention

Xiwen Miao¹, Preecha Methavasarakphak²

Abstract

This study examines the factors influencing parental purchase intentions regarding online courses for their children in China following the implementation of the dual reduction policy. With the "dual reduction" policy impacting offline tutoring institutions, particularly in the K12 sector, stringent regulations on offline teaching have prompted parents to seek online alternatives to address the scarcity of high-quality educational resources. Through quantitative analysis involving 410 participants, this research identifies performance expectations, effort expectations, social influence, and facilitating conditions as significant influencers of parental purchase intentions. These findings underscore the importance of considering these factors when designing and promoting online education products tailored to the needs of children and their parents, especially in the context of recent policy changes. Ultimately, understanding these factors is crucial for enhancing the quality and accessibility of online education, ensuring equitable access to educational resources, and providing enriching learning experiences for a broader audience. The identified factors collectively explain parental purchase intentions at 74.8% (Adjusted R² = 0.748), with facilitating conditions emerging as the most significant influence at 28.1% (Beta = 0.281).

Keywords: purchase intentions, performance expectations, effort expectations, social influence, facilitating conditions

JEL Classification Code: M31 L86 O33

1. Introduction of study

In the digital era, online education has become an increasingly popular mode of learning, breaking away from the confines of traditional lectures and physical materials. Both teachers and students benefit from a wide array of digital tools, including interactive devices, electronic learning courses, and e-textbooks. Furthermore, with the continuous advancement of AI technology, new technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data are further revolutionizing the form and content of education. These innovations enable students to receive more personalized and precise learning experiences while

providing teachers with better teaching tools and resources (Vlasova, 2022).

From a business perspective, investing in the online education industry enables businesses to transcend spatial limitations and obtain long-term stable profits through various revenue models. Moreover, the Chinese online education market, catalyzed by various factors, is gradually maturing, offering substantial growth potential. From 2016 to 2022,¹³

the user base and utilization rate of online education in China have shown an overall upward trend. Particularly, in 2020, amidst the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a significant surge in online learning demand. In that year, China's online

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education user base reached 342 million people, marking a 27.1% increase from 2019, with the market size reaching 485.8 billion yuan, a 55% increase from the previous year (Net Economy Society, 2023). This surge was primarily due to the restrictions imposed on offline learning activities, which spurred the demand for online learning. However, as positive progress is made in pandemic control efforts, offline learning activities are gradually resuming, leading to a slight decline in online learning demand.

In 2021, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the "Opinions on Further Reducing the Homework and Extracurricular Burden of Compulsory Education Stage Students" aimed at alleviating the burden of students and parents and promoting comprehensive education fairness and quality (General Office of the CPC Central Committee & General Office of the State Council, 2021). These policies primarily focus on reducing homework loads, limiting the scale and fees of extracurricular training institutions, and standardizing their teaching content and faculty qualifications. The implementation of these "double reduction" policies has significantly impacted China's extracurricular education market, with offline education services being greatly restricted. Meanwhile, online education platforms provide flexibility and convenience that meet the growing demand for learning resources from parents and students. Consequently, the demand for extracurricular education is shifting towards online platforms, leading to intensified market competition. According to statistics, the size of China's online education market in 2022 was 343.29 billion yuan, with a focus on higher education, primary and secondary schools, vocational education, and other fields. The online education market in the K12 field has a scale of 58.99 billion yuan, accounting for approximately 17.2% of the entire online education market (Industry Research by Smart Research Consulting, 2024).

To adapt to policy directives and market demands, online education platforms need to deepen their

understanding of user decision-making factors. This involves adjusting their course offerings and teaching content to improve product quality and user experience. Additionally, further understanding the key influencing factors of user decision intentions is crucial for enhancing marketing efficiency, nurturing positive product reputation, and strengthening the effectiveness of community outreach. This adaptation is necessary to thrive in the evolving marketing landscape influenced by new policies. Therefore, our study is designed to explore the key factors that influence parents' online course purchasing decisions and analyze how these factors affect user learning engagement.

This study is based on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) for in-depth analysis. UTAUT, as a theoretical framework, is widely used to explain and predict users' acceptance of information technology, providing important theoretical support for studying parental online course purchase decisions. Firstly, the UATUT model integrates elements from multiple classic models and considers the influence of external variables such as social influence, cognition, and emotions. In the context of this study, parents are not the primary users of online education, and their consumption decisions regarding online courses are influenced by multiple factors. Secondly, the complexity of technology and the era background of online education have changed significantly compared to traditional models of technology acceptance. People's acceptance and usage behavior of technology are influenced by more factors. The UATUT model, built upon modern technology and digital environments, is timelier. Finally, online education involves various technological issues, such as platform technology and user experience, course content and quality, technical support and service quality, and security and privacy protection. Traditional models like TRA and TPB focus more on personal subjective evaluations and behavioral intentions, without fully considering technological attributes. In this research context, the UATUT model provides a more comprehensive explanation for



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online education consumption decision intentions, integrating multiple technological factors.

The research results will provide a deeper understanding of the process and influencing factors of parents' online course purchasing decisions and provide valuable insights for online education institutions. By optimizing products and services, and developing targeted marketing strategies, online education institutions can better meet the needs of parents and children and improve the learning effectiveness of online courses. Furthermore, this study will establish a basic understanding for government and education departments to formulate policies and regulate, promoting the healthy development of the online education industry.

The innovation of this study lies in applying the UTAUT theory to the study of parental online course purchasing decisions, to fill the existing research gap. By systematically reviewing and organizing relevant literature, constructing a model based on UTAUT theory, and using methods such as factor analysis and case studies to deeply explore the key factors affecting parental purchasing decisions. This study will provide a foundation and inspiration for future research, guiding more scholars to explore the internal mechanisms of user learning participation and online course purchasing decisions.

Previous studies have mainly focused on the acceptance and willingness of individuals, i.e. direct users of technology, to use online courses, and most of these studies have been conducted on the population aged 18 and above. In contrast, parents, as decision-makers, have received relatively less attention in their decision to purchase online courses. However, research on parents and online education focuses more on exploring the role and user experience of parents in the process of online education. These research backgrounds also focus more on addressing the situation during the COVID-19 pandemic, where parents are forced to use online education services, rather than allowing parents, as consumers, to make their own choices regarding services in a normal market environment.

Therefore, in-depth research on parental online course purchasing decisions has become particularly important. Parents play a crucial role in their children's education, and their purchasing decisions directly affect their children's learning and growth. However, so far, there is relatively little understanding of the factors that parents consider in their online course purchasing decisions and the motivations behind their purchasing behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct more in-depth research on the behavior and decision-making of parents as buyers of online courses, to fill the research gap in this field and provide more accurate understanding and guidance for the online education market.

1.1 Research objectives

This study aims to explore in depth the decision-making process of parents in purchasing online courses in the Chinese market. Firstly, the study will focus on exploring various factors that influence parents' intention to purchase online courses, including perceived usefulness, ease of use, social influence, and convenience conditions. Secondly, the study will examine the applicability of the Unified Technology Acceptance and Use Model (UTAUT) in the Chinese environment. This study aims to provide valuable insights into the dynamics of parental behavior in the field of online course purchasing, paving the way for more effective tailored strategies.

1.2 Scope of research

This study focused on exploring the primary factors impacting parental acceptance and utilization of online courses through a literature review and initial surveys. Subsequently, employing the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), these factors are thoroughly examined to construct a theoretical framework. Following this, empirical research techniques including questionnaire surveys and interviews will be



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employed to gather data, which will then be analyzed to validate the proposed hypotheses' efficacy and relevance. Finally, based on the empirical findings, recommendations, and strategies will be formulated to enhance the adoption and usage of online courses among Chinese parents.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Performance Expectancy

In media-supported learning, performance expectancy pertains to individuals' beliefs about the ability of technology to enhance their learning results. Greater levels of performance expectancy are associated with an increased likelihood of individuals intending to integrate technology into their learning routines. This inclination stems from the belief that technology can positively impact their learning outcomes, promoting confidence and motivation to interact with the technology (Rumangkit, Surjandy, & Billman, 2023). The initial findings of the study indicate performance expectancy has a significant positive influence on the intention of adopting media-supported learning.

2.2 Effort Expectation

Effort Expectation pertains to users' perceptions and expectations regarding the user-friendliness of use and the level of effort needed to operate a specific technology or system. It assesses the anticipated difficulty or simplicity associated with engaging with the technology and completing tasks using the system. Rumangkit et al. (2023) found a strong linkage between perceived ease of use and the willingness to use media-supported learning. Technology, including online platforms, enhances student involvement, making learning more interactive and effective. The study by Attuquayefio and Addo (2014) applies the Venkatesh et al. (2003) model to Ghanaian private tertiary students. Their research result showed that Effort Expectancy, Performance Expectancy, and

Social Influence have a positive influence on students' Behavioral Intentions to use ICT for learning at MUCG. Specifically, Effort Expectancy and Facilitating Conditions significantly predict students' willingness to use ICT and ICT use behavior.

2.3 Social Influence

In the study conducted by Zainab et al. (2018), the impact of social factors on the acceptance and usage of RFID-based LMS systems by librarians was investigated. Preliminary findings suggest that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, attitude towards technology use, social influence, and self-efficacy have insufficient effects on the acceptance, adoption, and willingness of technology users to use RFID-based LMS.

2.4 Facilitating Conditions

In the context of learning support media, facilitating conditions encompass a range of elements such as resources, availability, technological competence, social assistance, and environmental factors. These factors can either simplify or hinder the utilization of learning support media. Facilitating conditions exert a positive and significant influence on individuals' intention to partake in media-supported learning. This highlights the crucial role of supportive conditions in shaping individuals' intentions to utilize media for educational purposes (Rumangkit, Surjandy, & Billman, 2023).

2.5 Use Behavior and Behavioral Intention

In the study conducted by Osei, Kwateng, & Boateng (2022), Behavioral Intention (BI) is the students' inclination or readiness to utilize e-learning platforms for their learning activities. The study posits that when students express an intention to use e-learning tools, they are more inclined to actual usage of these platforms. Davis (1989) highlights the importance of BI as a key factor influencing individuals' adoption

of new technologies or IT. Ngai et al. (2007) suggest that BI acts as an indicator to evaluate an individual's commitment. In previous research, which was conducted by Ain et al. (2016) and Khechine et al. (2016), the results have demonstrated the strong positive impact of behavioral intention on the practical utilization of IT. Similarly, findings from various e-learning studies, including those by Lin (2007) and Mohammadi (2015), support the notion that BI correlates positively with actual utilization. Therefore, this study aligns with prior literature by suggesting a positive association between Behavioral Intention and Practical Utilization.

2.6 Parental Engagement in Online Courses

In multiple studies involving parental engagement in online courses, research has predominantly focused on the period of epidemic prevention and control. The utilization of online education systems is often constrained by environmental factors rather than parental autonomy. These studies suggest that during the pandemic, family support can effectively motivate students to follow teachers' instructions and complete online learning tasks, influencing students' habits, adaptation, and acceptance of online learning (Mo et al., 2021). With active parental involvement, survey participants demonstrated excellent performance in utilizing online learning modes (Olivar & Naparan, 2023). A study conducted by Hanny et al. (2023) provided additional evidence supporting the views within the ACE framework regarding individual support communities, highlighting parents' direct support roles in students' emotional, behavioral, and cognitive aspects. Additionally, the study revealed that parents indirectly support students by influencing the support provided by students, parents, and the curriculum community. The study by Pânișoară et al. (2020) explored the roles of each stakeholder in online courses and their relationship with online learning from the perspectives of parents, students, and teachers. Parental engagement was found to impact

students' online learning experience and outcomes significantly. The support and engagement of parents may play a crucial role in students' learning outcomes and course experience. Parental involvement has a substantial impact on various aspects of students' online learning, including their course selection, relationship building, learning supervision, and motivation, with active parental participation shown to increase students' engagement in online courses (Borup et al., 2019).

2.7 Conceptual framework

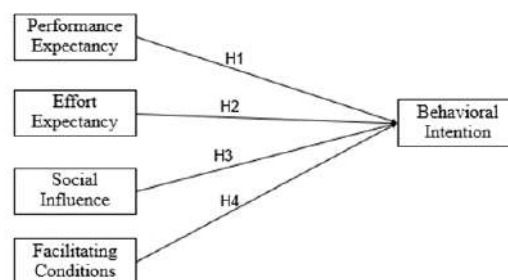


Figure 1: The Factors Influencing Parent's Online Course Purchase Intention

The researcher has constructed a conceptual framework under the guidance of the UTAUT model, which will examine the independent variables that are key factors influencing whether parents are willing to purchase online courses. Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, and Facilitation Conditions are introduced as independent variables of this research. Behavioural Intention is introduced as the dependent variable. The conceptual framework for this study is as follows:

Figure 1: The Factors Influencing Parent's Online Course Purchase Intention

2.8 Research hypothesis

According to the conceptual framework of this study, four hypotheses have been listed to examine the correlations between independent variables and dependent variables:

H1a: Performance Expectancy (PE) has a significant influence on Behavioral Intention (BI) to purchase online courses.

H2a: Effort Expectancy (EE) has a significant influence on Behavioral Intention (BI) to purchase online courses

H3a: Social Influence (SI) has a significant influence on Behavioral Intention (BI) to purchase online courses.

H4a: Facilitating Conditions (FC) have a significant influence on Behavioral Intention (BI) to purchase online courses.

3. Research Methodology

This study focused on exploring the primary factors impacting parental acceptance and utilization of online courses by examining the relationship among 5 variables. Four of them, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitation conditions, are the independent factors. And behavioral intention is the dependent factor. Considering the nature of this study, the quantitative method was applied.

Among the research questionnaires employed to be the indicators for evaluating the essential factors and the relationship allying with the research variables. The questionnaires were distributed as an online survey to the qualified samples and there are three parts of questions. Three screening questions are included in the first part to screen out suitable respondents who share the features that are related to this research. Five respondents' demographic information questions are listed in the second section. Twenty scale items are covered in the last section to

examine all the independent variables and dependent variables.

Firstly, this study will determine the reliability of quantitative research questions through Cronbach's Alpha analysis. For this process, 40 participants' responses were used to conduct the pilot test.

Afterward, the researcher utilized Cochran's sampling techniques (Cochran, 1997) to calculate the sample size as 384. Due to the unknown population of the target group, a non-probability sampling approach was applied. The survey was conducted online through multiple social media platforms. Quantitative analysis, including single linear regression, multiple linear regression, and descriptive statistics, was conducted on the data using the statistical software Jamovi.

3.1 Results of Reliability

3.1.1 Pretesting Questionnaire

To detect potential errors within the questionnaire, the researcher opted to conduct a pilot test involving 40 participants. These participants were screened out by the screening questions. The questionnaire's reliability was evaluated by Cronbach's Alpha.

Cronbach's alpha is a statistic used to measure the internal consistency or reliability of a scale or questionnaire. The value of α ranges from 0 to 1. When $\alpha > 0.9$, it means excellent internal consistency. When $0.8 < \alpha < 0.9$, it means good internal consistency. When $0.7 < \alpha < 0.8$, it means acceptable internal consistency. When $0.6 < \alpha < 0.7$, it means questionable internal consistency. When $0.5 < \alpha < 0.6$, it means poor internal consistency. When $\alpha < 0.5$, it means unacceptable internal consistency.

Table 1 Pilot Test Result of Cronbach's Alpha. (N=40)

Variables Measurement Items	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Performance Expectancy	4	0.854	Good
Effort Expectancy	4	0.833	Good
Social Influence	4	0.888	Good



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Facilitating Conditions	4	0.888	Good
Behavioral Intention	4	0.871	Good

Table 1 shows the reliability level of the questionnaire from 40 respondents. All variables have Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.833 to 0.888, indicating good internal consistency reliability. This demonstrated the reliability of the questionnaire and suggests its readiness for distribution to the target sample of 385 parents in China.

3.2 Results of the study

The study encompassed 410 respondents, constituting the entire sample size, who were Chinese parents. The factors that would influence their intention to purchase online courses were analyzed. The data collected in this study is mainly processed using two analytical methods, one is descriptive analysis, which analyzes the basic information of the respondents. Another method is linear regression analysis, which tests the hypotheses of this study.

3.3 Descriptive Analysis

Age: According to the analysis results, the maximum age range among the respondents is 25-34 years old, with a total of 112 people, accounting for 27.3% of all participants. Next is the age group of 35-44, with 99 respondents, accounting for 24.1% of the total participants. Followed by the age range of 45 to 54, with 56 respondents, accounting for 13.7% of the total interviewees. There were 45 respondents in the age range of 55 to 64 years old, accounting for 11% of all study participants. The age group under 18 includes 27 respondents, accounting for 6.6% of the total population. Finally, the age group of 65 and above includes 26 respondents, accounting for 6.3% of the total sample population.

Gender: Among all the respondents, 208 were male, accounting for 50.7% of the total sample size; 202 female respondents, accounting for 49.3%.

Education: The statistical analysis of education level shows that the number of people with a bachelor's degree is the highest, accounting for 61.0% (250 people) of the total sample. Secondly, respondents with a high school diploma or equivalent education accounted for 12.4% (51 people) of the total sample, while those with a master's degree accounted for 11.2% (46 people). Junior high school graduates accounted for 7.1% (29 people) of the sample, while those with primary school education or below had the lowest number, accounting for only 2.9% (12 people). In addition, respondents with doctoral or professional degrees accounted for 5.4% (22 people) of the total sample.

Employment Status: Among the 410 respondents, the distribution of employment status shows that the vast majority of them are full-time employees, accounting for 60.5% (248 people) of the total sample. Secondly, 11.2% of the respondents were part-time employees (46 people), while self-employed individuals accounted for 7.6% (31 people). In addition, 6.6% of the respondents were students (27 people), and 2.4% were housewives (10 people). Among the remaining respondents, 5.4% were unemployed (22 people), while retirees accounted for 6.3% (26 people).

Monthly Income: From the analysis of monthly household income data, among 410 respondents, the distribution of monthly income shows that 12.4% of respondents have a monthly income below 5000 yuan (51 people), while 22.4% of respondents have a monthly income between 5001 yuan and 10000 yuan (92 people). In addition, 41.2% of respondents reported a monthly income between 10001 yuan and 20000 yuan (169 people), while 16.6% of respondents reported a monthly income between 20001 yuan and



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30000 yuan (68 people). In addition, 6.3% of the respondents had a monthly income exceeding 30000

RMB (26 people), while 1.0% chose not to disclose their income (4 people).

Table Overview of Average and Variation of All Variables in This Study

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Performance Expectancy	410	3.89	.853	Agree
Effort Expectancy	410	3.84	.864	Agree
Social Influence	410	3.91	.897	Agree
Facilitating Conditions	410	3.97	.892	Agree
Behavioral Intention	410	3.91	.909	Agree

Table 2 illustrates the result of the mean and standard deviation for all the variables tested in this study. Overall, respondents showed agreement with Performance Expectancy ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.853$), Effort Expectancy ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.864$), Social Influence ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.897$), Facilitating Conditions ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.892$). These findings suggest a consistent tendency towards agreement among the participants across all variables.

For the mean value, the highest mean value was observed in Facilitating Conditions ($M = 3.97$). The

lowest mean value was observed in Effort Expectancy ($M = 3.84$). For the standard deviation, the variable with the highest standard deviation is Behavioral Intention ($SD = 0.909$). The variable with the lowest standard deviation is Performance Expectancy ($SD = 0.853$).

For the dependent variable, Behavioral Intention, the mean value is 3.91, and the standard deviation is 0.909. It shows that the respondents agree with the dependent variable.

3.4 Hypothesis testing

Table 3 The Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.866	0.751	0.748

a. Predictors: (Constant), Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Behavioral Intention

Data from Table 3 illustrates that the adjusted R square value is equal to 0.748, which is 74.8% of the variation influence on Chinese parents' purchase intention on online courses, indicating that the model still had good explanatory power after considering the complexity of the independent variables. In addition, our model's R-value was 0.866, indicating a robust linear association between the independent variables and the dependent variables.

The remaining approximately 25% of the variance could be influenced by other factors which were not included in the current research. These potential factors that could contribute to the unexplained variance in Behavioral Intention (BI) to purchase online courses may include personal preferences and attitudes, past experiences, marketing strategies, and so on.

3.5 Significant Value & Beta Coefficient Analysis

Table 4 The result of Multiple Linear Regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	0.0868	0.1121		0.774	.439		
Performance Expectancy	0.2554	0.0519	0.240	4.918	< .001	0.303	3.30
Effort Expectancy	0.2074	0.0492	0.197	4.212	< .001	0.259	3.86
Social Influence	0.2301	0.0489	0.227	4.703	< .001	0.281	3.56
Facilitating Conditions	0.2864	0.046	0.281	6.231	< .001	0.265	3.78

a. Dependent Variable: Behavioral Intention

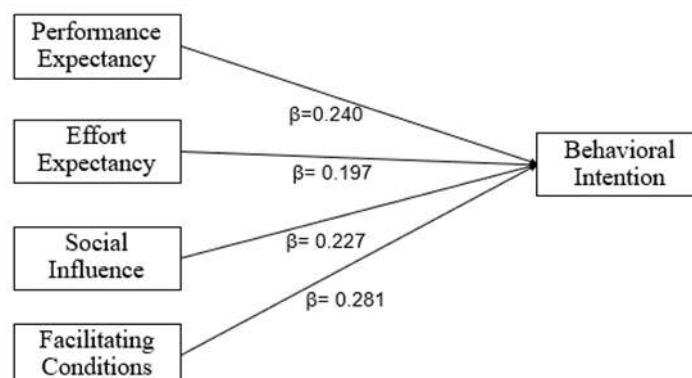
In this study, the p-values are used to determine whether there are statistically meaningful impacts on Behavioral Intention (BI) to purchase online courses. The p-values for Performance Expectancy (PE), Effort Expectancy (EE), Social Influence (SI), and Facilitating Conditions (FC) are all less than 0.001, indicating significant effects on BI.

Moreover, examining the standardized Beta coefficients reveals insights into the magnitude of these effects. For Performance Expectancy (PE), the standardized coefficient (β) is 0.24, suggesting that a rise of one unit in PE corresponds to a 24% rise in BI. Similarly, for Effort Expectancy (EE), the standardized coefficient is 0.197, suggesting that a one-unit increase in EE results in a 19.7% increase in BI. Social Influence (SI) also demonstrates a significant effect with a standardized coefficient of 0.227, indicating that a one-unit increase in SI leads to a 22.7% increase in BI. Furthermore, Facilitating Conditions (FC) shows a strong effect with a standardized coefficient of 0.281, implying that a one-unit increase in FC results in a 28.1% increase in BI.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is a metric utilized to evaluate multicollinearity among independent variables in regression analysis. It assesses the degree to which the variance of an estimated regression coefficient is increased because of multicollinearity among the predictor variables. VIF values below 10 are generally deemed acceptable, indicating minimal multicollinearity. A VIF value of 5 or less is typically considered highly desirable, indicating very low multicollinearity.

In this study, all VIF values are below 5, indicating that multicollinearity is not a significant concern. The independent variables: Performance Expectancy (PE), Effort Expectancy (EE), Social Influence (SI), and Facilitating Conditions (FC) are relatively independent of each other and do not redundantly explain the change in the Behavioral Intention (BI) to purchase online courses. Therefore, we can trust the individual coefficient estimates and interpret them confidently in our analysis.

Figure 2: The Factors Influencing Chinese Parents' Purchase Intention of Online Courses. Model Refer to the results of this study modified the conceptual framework, as below:





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Behavioral Intention = (0.0868) + 0.255 (Performance Expectancy) + 0.207 (Effort Expectancy) + 0.230 (Social Influence) + 0.286 Facilitating Conditions)

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The focus of this study is on the purchasing intentions of parents or legal guardians of children currently studying or participating in educational programs in China toward online courses. Although parents or legal guardians do not directly use online course products as decision-makers, research results indicate that performance expectations, effort expectations, social influence, and facilitating conditions greatly affect parents' intention to purchase online courses. These results are consistent with previous research on direct users of online courses, indicating a high correlation between user acceptance of technology and behavioral intention. Decision makers for online course purchases typically believe that online courses have advantages (performance expectations) and user-friendliness (effort expectations), which have a positive impact on their purchase intention. The influence of social factors emphasizes the importance of peer recommendations and social norms in shaping consumer attitudes and intentions toward online course purchases. In addition, the availability of resources and support (facilitating conditions) enhances users' confidence and ability to participate in online courses, enhancing their willingness to purchase.

In summary, our research provides valuable insights into the factors that influence consumer behavior and intention to purchase online courses. The significant impacts of performance expectations, effort expectations, social influence, and facilitating conditions highlight consumer purchasing intentions. These findings have positive guiding significance for online education service providers and related practitioners in product design, marketing promotion, service improvement, and other aspects. The current paid online education market is more concentrated in the adult stage, and the lack of understanding of the factors influencing the consumption willingness of

children's legal guardians or parents greatly limits the design and promotion of online education products for school-age children. By understanding the factors that influence parents as decision-makers in purchasing online courses, educational institutions and related service providers can further improve the design and functionality of online platforms and provide sufficient support and resources to meet the needs and preferences of consumers. Ultimately, this will contribute to the development and success of the online education industry, compensate for the unfair distribution of educational resources, and provide high-quality educational services and learning experiences for a wider audience.

5. Recommendation

This study examines the relationship between parental willingness to purchase online courses and performance expectations, effort expectations, social impact, and facilitating conditions. Given the significant impact of factors such as performance expectations, effort expectations, social influence, and promotion conditions on parents' willingness to purchase online courses, it is recommended that online course providers work closely with educational institutions. Establishing partnerships with renowned schools, universities, and educational institutions can enhance the credibility and trust of online courses offered. By aligning course content with academic standards and leveraging recognition from educational institutions, online course providers can increase parents' confidence in course quality and effectiveness, thereby enhancing their willingness to purchase.

Meanwhile, online course providers must prioritize user experience and support services. This requires investment in user-friendly platform design, intuitive navigation, and interactive learning features tailored to the needs of parents and children. In addition, providing instant responsive customer support services can promptly resolve any questions or

concerns, enhancing parents' confidence in the online learning experience. By continuously optimizing user experience and providing comprehensive support services, parents can promote a positive attitude and attitude towards online education, ultimately increasing their willingness to purchase.

Finally, communities and media have a significant impact on individual purchasing intentions, indicating that a deeper understanding of cultural, social, and economic factors that influence parental decision-making, further refining the audience, and designing effective marketing activities with targeted approaches are crucial. Further conduct more in-depth market research to analyze the preferences, needs, and concerns of different parent groups towards online education. Fully utilizing community marketing, actively responding to customer feedback, continuously promoting product research and development, and enhancing product reputation can better resonate with parents, evoke trust and familiarity, and ultimately achieve the goal of increasing consumer purchasing intention.

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A Case Study of a Mechanism to Create Local Value Using Local Resources

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to elucidate the mechanism of value creation. While novel strategies for utilizing forest resources are expected worldwide, Japan has the potential to utilize forest resources for tourism. In this paper, we conducted a literature review on advanced forest therapy projects in Japan and conducted interviews with the people involved. Furthermore, a strategic analysis framework of regional economic value chains was used to explain the value creation mechanism of tourism management.

Keywords: Case Study, Tourism Management, Creating Regional Value

JEL Classification Code (up to 3-5): M10, R00, Z30

1. Introduction

Japan's population is declining due to low birthrate and aging, and this trend is particularly prominent in rural areas outside major cities. Therefore, stimulating demand and creating jobs through tourism management are essential. The country has a unique culture and history, climate, natural environment, and food culture; thus, it holds high potential for tourism management. Additionally, Japan has abundant forests, and forest re-sources must be utilized for tourism.

Since the 1980s, forest bathing, an atmospheric bathing method backed by scientific evidence, has been popular in Japan. The practice has spread to Europe, the US, and other Asian countries. Recently, a number of empirical studies have been conducted on the effects of forest bathing from the medical perspective.

In 2004, Japan's Forestry Agency launched the Forest Therapy Study Group, established as a nonprofit organization in 2008. In March 2008, the Japan Forest Therapy Society (<https://www.fo-society.jp>) was established as a nonprofit organization and

received a commercial trademark for forest therapy. The Forest Therapy Society supports practical forest therapy activities that organically connect communities through forests. Moreover, it certifies forest therapies that have a scientific healing effect and contribute to individuals' health. Currently, there are 65 forest therapy programs in Japan.

This study will elucidate the mechanism of value creation through advanced forest therapy activities in Japan intended for tourism management. By analyzing the interconnectedness of human movements and organizations in the region, we believe we can elucidate the mechanisms of value creation.

Much of the research on forest bathing and forest therapy is empirical, based on psychology and physiology. In addition, there is limited research on tourism management that strategically analyzes the actors involved in forest therapy. Therefore, this study fills this research gap.

2. Literature review

The literature on forest utilization, rural tourism, and tourism management is dominated by survey



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analyses of tourists' needs and satisfaction in various countries. For example, Schmitz et al. [19] analyzed the needs of tourists interested in exploring Spain's natural and cultural characteristics. Kelley et al. [10] investigated the demand and determinants of walking trails in Ireland. Other studies have focused on tourism management, social pursuits, and value calculation for policymaking. Matarrita-Cascante et al. [12] conducted interviews with rural communities in Costa Rica and questioned respondents regarding the impact of tourism on their communities and community satisfaction. Edwards et al. [3] modeled forest recreation values for policymaking. Moreover, McCabe [13] used a survey on tourism and quality of life to highlight how satisfied social tourists are with respect to tourism. Additionally, Hall [6] studied tourism sustainability. Supported by scientific evidence, forest bathing is an atmospheric bathing practice that started in approximately 1982. For example, Lee et al. [11] reported on forest bathing's effect on preventing mental and neurological diseases, and Ochiai et al. [15] examined the stress-relieving and relaxing effects of forest bathing.

Gurbey [5] investigated and proposed locations in Turkey where forest bathing can be implemented as ecotourism. Following a decline in tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mihardja et al. [14] proposed a new type of tourism in Bali that combines forest bathing and environmental conservation. Farkic et al. [4] suggested the possibility of mindful tourism based on interviews with people who had experienced forest bathing. Using physiology in natural sciences, numerous studies on forest therapy have been validated. For example, Ohe et al. [17] proposed the concept of forest therapy tourism from the perspective of physiology and rural management studies to reduce stress among urban residents. The authors further conducted blood pressure measurements at a forest therapy base in Chizu-cho, Tottori Prefecture, Japan, and verified its relaxation effect. Yon et al. (2014) compared forest therapy policies between Japan and Korea. Yokoyama et al. [20] estimated the local economic ripple effects (2010-2015) of the Shinano-machi forest therapy base. Katsura and Nasu [9] presented a theory of regional revitalization through the forestry business. Similarly, Zhang et al. [21] used typification and

comparison to present the issues associated with forest therapy for health promotion in China. Hirashima and Satoshi [7] examined the relationship between forest therapy road certification and its contribution to the region.

As the COVID-19 pandemic enhanced health awareness, Zhao et al. [22] analyzed the relationship between health beliefs and planned behaviors using a survey on forest therapy tourists in China. Cvikl et al. [2] proposed forest therapy tourism for sustainable development policymaking in Slovenia owing to the increasing need for therapeutic tourism following the pandemic. Pichler et al. [18] examined the effects of mountain walking and forest therapy on physiological and immune parameters in Italy. Following the pandemic, the need for forest therapy tourism management for health promotion and treatment has been increasing globally. For the development of tourism management, a detailed examination of the operational mechanism of Japan's excellent forest therapy is necessary. Moreover, this area requires further academic attention. This study analyzes and systematizes tourism management in Shinano-machi. Based on the findings from the literature review, interview survey, regional value chain analysis, and quantitative text analysis, a value creation model with forest therapy for tourism management is presented. In terms of value creation through forest-based tourism management globally, the case study of Shinano-machi's tourism management based on organizational organic collaboration is anticipated to have an academic impact on scholars and a practical impact on practitioners.

3. Materials and Method

Descriptive case studies were selected as the research method. Case studies can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory (Yin, 1984), because the method that carefully describes the phenomenon and story of the target case is suitable for explaining the process of value creation and causal relationships. The case study is based on published materials and an ongoing field study conducted during the period 2020-2023, as well as interviews with stakeholders.



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In addition, a literature review of existing research and other studies was used to verify the facts and data confirmation of the case study.

A qualitative study based on unstructured interviews and participant observation was conducted. An inductive approach was used to elucidate the process by which value is created through tourism management of cutting-edge forest therapy.

4. Case study

4.1 Forest Therapy in Shinano-machi, Nagano, Japan

Shinano-machi in Nagano Prefecture, Japan, is located in the northern part of the prefecture and is adjacent to Myoko city in Niigata Prefecture. As of April 2022, the population of Shinano-machi was approximately 7,800, with 3,300 households residing in the area. Shinano-machi has vast forests of oak and white birch trees and outstanding natural beauty. It is home to the Kurohime Plateau and Lake Nojiri. The town's primary industries are agriculture, forestry, and tourism. Particularly, rice cultivation using high-quality spring water, along with highland vegetables, tomatoes, corn, and other crops, is thriving. Historically, this area has been a recreation and summer resort. In summer, several tourists visit the area for mountain climbing and summer retreats, and in winter, tourists arrive for winter sports. Since 2002, Shinano-machi has been engaged in a forest therapy program under the Healing Forest Project. Shinano-machi Forest Therapy offers various forest therapy programs for tourists and corporate training programs in collaboration with 37 companies and other organizations in the suburbs of major cities. Additionally, Shinano-machi certifies nearby hotels and pensions as Healing Forest Inns® and forest therapy guides as Forest Medical Trainers®.

Authors should discuss the results and how they can be interpreted from the perspective of previous studies and of the working hypotheses. The findings and their implications should be discussed in the broadest context possible. Future research directions may also be highlighted.

4.2 Development of the Forest Therapy Business in Shinano-machi

In 2002, eight volunteers, including residents of Shinano-machi, predicted that Shinano town would be self-governing without merging with other towns; they pro-claimed that "We will solve the problems associated with farming and mountain villages by ourselves." The Shinano Town Office—which represents the government—agreed to this idea, thereby marking the beginning of the forest therapy business in Shinano-machi.

Forest therapy in Shinano-machi has inherited the eco-medical healing philosophy (healing, health, and tourism town planning) of the late environmentalist C.W. Nicol. Subsequently, Shinano-machi developed human resources and systems related to its forest therapy project, known as Healing Forest Project. In 2006, the town was certified as a forest therapy base, and later in 2020, it became an advanced two-star certified therapy base. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak in 2019, Shinano-machi reported approximately 6,200 annual users of forest therapy.

4.3 Forest Therapy Management in Shinano-machi

There are six primary stakeholders in forest therapy management in Shinano-machi. The characteristics of management methods and factors contributing to successful results will be elucidated through interviews.

4.3.1 Operational Entities of the Forest Therapy Project

One of the main characteristics of the management of forest therapy in Shinano-machi is that the six main organizations cooperate organically and efficiently. The following are the management entities of the Shinano-machi Forest Therapy Project:

- (1) Healing Forest Section of the Shinano Town Office
- (2) A commissioned management organization (Woods-Life-Community)
- (3) A consulting company (Satoyume)
- (4) A forest therapy research group (Hitotoki no Kai)

(5) The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust

(6) A healing forest inn

The primary operator of the program has been the Healing Forest Section of the Commerce, Industry, and Tourism Division of Shinano Town Hall. In 2016, the operation was outsourced to a private organization named Woods-Life-Community. Through voluntary management, the company aims to create a sustainable business structure.

Additionally, Satoyume provides support for business plan development, corporate partnerships and marketing, and highland vegetable branding. The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust is located in Shinano-machi and cooperates with forest therapy. The Forest Therapy Study Group (Hitotoki no Kai) is a place of learning for forest medical trainers who manage the forest therapy program.

4.3.2 Features of the Shinano-machi Forest Therapy Program and Therapy Guide (Forest Medical Trainer®)

Shinano town offers three forest therapy courses: the Ojikaike, Nainotaki, and Zou-no-Komichi Courses, with distances of 12, 7, and 2.5 km, respectively. Additionally, these courses are barrier-free. The forest therapy program is tailored to visitors' objectives and length of stay. Furthermore, other programs, such as Zen meditation, yoga, aromatherapy, and night walks, are offered. The program fees are approximately 10,000-20,000, 10,000, and 15,000 JPY per person if staying overnight, for a half-day, and a full-day forest therapy trainer, respectively. Participants during forest therapy are instructed to breathe deeply to absorb the negative ions produced by the forest. They also engage in counseling, Tanden breathing exercises, harmony therapy, phytotherapy, and aromatherapy. In addition to trekking, Nordic walking, and learning about history and culture, visitors can enjoy the constellations, fireflies, and agriculture. Furthermore, the center offers corporate training programs in partnership with urban companies and organizations. The program includes communication training, team building, and self-management experiences. Training for employees reduces stress hormones, lowers blood pressure in hypertensive individuals, and decreases turnover among new employees. Forest

therapy guides provide advice on forest walking and exercise to enhance the benefits of forest bathing. In Shinano-machi, forest therapy guides are uniquely named as Forest Medical Trainers®, and the mayor certifies them. These trainers travel to the forest along with users and provide forest therapy, health checks, immunotherapy, and other services.

Shinano-machi has been working to certify Forest Medical Trainers® as a subsidized project of Nagano Prefecture. For certification, trainers must undertake comprehensive training in forest function studies, aromatherapy, phytotherapy, counseling, and safety management. Approximately half of these trainers belong to the Forest Therapy Research Association (Hitotoki no Kai), and they continue to study forest therapy in collaboration with doctors. Additionally, they offer courses for residents in phytotherapy, naturopathic medicine, and dietary therapy, etc.

4.3.3 Healing Forest Inn® Business

Shinano-machi certifies pensions and hotels located near forest therapy areas as Healing Forest Inns®. Currently, there are 32 certified inns collaborating on forest therapy programs. Certified inns offer therapy meals prepared with local morning vegetables, wild vegetables, medicinal herbs, and herbal and medicinal herb tea to the clients of the therapy program. Additionally, they offer aromatherapy and other healing services. Healing lodges and forest therapy operators collaborate to produce healing perfumes, teach healing bathing methods, and conduct healing evening programs. These certified inns include 29 pensions and three hotels. The three hotels are medium-to-large resorts that can accommodate skiers and golfers, offering conference rooms and Wi-Fi access to accommodate vacationers.

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Regional Value Chain Analysis

This study conducted a regional value chain framework analysis based on results of interviews with actors involved in the Shinano-machi Forest Therapy Project. According to Itakura et al. [8], the

concept of a regional value chain is “based on regional commitment, which is viewed as the engine of multilayered regional leadership and the function of newly combining internal and external forces.” It is a framework in which local re-sources, town development, and services provided by merchants’ associations are per-ceived as a joint enterprise that incorporates external forces and results in local revitalization. The following topics were included in the interviews: (1) regional commitment (love for the region, sense of mission, meritorious involvement, and cooperation with the region), (2) regional leadership (idea, creator, and coordinator connecting outside and inside the region), (3) new combination of forces internal and external to the region (experts, cultural figures, and companies outside the region), (4) processing, manufacturing, selling, and services, (5) site-specific storytelling (stories unique to the region), and (6) performance indicators (performance).

The interviewees included Shinano-machi town officials, the commissioning organization head, a pension manager, a Forest Medical Trainer®, businesspeople, tourists, facility users, and Shinano-machi residents.

5.1.1 Regional Commitment

A forest therapy trainer must be an effective forest therapy instructor and a community storyteller who carries on the history and traditions of the area. Additionally, this role takes on the task of coordinating between tourists and local residents. Interviews with the chairperson and vice chairperson of the forest therapy trainer revealed the reality of regional commitment.

During the Edo period (1603–1867), Shinano-machi flourished as a major connection point between Kanazawa in Ishikawa Prefecture and Edo. In the 1920s, Canadian missionaries developed the Lake Nojiri area as a summer resort. The residents of Shinano-machi engage in agriculture and forestry and provide summer vacation homes and winter sports havens. In 2002, the locals of Shinano-machi decided to operate the town independently rather than merging it with other towns. Some residents had a strong sense of mission to promote local revitalization by taking advantage of forest therapy using local forest resources. Those involved in forest

therapy in Shinano-machi tend to be sincerely committed to local issues and feel a sense of fulfillment in talking about the community. They exhibit a sense of purpose in using forest therapy to revitalize the com-munity.

5.1.2 Regional Leadership

Residents and leaders of the community have been involved in the development of human resources and creation of systems related to the forest therapy business. In Shinano-machi, six organizations are collaborating to promote the forest therapy projects. The leaders of each organization cooperate with each other to manage the forest therapy program. For example, the Healing Forest Section of the Shinano Town Office supports the entire forest therapy program. Similarly, Woods-Life-Community, a general incorporated association, which is the operating entity, leads the promotion of the project. In addition, one of the leaders runs a local consulting company. He acts as a coordinator, marketing local resources to numerous other regions and encouraging corporate partnerships. The company sells local specialty products in association with forest therapy and promotes sixth industrialization in cooperation with local producers and distributors.

5.1.3 New Combination of Forces Internal and External to the Region

In Shinano-machi, people from outside the community are active members of the forest therapy operation and are welcomed by an atmosphere of acceptance. People from within and outside the community cooperate in the activities. Some forest medical trainers and pension managers of healing lodges have also moved to the area. The combination of internal and external forces to the region has become a driving force for value creation.

Shinano-machi is increasingly capable of incorporating forces external to the region, as is evident from the incorporation of Nicol’s philosophy. Furthermore, its capability is also proved by the historically high-level of human traffic and use of outside forces to generate value within the community. Following the settlement of Canadian and other missionaries in the area during the 1920s,



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the area continued to host vacationers in the summer and skiers in the winter.

5.1.4 Processing, Manufacturing, Selling, and Services

Interviews with lodge managers, business owners, and local residents revealed pat-terns in local business management. Collaborative work that directly utilizes forest therapy in tourism and service businesses is underway.

In Shinano-machi, the products of agriculture and forestry are being utilized in the tourism and service industries. These applications include hotel and pension management, winter sports-related industries, tourism tour support, Internet home sales, and sports camp attractions. In addition, the area is attracting companies and satellite offices. Furthermore, the promotion of local highland vegetables is underway.

5.1.5 Site-Specific Storytelling

Regarding effective guidance in forest therapy, it is important to narrate the region's unique traditional history and value for tourists. The development of forest therapy is linked to the compilation of local love and inherited thoughts and philosophies as principles and values; forest therapy maintains and improves them through storytelling.

The forest therapy project in Shinano-machi follows Nicol's seminal eco-medical healing philosophy. This philosophy of preserving the region's rich nature and continuing to provide wellness and healing is being developed as a value for revitalizing traditional Japanese social culture.

5.1.6 Performance Indicators

Shinano-machi is working to identify the results of forest therapy. It is conducting customer surveys and monitoring the number of visitors using its services, and it has set up a permanent contact point for inquiries. Furthermore, it is working with medical institutions to collect data on observable benefits, including reduction in stress and blood pressure. The company hosts employee training programs for companies and organizations using forest therapy. It also conducts educational activities for the local community.

6. Discussion

This study has elucidated the structure of tourism management through forest therapy utilizing local resources in Shinano-machi and its relationship with the local com-munity. Shinano-machi Forest Therapy is one of the most advanced operations delivering this service. Forest therapy is a concept that originated in Japan, and excellent examples of it can be found there. The main purpose of forest therapy in other countries is to maintain and restore physical capabilities through "walking in the forest," but in Japan, there is an additional purpose of recovering from stress and physical and mental fatigue.

First, the project is driven by an organized management structure and clear division of roles. The Woods-Life-Community is at the heart of the forest therapy operation and has been acting as a mediator and bridge between stakeholders since 2015. It aims for sustainable and proactive management. Satoyume is involved in the planning and operation of the project, providing guidance on certain promotional activities and negotiating with businesses that will function as promoters. Forest medical trainers, who connect tourists and businesses to the project, are supported by the Forest Therapy Research Association (Hitotokino Kai). The origin of the project's philosophy lies in the C.W. Nicol Affan Forest Trust. Local businesses, hotels, and loges are involved with the forest therapy project and participate in the therapy program as healing forest lodges.

Second, the project continues to share the same values and aspirations as those at the time of its inception. In our interviews, we confirmed that the members of Forest Therapy have inherited Nicol's philosophy of eco-medical healing. This philosophy and values continue to provide wellness and healing while protecting the rich natural environment of the region. Moreover, Shinano-machi's therapy aims to create values that regenerate traditional Japanese social culture and share them internationally. Third, there were no prior examples when the project began, and knowledge and wisdom from inside and outside the area were flexibly incorporated. In 2002, when Shinano-machi started its forest therapy business, there were no instances of therapy businesses being



fully promoted either in Japan or abroad. Despite referring to examples of forest utilization in Germany and Scandinavia, the local residents independently created the system. The historical development of the region as a highway, recreation area, and summer resort also promotes interaction with people from outside the region.

The key points are as follows: (1) an organized management system and clear division of roles, (2) sharing of thoughts and values, (3) cooperation and flexible incorporation of knowledge and wisdom from within and outside the community, (4) awareness of sustainability with an orientation toward self-reliance regarding operations and profits, and (5) awareness of the development of the local community and value creation (Figure 1). Following the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an increasing need for healthy forest therapy tourism. Consequently, there is a need for tourism management in which local residents create and share values and cooperate autonomously and organically.

7. Conclusion

Research on forest bathing and forest therapy has so far focused mainly on physiological and empirical studies, while research on tourism and agricultural and mountain villages has also been dominated by analyses from the perspective of tourists.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it analyzed the supply side of forest therapy using forests, a regional resource, from a social scientific perspective, as well as the factors and mechanisms that utilize local resources and create local value.

It is founded on the connection of organically linked organizations and the sharing of knowledge by people with a philosophy and clear intentions. In addition, local residents are aware of sustainability by flexibly incorporating the knowledge and wisdom of people outside the community, and are self-reliant in terms of operation and profitability.

However, a major limitation of this study is that it is a single case study, and quantitative verification using a large sample size will be an issue in the future. We hope that forest therapy will contribute to the creation of healthy and vibrant local communities and create value for local residents. There are no conflicts of interest related to this study.

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Exploring the Nexus of Entrepreneurship, Sustainability, and Digital Innovation: Understanding Factors Influencing International Students' Behavioural Intentions towards Online Food Delivery Apps in Post-COVID Bangkok

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to analyze the significant influence of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and behavioral intention toward online food delivery applications. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** The researcher employed primary and secondary data collection methods to analyze factors influencing behavioral intentions toward using online food delivery applications. The data was collected among 398 respondents studying at a Thai university located in Bangkok. This research used theoretical frameworks from previous studies to construct a new conceptual framework. **Findings:** This research is intended to investigate factors influencing behavioral intentions to use online food delivery applications. This research indicated that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence have a significant influence on behavioral intention toward using online food delivery applications. Moreover, behavioral intention is also directly influenced by using online food delivery applications. **Research Limitations/Implications:** The limitations of the research revealed several factors influencing online food delivery applications used by individual international students in Bangkok. The scope of this study focused only on the intentions of international students who are studying in Bangkok. Moreover, this research focused on the international students in Bangkok, so it might not apply to different nations. However, personal preference factors would have different consideration points toward their decision to use online food delivery applications.

Keywords: Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Behavioral Intention, Use Delivery Application Behavior

JEL Classification Code: M16, M31, M14, M19

1. Introduction

This study aims to explore the relevant factors that affect the behavioral intentions of international students in Bangkok to use online food delivery apps

after COVID-19. In today's development context, more consumers are choosing to adopt a more convenient lifestyle, and the rise of online food delivery applications has confirmed the changes in people's

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lifestyles. After COVID-19, online food delivery apps continued to grow, reflecting recognition and love for their performance and functionality. Choose food to dine on and enjoy delicious food without leaving home, entering consumers' lifestyles.

In almost ten years, more consumers have been willing to choose online food ordering and takeout services, benefiting from their convenience and speed. This is largely due to the popularity of mobile phones and apps, which have contributed to the development of the food delivery industry and its popularity around the world (Roh & Park, 2018). The growth rate of online delivery systems is 9.3% per year. Klein (2019) predicts that the market size of online delivery systems will approach US\$134.49 billion by 2023. This can also be proven by the fact that more research investigators this year have focused on studying consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and usage of food delivery apps (Abed, 2023; Allah Pitchay et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2019; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019; Puriwat & Triopsakul, 2021; Roh & Park, 2018). It is worth mentioning that the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has played a role in changing the operating model of the food service industry, directly or indirectly promoting the new trend of maintaining social distance in food consumption (Kim et al., 2021).

In recent years, the number of people participating in the digital industry has been increasing rapidly due to the increased use of technology. The changes in the food service industry are evident. The rise and use of food delivery applications have undoubtedly opened up a new competitive situation in the highly competitive food market. We see food service companies increasingly relying on technology as a source of information, a marketing tool, and a medium of use. The use of online food delivery applications has become an integral part of the food industry in today's world. Food delivery mobile applications are more popular because they make life more convenient. The Bangkok food delivery market also shows widespread use of online food delivery applications. The main

players are Grab, Panda Food, Lineman, and Shopee Food, as well as other software. We aim to explore the relevant factors that influence the behavioral intention of international students in Bangkok to use online food delivery applications, focusing on the consumer usage behavior of these apps.

1.1 Problem statements

The global Internet usage rate is growing rapidly, which has effectively catalyzed the transformation of consumers from the traditional consumption environment and marketing environment to a consumption form that is more suitable for the development of the Internet in today's era (Troise et al., 2020). Since the Internet penetration in Thailand has become wider and wider, Thailand's Internet penetration rate has also shown a steady and rapid upward trend. Behind this, we found that to provide convenience and save cost and time, many consumers like to search for information through the Internet and will choose to order online food via an application.

Currently, the rise of mobile food delivery programs is in line with consumer habits. Consumers can simply use their smartphones to download and use mobile applications for online food delivery. These applications' function is to browse the menu contents of various restaurants online, add preferred foods to the bill, and purchase them directly. A new type of channel without any actual contact or interaction with the restaurant (Dirsehan & Cankat, 2021). In addition, those platforms have been anticipated to steadily increase over the past few years during COVID-19. The market's total value amounted to 26 billion baht in 2017 (Jitsoonthornchaikul, 2022).

Therefore, the utilization of online food delivery applications in Thailand is still in a positive state and steadily increasing after COVID-19. Online food delivery applications should be in line with consumer usage preferences and actively study influencing factors. Taking a sample of international students in Bangkok as an example, we actively explore the factors that influence the behavior of this group of



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consumers during use. This study aims to identify the factors that influence the behavioral intention of international students in Bangkok to use online food delivery. This information will guide the development and use of food delivery software in the post-pandemic period, further demonstrating the industry's booming development. As a result, it aims to investigate the factors influencing the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok after COVID-19. This study employed a questionnaire survey as a methodology to test the hypotheses.

1.2 Objectives of study

- (1) To investigate the impact of performance expectancy on the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok.
- (2) To examine the effect of effort expectancy on the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok.
- (3) To explore the influence of social influence on the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok.
- (4) To assess the relationship between behavioral intention and the actual usage of food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok.

1.3 Research questions

- (1) Does performance expectancy influence the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok after COVID-19?
- (2) Does the effect of effort expectancy on the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok after COVID-19?

(3) Does social influence impact the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok after COVID-19?

(4) Is there a significant relationship between behavioral intention and the actual usage of food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok after COVID-19?

1.4 Significance of the study

The rapid expansion of internet-based food delivery services has captured the attention of consumers. The proliferation of delivery platforms catering to both restaurants and customers exemplifies this trend. From January 2019 to January 2020, Google search results for online meal delivery keywords tripled, indicating a significant surge in demand (Thailand, 2020). Whether attributed to internet growth or the rise in takeaway transactions, this reflects a gradual increase in consumers' usage of online meal delivery apps and market demand. Consumer preferences have a significant impact on food delivery, driven by their intention to order online. Smartphone-based food delivery is on the rise. Consumers can shop online and have items delivered to their homes without leaving their premises. This convenience mirrors consumer behavior patterns (Jitsoonthornchaikul, 2022). Notable delivery platforms in Thailand include Grab, Panda Food, Lineman, Shopee Food, Robinhood, and Gokoo. Consumers, accustomed to purchasing food online through apps or websites, expect a seamless dining experience from restaurants. As smartphone apps gain popularity on internet platforms, restaurant meals are delivered to homes, and customer preferences for online dining are gaining global attention (Hirschberg et al., 2016). This study explores how international students in Bangkok perceive internet-based meal delivery. It offers insights and survey findings on the determinants of online dining to assist related sectors in understanding consumers' intentions to use online meal delivery apps.



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During the COVID-19 outbreak, most nations advised citizens to stay indoors and avoid social contact. Businesses relied on technology to communicate with customers during this period. Even after the pandemic, people continued to utilize online food delivery apps, indicating ongoing market needs. Therefore, this study investigates the factors influencing consumers' post-pandemic usage of online food delivery. It can help foreign students in Bangkok explore and advance online meal delivery. This research can assist catering firms and online meal delivery apps in evaluating consumer behavior throughout their usage. Given the diverse needs of clients in the service sector, understanding the industry's pros and cons is crucial to enabling timely updates and improvements to meet target needs effectively. Thus, this study can inform future research on international students' behavioral intentions in Bangkok when using online food delivery apps, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, behavioral intention, and other pertinent factors. After COVID-19, international students in Bangkok utilized online meal delivery apps. This study delves into the reasons behind this behavior. The findings may aid the Internet food delivery industry in developing marketing strategies and boosting consumer usage and investment post-pandemic.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Performance expectancy and Behavioral intention

Performance expectancy refers to the degree of use of technologies that will assist customers in enhancing or improving their job performance (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Davis (1989) relates it to the perceived usefulness of Total Activity Management (TAM). While many have concentrated on functional performance, various studies have shown that the enjoyable aspects of using technology are significant. These aspects are expected to be experienced through

the joy of communicating with others via mobile shopping services or engaging with the diverse functions and features of mobile shopping services (Yang, 2010).

Performance expectancy is considered the strong predictive factor for behavioral intention (Lee et al., 2019; Venkatesh et al., 2003), particularly in online food delivery applications (Abed, 2023; Lee et al., 2019; Ramos, 2022). Customers are more likely to use new technologies if they consider them useful, as they increase productivity and help accomplish tasks more quickly in their daily lives (Abed, 2023; Dowpiset & Nuangjamnong, 2021). Previous studies have determined positive results regarding the relationship between Performance expectancy and Behavioral intention using online food ordering applications after COVID-19 (Abed, 2023; Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). Therefore, this hypothesis was developed.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *There is a significant influence of performance expectancy effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.*

2.2 Effort expectancy and Behavioral intention

Effort expectancy is defined as “the degree of convenience experienced by using technologies” (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2022). It is related to the perceived ease of use in TAM (Davis, 1989). It is expected to play a significant role during the initial stages of adoption when customers believe that using the technology is free of effort. However, it will become nonsignificant at a later stage (Davis, 1989).

Effort expectancy is a significant predictive factor for customer's intention to continue using Web-based learning, food delivery applications, and mobile application (Chiu & Wang, 2008; Kang, 2014; Okumus et al., 2018; Ramos, 2022; Nuangjamnong &



Maj, 2022). When users don't find new technologies difficult to use or understand and when users don't need to put effort into learning technologies, users tend to have an intention to adopt those technologies (Curtis et al., 2010). Previous studies have found that Effort expectancy significantly impacts behavioral intention on using online food ordering applications after COVID-19 in Thailand (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). Therefore, this hypothesis was developed.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *There is a significant influence of effort expectancy effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.*

2.3 Social influence and Behavioral intention

Social influence is defined as “the degree to which a customer perceives the opinions of other people in social situations to shape their behavior when using technologies” (Ajzen, 1991; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2022). However, TAM (Davis, 1989) did not include any factor related to social influence. Customers' decisions to use technologies or purchase products may include their behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, or other opinions from individuals who have similar experiences, roles, and interests, or someone essential, such as family members, friends, colleagues, and supervisors (Gunawan et al., 2023).

Social influence is a positive predictor that affects customer intention to use mobile advertising, mobile payment, mobile shopping, mobile application, and new technologies (Abed, 2023; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019; Venkatesh et al., 2012; Yang, 2007; Yang, 2010; Zhu et al., 2017). However, in terms of online food ordering applications, previous studies have shown the positive effects on behavioral intention resulting from the adoption of new technologies influenced by family, close friends, colleagues or other important individuals during COVID-19 (Allah Pitchay et al.,

2022; Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *There is a significant influence of social influence effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.*

2.4 Behavioral intention and using food delivery application behavior

Behavioral intention measures the customer's probability of wanting to engage in a specific behavior in the future and is commonly used to forecast or explain actual behavior (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2022). In addition, the researchers defined BI as “the intensity of a person's spontaneous plan to engage in a certain behavior” (Harrison et al., 1997). Moreover, intentions reflect the level of effort people are willing to exert and the level of exertion they intend to put forth in order to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). It has been argued that an individual's intentions to continue to use the technology platform could be similar to a customer's repurchasing (Bhattacharjee & Lin, 2015). The repurchasing intention of the customer is influenced by the degree to which the perceived performance matches their first expectations (Bhattacharjee, 2001).

Behavioral intention is a strong predictor and directly effect on using technology behavior (Venkatesh et al., 2003), such as using online food delivery application and mobile banking, researchers have found a positive and significant effect of behavioral intention on using food delivery applications and mobile banking behavior after Covid-19 (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021; Purwanto & Loisa, 2020; Shukla & Pandey, 2023).

Using food delivery application behavior is defined as the positive interest in using online food delivery applications (Venkatesh et al., 2003). According to the researcher, three types of factors influence human

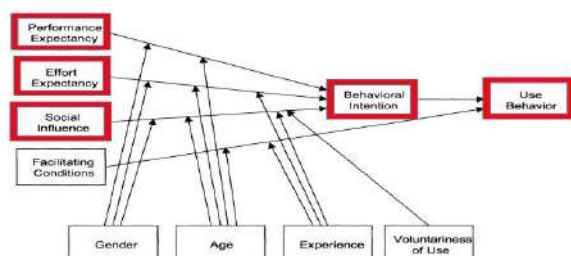
behavior: behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs (Ajzen, 1991). A behavioral belief refers to “an individual's feeling about the outcomes or consequences of a specific behavior,” which leads to a positive or negative attitude toward the behavior, such as a positive interest in using online food delivery applications (Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *There is a significant influence of behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior.*

2.5 Theoretical frameworks

The theoretical framework from The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) was formulated with four constructs that are considered significant core determinants for adopting new technologies: Performance expectancy, Effort expectancy, Social influence, and Facilitating conditions. While Performance expectancy, Effort expectancy, and Social influence impact behavioral intention, Facilitating conditions influence usage behavior (Venkatesh et al., 2003) as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)*

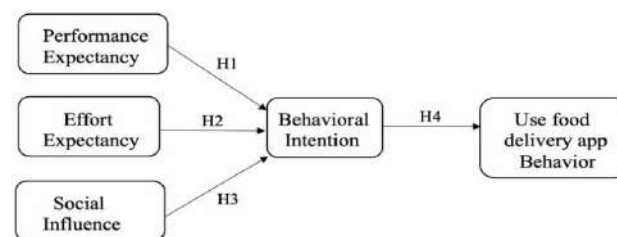


2.6 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study was based on the theoretical framework presented in Figure 2 and

employing three variables comprising Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, and Social Influence to determine behavioral intention and the use of food delivery application behavior. The last independent variable is the influence of behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior. The conceptual framework determined the Factors influencing in behavioral intention on using online food delivery application among international students in Bangkok after COVID-19 as displayed in the figure below:

Figure 2. *Factor influencing behavioral intention on using online food delivery application among international students in Bangkok after Covid-19*



Source: Constructed by author

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1 Research design

The aim of this study was to identify the factors influencing the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students. These factors include performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, behavioral intention, and usage behavior of food delivery applications. Furthermore, this research seeks to assess the level of effectiveness of online food delivery applications through the evaluation of behavioral intention among international students in Bangkok. To achieve these objectives, Cronbach's Alpha, simple linear regression, multiple linear regression, quantitative research, and descriptive statistics methods were employed to analyze each variable.

The questionnaire comprised three sections, totaling 27 questions. These questions covered five



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variables from the research conceptual framework, three screening questions, 17 questions pertaining to the measured variables, and seven questions concerning demographic aspects.

Initially, techniques for assessing questionnaire reliability were implemented, utilizing Cronbach's Alpha to scrutinize any confounded or ambiguous measurement items. A pilot test involving a sample of 50 respondents was conducted to evaluate the reliability of the measured variables and the comprehensibility of the content. Additionally, simple linear regression (SLR) was utilized to examine the influence of behavioral intention on the usage behavior of food delivery applications. Subsequently, multiple linear regression (MLR) was employed to analyze the impact of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence on behavioral intention. Furthermore, secondary data were incorporated into this study, sourced from reputable articles, journals, books, and previous research endeavors.

3.2 Sampling Plan

3.2.1 Target Population

In this research, the target population is international students who studying in Bangkok and use online delivery applications after the COVID-19 situation. In the first semester of the academic year 2021, the total number of international students was 36,060 people. The number of Chinese students studying in Thai universities is the highest, totaling 21,906 people, followed by students from Myanmar, totaling 4,046 people (MHESI, 2021).

3.2.2. Sample Size

Due to the limitation of time and effort to collect all of the population data, the researchers used an estimated sample size by applying the Krejcie and Morgan determining sample size table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The sample size in this study was 398

respondents who are international students studying in Bangkok after the COVID-19 situation. Based on the total of 36,060 international students studying in Thai universities, this table suggests a suitable sample size of 384 people.

3.2.3 Sampling Procedure

The researchers decided to utilize a non-probability sampling method by employing the convenience sampling technique due to time constraints. This approach was chosen for its practicality, efficiency in quickly gathering data, and low cost within the available time-frame.

3.3 Research Instrument

A questionnaire was employed as a research instrument to assess the significant factors and the relationships between the research variables. The researchers distributed the questionnaire online to the target samples. The questionnaire is divided into three parts. The first section consists of screening questions that will particularly target respondents who are international students in Bangkok and still use online delivery application after COVID-19. The second section includes questions on the demographic information of respondents. The last section comprises questions for dependent and independent variables, containing a total of 17 scale items.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

3.4.1 Content validity (IOC)

The researcher used the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) index to evaluate the content validity of each question in the questionnaire, aligning with the research objectives. One expert provided comments on the questions to ascertain content validity. The resulting IOC value was 1, indicating appropriateness, all questions were considered applicable for distribution to respondents.



3.4.2 Reliability Test (Pilot Test)

To assess the reliability of the questionnaire's variables, the researcher employed Cronbach's alpha. A pilot test involving 50 participants was conducted for this purpose. Cronbach's alpha evaluates the reliability of a measure by comparing the degree of shared variance or covariance among its constituent items to the total variance (Collins, 2007). The results are reported in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Reliability Test of Five Variables ($n=50$)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association	No. of items
Performance Expectancy (PE)	0.782	Acceptable	4
Effort Expectancy (EE)	0.908	Excellent	3
Social Influence (SI)	0.780	Acceptable	3
Behavioral Intention (BI)	0.922	Excellent	3
Using food delivery application behavior (UB)	0.792	Acceptable	4

4. Findings

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Screening Data

In the questionnaire that the researcher distributed to target respondents individually in February 2024, 405 respondents took the questionnaire, participating and 7 respondents were eliminated. Therefore, 398 eligible respondents will be used for data analysis. The questions asked for screening conditions are International students, ever use online food delivery application, and whether they choose to continue to use food delivery apps after COVID-19.

Table 4.1 shows the frequency distribution and percentage of demographic information from a sample size of 398 respondents as follows:

International student: According to the number of total respondents 405 respondents including all international students. The percentage is 100%.

Ever use online food delivery apps: The majority of 405 respondents all have used online food delivery application. The percentage is 100%.

Continue to use food delivery apps after COVID-19: This survey includes 398 respondents calculated to 98.27 % who would like to continue to use food delivery applications after COVID-19, and 7 respondents calculated to 1.73% chose not to continue to use food delivery application.

Table 4.1 The frequency distribution and percentage in sample size of 405

Screening Factors	Frequency	Percent
International student		
Yes	405	100
No	0	0
Ever use online food delivery apps		
Yes	405	100
No	0	0
Continue to use food delivery apps after COVID-19		
	398	98.27
	7	



Yes	0	1.73
No		0
Total	398	100

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Data

The questions about demographic information from 398 eligible respondents were analyzed on such as gender, income, nationality, online food delivery ordering frequency, the name of the application used, spending on using the application, and types of ordering. The demographic information in the part of the descriptive analysis to categorize the character of target respondents.

Table 4.2 shows the frequency distribution and percentage of demographic information from a sample size of 398 respondents as follows:

Gender: The total respondents 398 respondents including Male 115 respondents or 28.9%, Female 282 respondents or 70.9%, and not specified 1 respondent or 0.3% of all respondents.

Income: The majority of 398 target respondents separated to respondents who have income more than 100,000 THB calculated to 1% or 4 respondents, followed by 47 respondents who have an income lower than 20,000 THB calculated to 11.8%, 13 respondents who have income between 80,001-100,000 THB calculated to 3.3%, 106 respondents who have income between 50,001-80,000 THB calculated to 26.6%, 228 respondents who have income between 20,001-50,000 THB calculated to 57.3% of all target respondents as the sequence.

Nationality: The respondents of all 398 include 218 Chinese citizen respondents calculated to 54.8%, 8 France citizen or 2%, 54 Myanmar citizen or 13.6%, 27 Singapore citizen or 6.8%, 58 Vietnam citizen, or 14.6%, includes 8 others or 8.3% of 398 respondents.

Online apps frequency per month: According to the survey, the frequency of respondents who use online food delivery apps are ranked as; the majority

is the first rank 161 respondents or 40.5%, use 2-3 times per month, the second rank is 99 respondents or 24.9% use less than 3-4 times per month, the third rank is 43 respondents or 10.8% use 5-6 times per month, the minority respondents with 12 respondents or 3% use online food delivery apps almost every day.

Delivery application: Among the 398 target respondents, the number of respondents who use Grab is 223 accounting for 56%, Lineman is 92 accounting for 23.1%, Shopee food is 48 accounting for 12.1% and Foodpanda is 35 accounting for 8.8%.

Spending: The number of respondents who consumed less than 1,000 THB accounted for 12.3% or 49 respondents. The majority of respondents consumed between 1,001- 3,000 THB, which accounted for 45.7% or 182 respondents. 30.7% of respondents or 122 spend between 3,001-5,000 THB. As a percentage of 10.1 or 40 respondents who spend between 5,001-10,000 of all target respondents. A minority of the respondents who consumed less than 10,000 THB accounted for 1.3% or 5 respondents.

Type of food: The majority of respondents who chose to order Chinese food accounted for 65.3% or 260 respondents. Followed by 398 respondents who chose to order Italy food, which accounted for 9.5% or 38 respondents. Of all target respondents, 24.4% of respondents, or 97 would like to choose Thai food. A percentage of 1 or 0.3% of respondents who chose French all target respondents. A minority of the respondents chose others like the coffee category for 0.5% or 2 respondents.

Table 4.2. The frequency distribution and percentage in a sample size of 398

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	115	28.9



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Female	282	70.9
Not specified	1	0.3
Total	398	100
Income Per Month		
Lower than 20,000 Baht	47	11.8
20,001 – 50,000 Baht	228	57.3
50,001 – 80,000 Baht	106	26.6
80,001 – 100,000 Baht	13	3.3
More than 100,000 Baht	4	1
Total	398	100
Nationality		
China	218	54.8
France	8	2
Myanmar	54	13.6
Singapore	27	6.8
Vietnam	58	14.6
None of above	33	8.3
Total	398	100
Ordering frequency per month		
Once per week	43	10.8
Two to three times a week	161	40.5
Three or four times a week	99	24.9
Five to six times a week	27	6.8
Almost everyday	12	3
Total	398	100
Delivery application		
Grab	223	56
Lineman	92	23.1
Shopee food	48	12.1
Foodpanda	35	8.8
Total	398	100
Spending		
Lower than 1,000 Baht	49	12.3
1,001 -3,000 Baht	182	45.7
3,001 -5,000 Baht	122	30.7
5,001-1,000 Baht	40	10.1
More than 10,000 Baht	5	1.3
Total	398	100
Type of food		
Italy food	38	9.5
Chinese food	260	65.3
Thai food	97	24.4
Others (French)	1	0.3
Others (Coffee)	2	0.5
Total	398	100

4.3 Mean and Standard Deviation for Descriptive Analysis

This section provides a summary of the mean and standard deviation for each variable. The following grade point averages are from (Sözen & Guven, 2019) and the criteria for Interpreting Mean Scores are displayed below:

Mean score	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly agree
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
2.61 – 3.20	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly disagree

The result analysis represented 398 respondents and 0 missing respondents for variables Performance expectancy, Effort expectancy, Social influence, Behavioral intention, and using food delivery application behavior described in 4.3.1-4.3.5.

4.3.1 Mean and standard deviation of Performance expectancy

Table 4.3 indicated that the highest mean of performance expectancy was "I believe that using online food delivery application will help me find tasty food." which equals 3.92. Conversely, the lowest mean was "Using online food delivery application allows to achieve the purchasing of food more quickly." which equals 3.75. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "I believe that online food delivery application is useful for my daily life." which is equal to 1.15. Nevertheless, the lowest was "I believe that using online food delivery application will help me find tasty food." which equals 0.90.



Table 4.3 *The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of Performance expectancy*

	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
PE1: I believe that online food delivery application are useful for my daily life.	3.76	1.15	Agree
PE2: I believe that using an online food delivery application will help me search for food more quickly.	3.76	1.12	Agree
PE3: I believe that using an online food delivery application will help me find tasty food.	3.92	0.90	Agree
PE4: I believe that using online food delivery application allows me to achieve the purchasing of food more quickly.	3.75	1.06	Agree
Performance expectancy	3.80	0.868	Agree

4.3.2 Mean and standard deviation of Effort expectancy

Table 4.4 indicated that the highest mean of effort expectancy was "I believe that the application feature is user friendly." which equals 3.87. However, the lowest meaning was "I believe that it's not difficult for me to become skillful at using online food delivery application." which equals 3.63. According to the standard deviation, the highest was "I believe that it's not difficult for me to become skillful at using online food delivery application." which equals 1.12.

Inversely, the lowest was "I believe that the application feature is user friendly." which equals 1.02.

Table 4.4 *The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of Effort expectancy*

	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
EE1: I believe that learning how to use the online food delivery application is easy.	3.84	1.10	Agree
EE2: I believe that it's not difficult for me to become skillful at using online food delivery application.	3.63	1.12	Agree
EE3: I believe that the application feature is user-friendly.	3.87	1.02	Agree
Effort expectancy	3.78	0.944	Agree

4.3.3 Mean and standard deviation of Social influence

Table 4.5 shows that the highest mean of social influence was "I believe that many international students use online food delivery application." which equals 3.95. Meanwhile, the lowest meaning was "I believe that international students prefer to use online food delivery application to purchase food than traditional ones." which equals 3.82. For the standard deviation, the highest was "I believe that many international students use online food delivery application." which equals 1.11. On the other side, the lowest was "People who influence my behavior think that I should use online food delivery application for ordering the food." which equals 1.09.

Table 4.5 *The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of Social influence*



	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
SI1: People who influence my behavior think that I should use online food delivery application for ordering the food.	3.85	1.09	Agree
SI2: I believe that many international students use online food delivery application.	3.95	1.11	Agree
SI3: I believe that international students prefer to use online food delivery application to purchase food than traditional ones.	3.82	1.10	Agree
Social influence	3.87	0.906	Agree

4.3.4 Mean and standard deviation of Behavioral intention

Table 4.6 exhibited that the highest mean of behavioral intention was "I intend to continue using online food delivery application after covid-19 pandemic." which equals 3.67. In contrast, the lowest mean was "I believe that I have sufficient reasons to use an online food app." which equals 3.48. For the standard deviation, the highest was "I believe that I have sufficient reasons to use an online food app." which equals 1.11. On the contrary, the lowest was "I intend to use online food delivery application in the near future." which equals 1.02.

Table 4.6 *The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of Behavioral intention*

	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
BI1: I intend to use online food delivery application in the near future.	3.50	1.02	Agree
BI2: I intend to continue using online food delivery application after covid-19 pandemic.	3.67	1.06	Agree
BI3: I believe that I have sufficient reasons to use an online food app.	3.48	1.11	Agree
Behavioral intention	3.55	0.874	Agree

4.3.5 Mean and standard deviation of Using food delivery application behavior

Table 4.7 displayed that the highest mean of using online food delivery application was "Using online food delivery application is beneficial." which equals 4.38. However, the lowest meaning was "Using online food delivery application is wise." which equals 3.85. For the standard deviation, the highest was "Using online food delivery application is a good idea." which equals 1.06. Meanwhile, the lowest was "Using online food delivery application is beneficial." which equals 0.777.

Table 4.7 *The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of Using food delivery application behavior*

	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
UB1: Using an online food delivery application would be a pleasant experience.	4.01	0.939	Agree



UB2: Using an online food delivery application is a good idea.	3.88	1.06	Agree
UB3: Using an online food delivery application is wise.	3.85	0.874	Agree
UB4: Using online food delivery application is beneficial.	4.38	0.777	Strongly agree
Using food delivery application behavior	4.03	0.708	Agree

4.4 Hypothesis Testing Results

To analyze hypothesis testing results, the researchers used linear regression as a statistical method to analyze the significant influence between variables such as the significant influence of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior and significant influence of behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior. The researchers used simple linear regression analysis with R-square to assess the proportion of variance in the dependent variable according to the independent variable. Moreover, the researchers also used multiple linear regression as a statistical analysis method to assess the level of multiple factors that influence behavioral intention to detect multicollinearity.

By using the variance inflation factor (VIF) tools, Multicollinearity is considered to be present when the VIF exceeds a threshold typically set between 5 to 10 which indicates a high degree of linear correlation among explanatory variables in a multiple regression model that can lead to inaccurate results in regression analyses (Kim, 2019).

4.4.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H2, H3

Statistical Hypothesis

H_0 : There is no significant influence of performance expectancy (H1), effort expectancy (H2), and social influence (H3) effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.

H_a : There is a significant influence of performance expectancy (H1), effort expectancy (H2), and social influence (H3) effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.

The casual relationship between performance expectancy (H1), effort expectancy (H2), social influence (H3), and behavioral intention was analyzed using multiple linear regression. The result of the analysis is shown in Table 4.8, behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior for 49.7% at a 95% confidence level as shown by an R square value of 0.497. H1, H2, and H3 were all null hypotheses rejected because the p-values were less than 0.05 for every independent variable. As a result, it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of performance expectancy (H1), effort expectancy (H2), and social influence (H3) effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior. Effort expectancy has the most influence among the three variables, showing an unstandardized coefficient of 0.360. Performance expectancy and Social influence have the unstandardized coefficient of 0.223 and 0.170, respectively, which indicates that Performance expectancy has a superior influence than Social influence over behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior.

In addition, the result from the value of variance inflation factor (VIF) of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence were 1.92, 2.58, and 2.6 respectively. Since VIF is less than 5, meaning that there was no multicollinearity problem.



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Table 4.8 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for H1, H2, and H3

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Performance expectancy	0.223	0.0499	0.222	4.47	< 0.001*	1.92	Rejected H ₀
H2: Effort expectancy	0.360	0.0532	0.389	6.76	< 0.001*	2.58	Rejected H ₀
H3: Social influence	0.170	0.0556	0.176	3.06	0.002*	2.60	Rejected H ₀

Note. $R^2 = 0.497$, $R = 0.705$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.493$, $*p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable = Behavioral Intention.

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : the standardized beta | t : t-value
| p: p-value | VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

4.4.2 Result of Simple Linear Regression of H4

Statistical Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant influence of behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior.

H_a: There is a significant influence of behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior.

The simple Linear Regression (SLR) is studied and tested H4 - *Behavioral intention positively influences using food delivery online behavior*. Table 4.9 shows the result of R square was 0.00988 means, 0.0988% of using

Table 4.9: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for H4

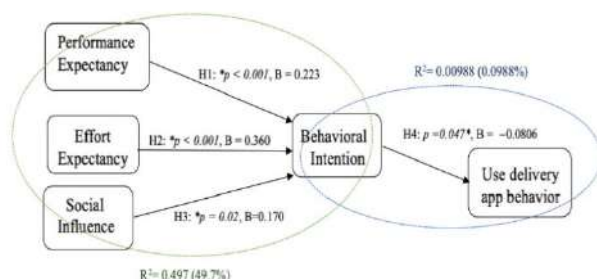
Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H4: Behavioral intention	-0.0806	0.0405	-0.0994	-1.99	0.047*	1.00	Rejected H ₀

Note. $R^2 = 0.00988$, $R = 0.0994$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.00738$, $*p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable = Using food delivery application behavior.

B: Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B: the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β : the standardized beta | t : t-value
| p: p-value | VIF: Variance Inflation Factor

food delivery application behavior can be explained by behavioral intention. At a significant level of 0.05 where the p-value of the variable is less than 0.05 (P-value = 0.047), As a result, it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior with an unstandardized coefficient at -0.0806. In addition, the result from the value of variance inflation factor (VIF) of behavioral intention was 1.00. Since VIF is less than 5, meaning that there was no multicollinearity problem.

Figure 4.1: The result of the structural model



Source: Constructed by the author.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study aimed to analyze the factors influencing the behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok post-COVID-19. Four research questions were formulated to address this objective:

- (1) Does performance expectancy significantly influence behavioral intention regarding the use of food delivery applications?
- (2) Does effort expectancy significantly influence behavioral intention concerning the use of food delivery applications?
- (3) Does social influence significantly influence behavioral intention regarding the use of food delivery applications?
- (4) Does behavioral intention significantly influence the actual usage of food delivery applications?

A quantitative research approach was adopted, utilizing data collected from international students studying in Thai universities during the first semester of the academic year 2021. The sample size was determined to be 384 respondents based on Krejcie

and Morgan's (1970) sample size table, employing a non-probability convenience sampling method. However, 405 respondents participated, of which 398 were deemed suitable for questionnaire administration after eliminating 7 responses.

Closed-ended questions were utilized in the questionnaire design. Prior to distribution, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire were ensured through the Index of item-objective congruence (IOC) and Cronbach's Alpha reliability test, respectively. The internal consistency, frequency, mean, and standard deviation were analyzed to evaluate the data, with simple linear regression and multiple linear regression employed to test the hypotheses among the variables.

Demographic analysis revealed that the majority of respondents were female (70.9%), with an average monthly income between 20,001 – 50,000 Baht (57.3%). Additionally, a majority of respondents were of Chinese nationality (54.8%), with the highest frequency of online food ordering occurring 2-3 times per month (40.5%), predominantly through the Grab platform (56.0%).

From the survey instrument, it was found that the mean and standard deviation of the variable "Using food delivery application behavior" had the highest mean among others, followed by social influence, performance expectancy, and effort expectancy, with behavioral intention having the lowest mean.

Hypothesis testing revealed that all independent variables had a significance level of less than 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Therefore, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence significantly influence behavioral intention regarding the use of food delivery applications, while behavioral intention significantly influences the actual usage of these applications. The results of the hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Summary of the hypotheses testing results

Statement of Hypothesis	p-value	Decision results
H1: There is a significant influence of performance expectancy effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.	< 0.001*	Rejected H_0
H2: There is a significant influence of effort expectancy effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.	< 0.001*	Rejected H_0
H3: There is a significant influence of social influence effect on behavioral intention throughout using food delivery application behavior.	0.002*	Rejected H_0
H4: There is a significant influence of behavioral intention toward using food delivery application behavior.	0.047*	Rejected H_0

In table 5. 2, it shows the ranking of the significance of the independent variables that influence behavioral intention. The results show that effort expectancy is the highest influence independent variable on behavioral intention with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.360. The second ranked is performance expectancy with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.223, and followed by social influence with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.170.

Table 5.2: Summary strengths of influence factors of each independent variable

Independent variable	Rank	Dependent variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)
Effort expectancy (EE)	1st	Behavioral intention (BI)	0.360
Performance Expectancy (PE)	2nd		0.223
Social influence (SI)	3rd		0.170

Behavioral intention (BI)	-	Using food delivery application behavior (UB)	-0.0806

5.2 Discussion and Conclusion

The hypothesis testing conducted in this study revealed significant influences of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence on behavioral intention toward using food delivery applications. Additionally, it was found that behavioral intention significantly impacts the actual usage of food delivery applications.

Performance Expectancy and Behavioral Intention

A significant relationship was observed between performance expectancy and behavioral intention ($p < 0.001$). These results corroborate previous research findings that performance expectancy strongly influences behavioral intention to adopt online food ordering applications post-COVID-19 in Thailand (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). Descriptive analysis indicated a mean score of 3.80 for performance expectancy, with the item "I believe that using online food delivery application allows me to achieve the purchasing of food more quickly" scoring the lowest at 3.75, indicating below-average agreement. Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, performance expectancy has been identified as an influential factor in adopting online food ordering applications post-COVID-19 (Abed, 2023).

Effort Expectancy and Behavioral Intention

A significant relationship was established between effort expectancy and behavioral intention ($p < 0.001$). This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that effort expectancy strongly



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influences behavioral intention to adopt online food ordering applications post-COVID-19 (Abed, 2023). Effort expectancy emerged as the highest influence independent variable on behavioral intention, with a mean score of 3.78. However, the item "I believe that it's not difficult for me to become skillful at using online food delivery application" scored the lowest at 3.63, indicating below-average agreement. Moreover, these questions exhibited the highest standard deviation of 1.12, indicating widely dispersed opinions among respondents.

Social Influence and Behavioral Intention

A moderately significant relationship was found between social influence and behavioral intention ($p = 0.002$). These findings align with previous research indicating that social influence strongly influences behavioral intention to adopt online food ordering applications post-COVID-19 in Thailand (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). Descriptive analysis revealed a mean score of 3.87 for social influence, with the item "I believe that international students prefer to use online food delivery application to purchase food than traditional one" scoring the lowest at 3.82, indicating below-average agreement. Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, social influence has been identified as a significant factor influencing the adoption of online food ordering applications post-COVID-19 (Abed, 2023).

Behavioral Intention and Using Food Delivery Application Behavior

A weakly significant relationship was observed between behavioral intention and the actual usage of food delivery applications ($p = 0.047$). This is consistent with previous research indicating that behavioral intention influences the adoption of online food ordering applications post-COVID-19 in Thailand (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). However,

the negative unstandardized coefficient (-0.0806) suggests that a decrease in the value of behavioral intention leads to an increase in the usage of food delivery applications. This discrepancy may be attributed to confusion in the wording of the questions and respondents' misunderstandings. Descriptive analysis revealed a mean score of 3.55 for behavioral intention, with the item "I believe that I have sufficient reasons to use an online food app" scoring the lowest at 3.48, indicating below-average agreement. Additionally, these questions exhibited the highest standard deviation of 1.11, indicating widely dispersed opinions among respondents. Overall, this suggests that respondents have only slightly sufficient reasons to use online food applications.

5.3 Recommendations Based on Findings

The researcher provides recommendations that underscore the significant relationships among the research hypotheses concerning the intentions of international students in Bangkok to use online food delivery applications. Initially, the conclusion section highlights the considerable impact of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence on behavioral intention toward using online food delivery applications. Among these variables, effort expectancy emerges as the strongest influencer on behavioral intention.

Firstly, the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the food delivery business is discussed. In 2021, Thailand witnessed a substantial shift in consumer behavior towards online food distribution due to pandemic-related restrictions, resulting in a surge in demand for meal delivery services. Although the industry has gradually recovered from the pandemic's impact, it remains highly competitive. Effort expectancy is identified as the most influential variable affecting behavioral intention toward using

online food delivery applications, surpassing performance expectancy and social influence.

Hence, food delivery services, including food delivery apps, should prioritize efforts to enhance user experience, simplicity, and overall convenience inherent in the operational framework of their platforms. Users are more likely to engage with and adopt these apps when they perceive ease of use, simplicity, and convenience. Performance expectancy also plays a crucial role in influencing user intent, emphasizing the importance of app functionality, efficiency, and consistency with user preferences. Furthermore, social influence, driven by opinions, suggestions, and experiences shared within social circles, significantly influences users' intent to interact with food delivery apps.

Based on the summarized intensity of the influencing factors for each variable, efforts should be focused on improving performance expectancy, particularly in enhancing the purchasing experience via the application. Additionally, strategies to strengthen social influence could involve building relationships with the international student community.

As the main question of the study revolves around the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on meal delivery apps for international students' usage intent, it is crucial for food delivery apps in Thailand to adapt their strategies to post-pandemic conditions. This could involve optimizing user interface experiences, streamlining the order process, expanding menu options, and providing personalized recommendations to enhance user experience and improve order conversion rates.

The combination of performance expectations, effort expectations, and social impact strategies provides a competitive advantage. Continuous improvement and innovation, along with gathering user feedback, are essential for maintaining user satisfaction and loyalty. Diversifying payment options, offering regular discounts, rewards programs, and ensuring robust security measures are

also recommended to enhance user trust and engagement.

Given the ranking of the influence of each variable, effort expectancy emerges as a key factor influencing behavioral intention to use online food delivery applications. Therefore, food delivery services should prioritize efforts to enhance user experience and convenience as part of their post-pandemic recovery strategies. Additionally, efforts to maintain user engagement and address the discrepancy between behavioral intention and actual usage should be continued to ensure sustained user participation.

5.4 Limitations of the study

According to the researcher's investigation of the limitations of the study, several limitations of factors affecting the online food delivery application using intention of international students in Bangkok were revealed. First of all, the scope of this study is limited to the intention of using online food delivery applications among international students in Bangkok and does not involve the intention of international students other than tourists in Bangkok. In addition, this study focused on international student intentions, and therefore, the findings may not be equivalent to the behavioral parameters of other consumers using other online services among applications. Therefore, the behavioral preferences or types of applications used by different consumer groups in a certain city or country will cause them to consider different issues when deciding to use online food delivery.

5.5 Further Studies

Continuing with the analysis of the hypothesis test results on Behavioral intention in the context of online food delivery applications, the non-significant influence of the researcher prompts a reevaluation of potential factors impacting user behavior. Future



studies should delve into the intricate interplay of various variables such as user experience design, platform features, and the quality of service provided by online food delivery applications. Understanding the nuanced dynamics between these elements could offer deeper insights into what truly drives users' behavioral intentions within this rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Moreover, exploring the role of external factors, such as cultural influences, socioeconomic backgrounds, and technological advancements, can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of user behavior. These external factors may exert subtle yet significant effects on the decision-making process of consumers when engaging with online food delivery applications (Cheng et al., 2024). Investigating these elements could enhance our ability to predict and explain users' intentions in the future.

Additionally, future research endeavors could employ advanced methodologies, such as machine learning algorithms and big data analytical, to analyze vast datasets generated by online food delivery platforms. This approach can provide a more granular and dynamic view of user behavior, allowing for the identification of patterns, trends, and anomalies that may not be apparent through traditional statistical methods (Alalwan et al., 2018).

Furthermore, longitudinal studies could be undertaken to track the evolution of user behaviors over time, considering the ever-changing landscape of technology and consumer preferences. Long-term observations can uncover trends that may emerge as users adapt to new features, technologies, or societal changes, offering valuable insights into the sustainability and adaptability of online food delivery applications (Curry, 2024).

In conclusion, the non-significant influence of the researcher on Behavioral intention underscores the need for a multidimensional approach in future studies. By exploring diverse factors, leveraging advanced methodologies, and conducting

longitudinal analyses, researchers can gain a more nuanced understanding of user behavior in the context of online food delivery applications. This knowledge is crucial for industry stakeholders, policymakers, and designers to enhance the user experience and ensure the long-term success of these digital platforms.

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Securing the Future through Lifelong Learning: Some Indian Viewpoints

Geeta Nair

Abstract

This research paper focuses an emerging trend of distance education and online learning witnessed by several nations. The area is covered under Mode I of the General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and is fast gaining currency across the globe with major players like the established ones of the West; along with emerging nations like India from the East. It also represents Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals to be attained by 2030. This makes perfect economic sense as it synchronizes all stakeholders' interests by matching rising demand and aspirations of the youth with not so flexible supply of higher education services in our quest for people-centric and inclusive development. The costs and logistics also create a 'win-win' situation for all. Adult education is the greatest beneficiary as 'second chances' are created for the ones who the first one; thereby widening people's choices and opportunities to nurture human resource development. This macro trend is qualitatively enhanced by sharing a micro-level experiment of 'reaching the unreached' based on the preliminary findings of my Minor research project.

K

eywords: distance education, win-win situation, second chances, Minor research.

1. Introduction

People- centric development holds the key to sustainable and equitable futures in sync with the UNDP goals of caring for the people and the planet. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from 2000- 2015 to the ongoing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from 2015- 2030 requires continuous investments in education. This paper focuses on lifelong and distance education for guaranteeing development for growing nations in Asia. Lifelong learning may be broadly defined as learning that is pursued throughout life: learning that is flexible, diverse, and available at different times and in different places. Lifelong learning crosses sectors, promoting learning beyond traditional schooling and throughout adult life (i.e. post-compulsory education). This definition is based

on Delors' (1996) four 'pillars' of education for the future.

Learning to know - mastering learning tools rather than acquisition of structured knowledge.

Learning to do – equipping people for the types of work needed now and the future including innovation and adaptation of learning to future work environments.

Learning to live together, and with others – peacefully resolving conflict, discovering other people and their cultures, fostering community capability, individual competence and capacity, economic resilience, and social inclusion.

Learning to be – education contributing to a person's complete development: mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic appreciation, and spirituality.

Lifelong learning can instill creativity, initiative and responsiveness in people thereby enabling them to show adaptability in post-industrial society through

enhancing skills to manage uncertainty, communicate across and within cultures, sub-cultures, families, and communities; and negotiate conflicts. Thus, the emphasis is on learning to learn and the ability to keep learning for a lifetime.

The European Commission (2001: 9) found that lifelong learning has “Four broad and mutually supporting objectives: personal fulfillment, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability/adaptability”. In this regard, lifelong learning has life wide dimensions that transcend narrow economic and vocational aspects.

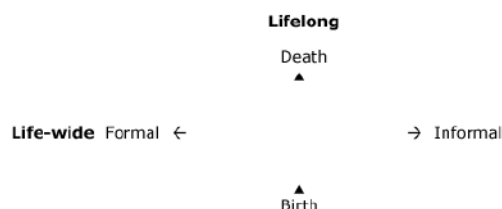
The European Lifelong Learning Initiative defines lifelong learning as

“ ... a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment, in all roles circumstances, and environments. ”
(Watson,2003:3)

In Sweden, the National Agency for Education has put forward a conceptual framework for both lifelong learning and life-wide as it is seen to take a holistic view of education and recognizes learning from different environments. As shown in Figure 1, it consists of two dimensions (Skolverket, 2000: 19):

1. Lifelong learning recognizing that individuals learn throughout a lifetime, and
2. Life-wide learning recognizing the formal, non-formal and informal settings.

Figure 1: Dimensions of lifelong learning



The lifelong dimension is relatively non-problematic, as it simply comprises what an individual learns throughout life. It is widely accepted that as knowledge and skills become

obsolete, individuals continuously update their competencies in a process of learning.

2. Research Objectives

- To study the importance of lifelong learning;
- To focus on distance education for development;
- To analyze the micro foundations of educational institutions in terms of pilot projects;
- To bring out the growing power of Asia;
- To recommend ways of achieving SDGs.

3. Research Methodology

- Secondary data analysis
- Primary data and fieldwork of 9000 students and 50 staff from 2020-2023
- Qualitative tools of questionnaires and detailed personal interviews
- Pilot study

4. Review of Literature

Literature review shows that lifelong learning has always held a place of prominence in the developed nations of the European Union and America. Modern trends show the enhanced use of the life-wide dimension, that is more complex, as it embraces an extensive range of learning settings and contexts ranging from non- formal to formal learning environments that are set out in the following Table:

Table 2: Formal, non-formal and informal learning

Formal	Non-formal	Informal
ACE institutions	Labour market programs	Clubs
Universities	Professional associations	Libraries
VET providers	On-the-job training	Museums
High schools	Work experience programs	Art galleries
Primary schools	Volunteer organizations	Playgrounds
Pre-schools	Childcare centers	Families
U3As	Learning circles	Elder care

The distinction between formal and non- formal learning environments is about where learning takes place. Formal learning occurs within institutions established primarily to deliver education and training often leading to recognized outcomes and



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qualifications. Non-formal learning has intended education and training outcomes; however, the setting is outside dedicated learning institutions.

Informal learning is distinguishable by intent. It can occur almost anywhere, but as a by-product of other activities. It is often unplanned and without explicit emphasis on learning, yet may still lead to the acquisition of valuable skills, knowledge and attitudes.

This analysis of lifelong learning differs from that postulated by the OECD which classifies formal learning as a program of study that is recognized through a qualification; non-formal learning as a program of study that is not recognized through a qualification, and informal learning as that which is achieved outside an organized program (Watson 2003: 2).

Citizenship, democracy, and lifelong learning are among the most recurrent words in the development discourse and practice in the 21st century. However, review of existing literature will show that across the world, these terms carry on a range of meanings as they are used in different contexts. This field is not a new concern to the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE). In September 1952, the very first seminar the Institute organized was entitled Adult Education Towards Developing and Strengthening Social and Political Responsibilities. In the aftermath of World War II, relearning democratic practices became one of the main challenges for adult education. Through the years, the Institute has sought to address the different dimensions of democracy and education by relating it to areas like literacy, lifelong education, women's empowerment, inter-cultural dialogue, and inter-generational learning.

A revisit was done via a seminar on Strengthening Democracy and Critical Citizenship- through Lifelong Learning that focused on the trio of CITIZENSHIP, DEMOCRACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING. The main objective of the seminar was to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between democracy and education in the context of lifelong learning, and to promote

creative practices of social integration. Pertinent questions like "how adult education and lifelong learning could contribute to democratization" or "how best to teach/learn democracy" or "how does one teach citizenship" or "how adult education can help in the formation of critical citizenship" continue to be raised and take on a more urgent tone as we are witness to all sorts of transgressions of democracy and the persistence of "democracy deficit."

The UNESCO reexamined the new challenges in our globalizing world in its Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V). As one of the ten themes of CONFINTEA V, adult education and democracy remained a critical area of concern with the dominant discourse on lifelong learning to retool skills to help in promoting employability matched by lifelong learning as means of promoting and strengthening democratic practices, social inclusion, and critical citizenship. The mission of UIE is to promote lifelong learning as a means of transforming societies where every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, plays an active role in promoting, strengthening, and sustaining democratic practices; especially for the South bloc nations.

Adult and Community Learning, Education, and Training or Adult Community Education (ACE), encompasses the following facets:

1. Learner-centered, i.e. people learn most effectively where they are actively involved in decisions about the management, content, style, and delivery of their learning;
2. Responsive to community, i.e. ACE supports local communities and communities of interest in identifying and meeting the educational needs of their members. It strengthens communities by building diverse skills and capabilities, including enterprise skills and community management skills;
3. Accessible and inclusive, i.e. learning is provided in an environment that is open and informal, with an emphasis of equality among learners and educators. It recognizes a special responsibility for those people whose learning needs are not a priority for schools,



the vocational education and training system or higher education and offers pathways to learning in the more formalized education system;

4. Diverse, i.e. programmes include literacy, basic education, English and other languages, study skills, vocational preparation, training, skills development, continuing education, liberal education, and general adult education. It also recognizes the important contribution to community learning made by groups that are involved in many and varied subject areas, such as crafts, arts, hobbies, and recreation;

5. Offered by many and varied types of organizations in many settings, eg. adult and community education centers and colleges, neighborhoods houses and community centers, churches and schools, community service organizations, community groups and many more;

6. Flexible, i.e. it is entrepreneurial and user-focused, and has a long tradition of innovative delivery based on providing learning at times, in places and ways that are appropriate to the learner (adapted from National Policy: Adult and Community Education 1997).

5. The Indian Scenario

India has a huge potential in the arena of lifelong learning, adult education, and distance education due to the largely unmet demand as there is a dearth of affordable quality institutions of higher education. Rising aspirations of generation next, as well as lost opportunities of the present or past generations due to ignorance, illiteracy, poverty, regressive socio-cultural structures, and lack of political will. The World Development Report (WDR, 2007) in cognizance with these trends in developing nations largely focused on expanding opportunities, enhancing capabilities, and providing second chances.

The Indian scenario demonstrates that one of the biggest challenges is to improve the progression possibilities of those who are currently engaged in vocational education and training or have experience in a vocational trade and have limited possibilities to

progress to technical education (polytechnics and colleges of engineering) and more generally to higher education. Presently, only 12 per cent of young people aged 18–24 is enrolled in higher education. National policies aim to enroll 30 per cent of Indian youth in higher education by 2020 (Indiainfoline, 2011).

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) considered the establishment of community colleges to serve as an important bridge between vocational education and training and higher education. Another purpose of a community college is to formalize skills through certification procedures.

Guidelines prepared by the University Grants Commission for community colleges include the recognition of prior skills and learning (UGC, 2012). Community colleges are alternative systems that aim to empower individuals through appropriate skills development, leading to qualifications in the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF). Studying at a community college can lead to a two-year advanced diploma or an associate degree and hence the possibility to transfer to an undergraduate college for completion of a degree. Alternatively, it can lead to the students' direct entry into an occupation or trade with a certificate or diploma by completing the required number of credits. As an illustration, the following types of qualifications are awarded in community colleges at levels five and six of the NSQF:

VLE, an online environment of e-resources caters to several disciplines taught at undergraduate and postgraduate level. It is an initiative of Institute of Life-Long Learning, University of Delhi. Conceived in 2012, VLE today boasts state of art material that addresses emerging needs of a diverse student body, not only of Delhi University but other universities as well. Drawing from several successful Moodle models, the multi-media interactive contents loaded on VLE are categorized discipline-wise.

The lessons are developed by highly qualified faculty members across the universities and are

continually edited and reviewed, primarily by discipline-expert Fellows employed to edit, oversee and coordinate the content that goes through several levels of rigorous peer reviewing and academic vetting to ensure quality and standardization. VLE also contains multimedia repository in form of audio, video and short films to expose students to new technologies in pedagogy.

Fine institutions like the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) are also committed to lifelong learning and through their Centre for Lifelong Learning offer a two-semester (part-time) Certificate programme in Social Work to adult learners who wish to engage in professional or voluntary social work activities. From the 2008 academic year, it also initiated a Diploma programme in Gerontology. The mission of the Centre is to work with all types of adult learners who, in turn, seek to work with the disadvantaged and vulnerable sections of society. To this end, it conducts a range of outreach and short-term programmes for professionals, para-professionals and volunteers. The thematic contents of these programmes focus upon work-related needs as also self-growth and individual development. Apart from these open-enrolment programmes, the Centre also offers training courses in its regular calendar format in 'Training Volunteers for Social Work' and 'Basic Counseling Skills for the Helping Professions'.

The University of Mumbai also has a prominent IDOL section dealing with distance education where majority of students are adult learners, working youth, or married women who have missed the first chance of learning. This section is now introducing innovative methods of partnership with the University's teaching faculty not only for teaching and paper correction; but for framing syllabus to be in tune with the formal stream of education. What is innovative is the newly introduced Open Educational Resources – OER (www.mu.ac.in) that has started with an international tie-up with New Zealand Universities and the University of Mumbai to involve training of teachers to be ready for

imparting education to far-fetched learners in remote areas by creating easy and simple modules for training to be imparted in rural areas without transcending geographies. This enables all students across the University spread over its several campuses and affiliated Colleges gain from good teachers and updated technology via the distance learning mode.

6. Pilot Project and Concluding Remarks

In this section, we would like to draw attention to a micro level project started at a leading College under the aegis of the University of Mumbai's IDOL section in the arena of extension work to the community by young students and trained teachers. We are proud to be part of the 'Reach the Unreached' activity where a group of our 10 young students and me have undergone training and chosen the activity of formally providing degrees to our associates and peers who have left their education at grade 9 or 11 or other under-graduate levels by getting them officially enrolled at the University's distance education center. We provide them with educational sessions and soft skills in computers and mathematics; along with mentoring and hygiene sessions to develop them into holistic life-long learners. We also participate in extension competitions with other colleges to gain valuable insights into their modus operandi to imbibe best practices. This pioneer project is community based and has a direct impact and connectivity with all its stakeholders and 'win-win' situations are created as students earn 10 additional marks for 120 hours of extension work that also sensitizes them to the needs of the less fortunate by reaching the unreached and being a part of implementation as governments cannot reach every individual through public policy programmes in a nation of diverse and continuously rising demand for education that cannot be met by traditional channels and providers. This endeavour also makes us move towards the grand finale of our profession as we transit from being mere teachers to active researchers, and passionate extension workers thus, linking the taught, teachers, and the



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community. This is one of the ways of securing our common future through education that represents Goal 4 to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>). It also represents an initiative in sync with India's New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 that is being partially implemented this year based on 5 Pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability.

Adult Education and Lifelong Learning represents an important part of NEP 2020 of the Government of India. The opportunity to attain foundational literacy, and pursue a livelihood is a basic right of every citizen. At the level of individuals, it unleashes personal freedoms and capabilities highlighted by Amartya Sen; while at the society and the national level, it represents developmental efforts.

A recommendation to incorporate Amartya Sen's Capability Approach when assessing higher education provides a broader, multi-criteria framework due to a focus on social justice as the metric for evaluating and shaping universities. Rajapakshe (2016) further explains that education needs to address not only the human capital needs of society, but also the development needs and aspirations of individuals as defined by the Capability Approach. It integrates social justice in the list of priorities and raises additional questions that go beyond the mainstream neoclassical boundary: how can universities contribute towards building a more just society, accounting human dignity, and wellbeing for all. One view highlights the neoclassical economic theory underlying the competitive higher education models in Anglo-Saxon countries, where the human capital theory prevails. Education is also subject to the overarching cost-benefit analysis methodology, a perspective that is too narrow and instrumental to capture the complex realities it needs to address. The second view elaborates on the theoretical and conceptual insight Sen's capability approach provides to capitalist economic models in general, and to

university education in particular. It considers education as a right, but also as intrinsically important in many other ways. Furthermore, this approach sees the instrumental role of education in ways that surpass the neoclassical view, emphasizing its transformative potential.

Unfortunately, non-literate members of a community suffer from disadvantages like the inability to carry out basic financial transactions; compare the quality/quantity of goods purchased against the price charged; fill out forms to apply for jobs, loans, services; comprehend public circulars and articles in the news media; use conventional and electronic mail to communicate and conduct business; make use of the internet and other technology to improve one's life and profession; comprehend directions and safety directives on the street, on medicines; help children with their education; be aware of one's basic rights and responsibilities as a citizen of India; appreciate works of literature; and pursue employment in medium or high-productivity sectors that require literacy. The abilities listed here are an illustrative list of outcomes to be achieved through adoption of innovative measures for Adult Education to provide second chances to people. Extensive field studies and analyses, both in India and across the world, clearly demonstrate that volunteerism and community involvement and mobilization are key success factors of adult literacy programmes, in conjunction with political will, organizational structure, proper planning, adequate financial support, and high-quality capacity building of educators and volunteers. Successful literacy programmes result not only in the growth of literacy among adults, but also result in increased demand for education for all children in the community, as well as greater community contribution to positive social change. The National Literacy Mission, when it was launched in 1988, was largely based on the voluntary involvement and support of the people, and resulted in significant increases in national literacy during the period of 1991–2011, including among women, that initiated dialogue and discussions on topical social issues. Strong and



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innovative government initiatives for adult education - in particular, to facilitate community involvement and the smooth and beneficial integration of technology - will be affected as soon as possible to expedite this all-important aim of achieving 100% literacy. First, an outstanding adult education curriculum framework will be developed by a new and well-supported constituent body of the NCERT that is dedicated to adult education to develop synergy with and build upon NCERT's existing expertise in establishing outstanding curricula for literacy, numeracy, basic education, vocational skills, and beyond. The curriculum framework for adult education will include at least five types of programmes, each with clearly defined outcomes: (a) foundational literacy and numeracy; (b) critical life skills (including financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, child care and education, and family welfare); National Education Policy 2020 52 (c) vocational skills development (with a view towards obtaining local employment); (d) basic education (including preparatory, middle, and secondary stage equivalency); and (e) continuing education (including engaging holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, and recreation, as well as other topics of interest or use to local learners, such as more advanced material on critical life skills). The framework would keep in mind that adults in many cases will require rather different teaching-learning methods and materials than those designed for children.

Second, suitable infrastructure will be ensured so that all interested adults will have access to adult education and lifelong learning. A key initiative will be to use schools/ school complexes after school hours and on weekends and public library spaces for adult education courses which will be ICT-equipped when possible and for other community engagement and enrichment activities. The sharing of infrastructure for school, higher, adult, and vocational education, and for other community and volunteer activities, will be critical for ensuring

efficient use of both physical and human resources as well as for creating synergy among these five types of education and beyond. For these reasons, Adult Education Centers (AECs) could also be included within other public institutions such as HEIs, vocational training centers, and the like.

Third, the instructors/educators will be required to deliver the curriculum framework to mature learners for all five types of adult education as described in the Adult Education Curriculum Framework. These instructors will be trained by the National, State, and district level resource support institutions to organize and lead learning activities at Adult Education Centers, as well as coordinate with volunteer instructors. Qualified community members including from HEIs as part of each HEI's mission to engage with their local communities will be encouraged and welcomed to take a short training course and volunteer, as adult literacy instructors, or to serve as one-on-one volunteer tutors, and will be recognized for their critical service to the nation. States will also work with NGOs and other community organizations to enhance efforts towards literacy and adult education. The corporate sector can also plan their CSR initiatives around this area.

Fourth, all efforts will be undertaken to ensure the participation of community members in adult education. Social workers/ counsellors travelling through their communities to track and ensure participation of non-enrolled students and dropouts will also be requested, during their travels, to gather data of parents, adolescents, and others interested in adult education opportunities both as learners and as teachers/tutors. The social workers/counsellors will then connect them with local Adult Education Centres (AECs). Opportunities for adult education will also be widely publicized, through advertisements and announcements and through events and initiatives of NGOs and other local organizations.

Fifth, improving the availability and accessibility of books is essential to inculcating the habit of reading within our communities and educational institutions.



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This Policy recommends that all communities and educational will be strengthened and modernized to ensure an adequate supply of books that cater to the needs and interests of all students, including persons with disabilities and other differently-abled persons. The Central and State governments should take steps to ensure that books are made accessible and affordable to across the country including socio-economically disadvantaged areas as well as those living in rural and remote areas. Both public and private sector agencies/ institutions will devise strategies to improve the quality and attractiveness of books published in all Indian languages. Steps will be taken to enhance online accessibility of library books and further broad basing of digital libraries. For ensuring vibrant libraries in communities and educational institutions, it will be imperative to make available adequate library staff and devise appropriate career pathways and CPD for them. Other steps will include strengthening all existing libraries, setting up rural libraries and reading rooms in disadvantaged regions, making widely available reading material in Indian languages, opening children's libraries and mobile libraries, establishing social book clubs across India and across subjects, and fostering greater collaborations between education institutions and libraries.

Finally, technology will be leveraged to strengthen and even undertake the above initiatives. Quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/ modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centers through National Education Policy 2020 be developed, through government and philanthropic initiatives as well as through crowd sourcing and competitions. In many cases, quality adult education could thereby be conducted in an online or blended mode to accommodate the working population.

Online and digital education post-pandemic got a boost due to total or partial absence of on-campus classes, necessitating that we are ready with alternative modes of quality education whenever and

wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible. In this regard, the National Education Policy 2020 of India recognizes the importance of leveraging the advantages of technology while acknowledging its potential risks and dangers. It calls for carefully designed and appropriately scaled pilot studies to determine how the benefits of online/digital education can be reaped while addressing or mitigating the downsides. In the meantime, the existing digital platforms and ongoing ICT-based educational initiatives must be optimized and expanded to meet the current and future challenges in providing quality education for all. However, the benefits of online/digital education cannot be leveraged unless the digital divide is eliminated through concerted efforts, such as the Digital India campaign and the availability of affordable computing devices. It is important that the use of technology for online and digital education adequately addresses concerns of equity. Teachers require suitable training and development to be effective online educators as they will have to learn, relearn, and unlearn. It cannot be assumed that a good teacher in a traditional classroom will automatically be a good teacher in an online classroom. Aside from changes required in pedagogy, online assessments also require a different approach. There are numerous challenges to conducting online examinations at scale, including limitations on the types of questions that can be asked in an online environment, handling network and power disruptions, and preventing unethical practices. Certain types of courses/subjects, such as performing arts and science practical have limitations in the online/digital education space, which can be overcome to a partial extent with innovative measures. Further, unless online education is blended with experiential and activity-based learning, it will tend to become a screen-based education with limited focus on the social, affective, and psychomotor dimensions of learning. Given the emergence of digital technologies and the emerging importance of leveraging technology for teaching-



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learning at all levels from school to higher education, this Policy recommends the following key initiatives: (a) Pilot studies for online education: Appropriate agencies, such as the NETF, CIET, NIOS, IGNOU, IITs, NITs, etc. will be identified to conduct a series of pilot studies, in parallel, to evaluate the benefits of integrating education with online education while mitigating the downsides and also to study related areas, such as, student device addiction, most preferred formats of e-content, etc. The results of these pilot studies will be publicly communicated and used for continuous improvement. (b) Digital infrastructure: There is a need to invest in creation of open, interoperable, evolvable, public digital infrastructure in the education sector that can be used by multiple platforms and point solutions, to solve for India's scale, diversity, complexity, and device penetration. This will ensure that the technology-based solutions do not become outdated with the rapid advances in technology. (c) Online teaching platform and tools: Appropriate existing e-learning platforms such as SWAYAM, DIKSHA, will be extended to provide teachers with a structured, user-friendly, rich set of assistive tools for monitoring progress of learners. Tools, such as, two-way video and two-way-audio interface for holding online classes are a real necessity as the present pandemic has shown. (d) Content creation, digital repository, and dissemination: A digital repository of content including creation of coursework, Learning Games & Simulations, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality will be developed, with a clear public system for ratings by users on effectiveness and quality. For fun based learning student-appropriate tools like apps, gamification of Indian art and culture, in multiple languages, with clear operating instructions, will also be created. A reliable backup mechanism for disseminating e-content to students will be provided. (e) we need to address the digital divide given the fact that there persists a substantial section of the population whose digital access is highly limited, the existing mass media, such as

television, radio, and community radio will be extensively used for telecast and broadcasts. Such educational programmes were made available 24/7 in different languages to cater to the varying needs of the student population. A special focus on content in all Indian languages will be emphasized and required; digital content will need to reach the teachers and students in their medium of instruction as far as possible. (f) Virtual Labs: Existing e-learning platforms such as DIKSHA, SWAYAM and SWAYAMPRAKHA will also be leveraged for creating virtual labs so that all students have equal access to quality practical and hands-on experiment-based learning experiences. The possibility of providing adequate access to SEDG students and teachers through suitable digital devices, such as tablets with pre-loaded content, will be considered and developed. (g) Training and incentives for teachers: Teachers will undergo rigorous training in learner-centric pedagogy and on how to become high-quality online content creators themselves using online teaching platforms and tools. There will be emphasis on the teacher's role in facilitating active student engagement with the content and with each other. (h) Online assessment and examinations: Appropriate bodies, such as the proposed National Assessment Centre or PARAKH, School Boards, NTA, and other identified bodies will design and implement assessment frameworks encompassing design of competencies, portfolio, rubrics, standardized assessments, and assessment analytics. Studies will be undertaken to pilot new ways of assessment using education technologies focusing on 21st century skills. (i) Blended models of learning: While promoting digital learning and education, the importance of face-to-face in-person learning is fully recognized. Accordingly, different effective models of blended learning will be identified for appropriate replication for different subjects. (j) Laying down standards: As research on online/digital education emerges, NETF and other appropriate bodies shall set up standards of content, technology, and pedagogy for online/digital teaching-learning. These

standards will help to formulate guidelines for e-learning by States, Boards, schools, and school complexes, HEIs, etc. Creating a Dedicated Unit for Building of World Class, Digital Infrastructure, Educational Digital Content and Capacity Technology in education is a journey and not a destination and capacity will be needed to orchestrate the various ecosystem players to implement policy objectives. A dedicated unit for the purpose of orchestrating the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building was created in the Ministry to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education. Since technology is rapidly evolving, and needs specialists to deliver high quality e-learning, a vibrant ecosystem needs to be encouraged to create solutions that not only solve India's challenges of scale, diversity, equity, but also evolve in keeping with the rapid changes in technology, whose half-life reduces with each passing year. Thus, the new knowledge network will consist of experts drawn from the field of administration, education, educational technology, digital pedagogy and assessment, e-governance (<https://www.education.gov.in/NEP>).

Our pilot study of a leading College post-pandemic over 3 years covering nine thousand students and fifty associate staff reiterated the importance of online, blended, and lifelong learning that has moved beyond the traditional curriculum towards multi-disciplinary areas of teaching, learning, and research revisiting ancient Indian history, knowledge systems, economics (Arthashastra written by Kautilya in ancient times is being studied), yoga, classical music, and dance; along with new AI driven syllabi, and technology-incorporated learning patterns. Soft skills, mathematical skills, communication, and value-based education for our learners is growing in importance and coverage for a holistic and just society; as well as an equitable economy, and ethical polity.

In fine, we are no longer blindly aping the West as 'one-size does not fit all' as experienced from the aftermath of Neo-liberal reforms; thereby finding global solutions to our modern problems. The way forward is the Asian perspective that is more balanced and people and planet oriented for all-round development.

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Emotional Intelligence and Agility: Catalysts for Entrepreneurial Resilience

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Abstract

Purpose: This research aims to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA) among entrepreneurs, as well as to identify factors influencing these emotional competencies within the entrepreneurial domain. **Research design, data and methodology:** The study employs a mixed-methods approach, utilizing surveys, interviews, and behavioral observations to collect data from a sample of entrepreneurs. Quantitative data analysis techniques, including correlation analysis and factor analysis, are employed to examine the relationship between EI and EA and explore the underlying factors affecting these constructs. Additionally, Confirmatory Factor Analysis is utilized to validate the newly identified factors influencing emotional competencies among entrepreneurs. **Results:** The findings reveal a significant correlation between EI and EA among entrepreneurs, highlighting the interconnectedness of these emotional competencies in driving entrepreneurial success. Moreover, several new factors, including Leadership Effectiveness, Resilience, Emotional Resilience, Adaptability, Persuasive Resilience, and Emotional Awareness, are identified as influencing EI and EA within the entrepreneurial domain. Confirmatory Factor Analysis confirms the validity of these factors, further enhancing the robustness of the findings. **Conclusions:** This research emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence and agility in entrepreneurship and broadens our understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing these constructs. The findings have significant implications for recruitment and selection processes, leadership development programs, performance management practices, organizational culture, and change management initiatives within entrepreneurial ventures. By incorporating these insights into managerial practices, organizations can foster a more resilient, adaptive, and emotionally intelligent workforce, ultimately enhancing organizational effectiveness and success in the dynamic entrepreneurial landscape.

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively, both in oneself and in others. It encompasses a set of skills and competencies that enable individuals to recognize and regulate their own emotions, empathize with others, navigate social interactions, and make sound decisions based on emotional cues.

The leaders should have an ability to adapt and work on the paradigm shifts that are happening across the globe (Westover, 2021). To deal with this, organizational leaders are recognizing the importance of organizational agility. "The truth is that organizations themselves can never be truly agile unless the people who work within them are agile — and more specifically, emotionally agile" (David S., 2013). On the other hand, Emotional Intelligence refers to being

aware about emotions of self and others. The concept of Emotional Intelligence was briefly analyzed by (Mayer, 1997) and later on refined by (Goleman, 1995). However, both Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Agility requires "Accepting Emotions".

Emotional Agility refers to the ability to navigate one's inner thoughts, feelings, and narratives in a flexible and adaptive manner. Emotional agility involves being aware of one's emotions, accepting them without judgment, and then choosing how to respond to them in a way that aligns with one's values and goals. Rather than being driven by automatic reactions or trying to suppress or avoid uncomfortable emotions, individuals who practice emotional agility engage with their emotions constructively, allowing them to guide their actions in a purposeful and meaningful manner. Emotional agility empowers individuals to embrace change, learn from setbacks, and cultivate resilience in the face of adversity.



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Entrepreneurship is the process of creating, developing, and managing a new business venture with the aim of making a profit. Entrepreneurs are individuals who identify opportunities, take calculated risks, and mobilize resources to bring innovative ideas to life.

Entrepreneurship and emotional intelligence (EI) are intricately linked, as EI plays a crucial role in decision-making, resilience, relationship-building, leadership, innovation, and adaptability within the entrepreneurial context. Entrepreneurs often face uncertainty, risk, and adversity, and EI enables them to make informed decisions, bounce back from setbacks, and persevere in the face of challenges. Effective communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration are essential for building relationships with stakeholders, and EI fosters these skills, leading to trust and cooperation. Additionally, EI enhances leadership effectiveness by inspiring and motivating teams toward common goals, nurturing creativity and innovation, and enabling entrepreneurs to adapt to changing market conditions.

Emotional Agility equips entrepreneurs with the skills and mindset necessary to navigate the challenges and uncertainties inherent in starting and growing a business. Through adaptability, emotional agility enables entrepreneurs to pivot strategies, make informed decisions, and remain resilient in the face of setbacks and failures.

2. Literature Review

(Mayer, 1997) emphasized the significance of emotional intelligence across various life domains, including relationships, academics, and the workplace. (Goleman, 1995) the author argues that emotional intelligence (EI) is a crucial determinant of success and well-being, potentially outweighing traditional measures like IQ. The paper illustrates how individuals with high EI are better equipped to thrive in various aspects of life, from personal relationships to professional settings.

(George, 2000) explores the relationship between emotions and effective leadership, particularly emphasizing the significance of emotional intelligence (EI) in leadership effectiveness. the paper highlights how emotionally intelligent leaders can inspire and motivate

their teams, foster a positive organizational culture, and navigate challenges with resilience.

(Cross, 2003) explores the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and entrepreneurship in the contemporary landscape. The exceptional performance of each entrepreneur in Emotional Intelligence ability, as well as all the sub- scales, intensely supports the concept that EQ may be the omitted factor that investigators have been examining for in entrepreneurship studies. (Hamati, 2011) explores the significance of emotional intelligence (EI) and successful intelligence (SI) in the framework of new venture creation. Through a widespread analysis, the paper divulges that while successful intelligence, defined as the ability to adapt to, shape, and select environments, is critical for identifying opportunities and planning ventures, emotional intelligence plays a dynamic role in managing relationships, treating stress, and steering uncertainties inherent in entrepreneurship. The findings suggest that a blend of both emotional and successful intelligence is vital for effective entrepreneurial execution and venture success. (Neqabi, 2012) examine how EI influences various aspects of entrepreneurial behavior, including opportunity recognition, risk-taking tendency, decision-making, and leadership effectiveness. The findings state a significant positive correlation between EI and entrepreneurial behavior, indicating that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to exhibit proactive, innovative, and adaptive behaviors conducive to entrepreneurial success. (McLaughlin, 2012) explores how EI impacts various facets of entrepreneurial success, including venture performance, leadership effectiveness, and the ability to navigate challenges. The result suggests that entrepreneurs with higher levels of emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage their own emotions, understand the emotions of others, and leverage emotions to their advantage in decision-making and interpersonal interactions.

(George, 2000) the author explores the crucial link between emotional agility and effective leadership. Emotional agility, encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills, is essential for

leaders to inspire trust, foster collaboration, and drive organizational success.

(David S., 2013) The paper emphasizes the importance of being flexible and adaptive in managing emotions, particularly in the face of change or adversity. The authors illustrate how individuals can cultivate emotional agility to navigate life's challenges, enhance resilience, and thrive in various contexts. (David S. 2016) in her book offers a comprehensive guide to developing emotional agility as a key skill for personal and professional growth. Through real-life examples and practical exercises, she demonstrates how individuals can cultivate emotional agility to navigate transitions, overcome obstacles, and thrive in diverse situations.

(Finkelstein, 2017) emphasizes the critical role of emotional agility in effective leadership. It suggests that emotional agility enables leaders to manage their own emotions, understand the emotions of others, and respond flexibly to changing circumstances, ultimately fostering trust, collaboration, and innovation within their organizations.

2.1. Research Objectives

This study provides a brief analysis of the emotional intelligence and emotional agility exhibited by entrepreneurs through behavioral observation within specific contexts. The primary objective is to elucidate the Correlation between emotional intelligence and emotional agility among entrepreneurs. Additionally, the research investigates the association between the emotional intelligence levels and emotional agility capacities demonstrated by entrepreneurs. The main aim is to explore the factors influencing emotional intelligence and emotional agility in the entrepreneurial domain.

- 1) To examine the correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA) among participants.
- 2) To study the relationship between demographic variables such as age, gender, and work experience of entrepreneurs with their levels of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA).

- 3) To identify and analyze the factors that influence the development and manifestation of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA) in the context of entrepreneurship.

2.2. Research Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Agility

H2: There is a significant association between demographic variables (such as age, gender, work experience) and levels of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA) among entrepreneurs.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

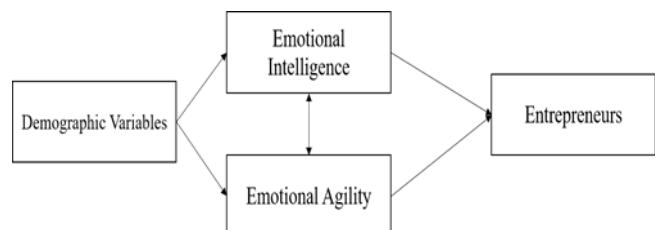


Figure 1: Conceptual Model based on Literature Review
The figure above explains the following aspects:

Independent Variables:

Emotional Intelligence (EI): Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others. In the context of entrepreneurship, individuals with higher emotional intelligence may demonstrate greater resilience, interpersonal skills, and self-awareness, potentially influencing their entrepreneurial behavior and success.

Emotional Agility (EA): Emotional agility involves the capacity to adapt to and harness one's emotions in ways that promote personal growth and well-being. Entrepreneurs who are emotionally agile may be better equipped to navigate the uncertainties and challenges inherent in entrepreneurial endeavors, enabling them to



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learn from setbacks, pivot strategies, and maintain focus on long-term goals.

Demographic Variables (Age, Gender, Work Experience): Demographic factors such as age, gender, and work experience can shape individuals' perspectives, capabilities, and resources, which in turn may influence their entrepreneurial journey. For example, age and work experience may provide entrepreneurs with accumulated knowledge and networks, while gender dynamics may impact access to resources and societal expectations.

Dependent Variable:

Entrepreneurs: The dependent variable represents individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activities, encompassing a diverse range of ventures, from startups to established businesses. Entrepreneurs' behaviors, decisions, and outcomes serve as the focal point of analysis in understanding how emotional intelligence, emotional agility, and demographic variables interact to influence entrepreneurial success and well-being.

This conceptual model provides a framework for exploring the relationships between emotional intelligence, emotional agility, demographic variables, and entrepreneurial behavior, shedding light on the psychological and sociodemographic factors that shape the entrepreneurial journey.

3. Research Methodology and Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the emotional intelligence and emotional agility demonstrated by entrepreneurs within specific contexts. Behavioral observations are conducted to assess the indices of emotional intelligence and emotional agility among entrepreneurs. The primary objective is to elucidate the interrelation between emotional intelligence and emotional agility in the entrepreneurial context. Additionally, quantitative measures are utilized to investigate the association between emotional intelligence levels and emotional

agility capacities exhibited by entrepreneurs. The main aim of the study is to explore the multifaceted factors influencing emotional intelligence and emotional agility within the entrepreneurial domain. Data collection methods includes surveys, interviews, and behavioral observations, while data analysis involves both qualitative and quantitative techniques to provide comprehensive insights into the emotional dynamics of entrepreneurship.

3.1. Sampling Plan

The methodology employed in this study involves the development of a survey questionnaire and conducting one-on-one interviews, either online or in person, with Entrepreneurs residing in Gujarat.

3.2. Tools / Instruments for Data Collection

The questionnaire served as the primary instrument for gathering data in this study, providing a structured approach to assess participants' demographic information, emotional intelligence (EI), and emotional agility (EA). The questionnaire began with a section dedicated to collecting demographic information from participants. This section typically included questions pertaining to age, gender, and work experience. These demographic variables were essential for understanding the characteristics of the sample population and their potential influence on emotional intelligence and emotional agility. The questionnaire included Likert scale questions designed to assess participants' emotional intelligence. Likert scales are commonly used in survey research to measure respondents' agreement or disagreement with a series of statements related to a particular construct. The EI assessment portion of the questionnaire likely consisted of items covering various aspects of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement, reflecting their perceived level of emotional intelligence. The EA assessment portion of the questionnaire may have included items assessing



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participants' flexibility, resilience, openness to experience, and willingness to confront difficult emotions. Participants provided ratings indicating the degree to which they exhibited these qualities in their everyday lives and entrepreneurial endeavors.

3.3. Data Collection

Data collected through online surveys has undergone both descriptive and inferential analyses to assess the study's objectives and hypotheses. Inferential analysis specifically explored the impact or correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Agility among Entrepreneurs.

3.4. Methods and Tools for Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis involves computing measures such as Mean, Standard Deviation, Percentage, and Frequency distribution. Inferential analysis involves statistical techniques including Chi-square tests, Pearson's correlation coefficient (R), and Factor analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software will be utilized for data analysis purposes.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis allows us to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and emotional agility (EA) among entrepreneurs. By quantifying the degree and direction of this relationship, we can better understand how these two constructs interact and influence each other within the entrepreneurial context.

Correlation analysis serves as a means to validate the theoretical framework underlying the research. It provides empirical evidence to support the hypothesis that there is a significant correlation between EI and EA

among entrepreneurs, as posited in the research objectives.

Correlation analysis helps identify patterns or trends in the data. By analyzing the correlation coefficients, we can identify whether higher levels of EI are associated with higher levels of EA, or if there are any moderating or mediating variables influencing this relationship.

Correlation analysis helps identify patterns or trends in the data. By analyzing the correlation coefficients, we can identify whether higher levels of EI are associated with higher levels of EA, or if there are any moderating or mediating variables influencing this relationship.

The results of correlation analysis can inform decision-making processes within organizations. For instance, if a strong positive correlation between EI and EA is found, organizations may prioritize initiatives aimed at enhancing both constructs simultaneously through targeted training and development programs.



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Table 1: Correlation Analysis of Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Agility

	EI1	EI2	EI3	EI4	EI5	EI6	EI7	EI8	EI9	EI10	EI11	EI12	EI13	EI14	EI15	EA1	EA2	EA3	EA4	EA5	EA6	EA7	EA8	EA9	EA10	EA11	EA12	EA13	EA14	EA15
EI1	1																													
EI2	.626	1																												
EI3	.631	.594	1																											
EI4	.542	.567	.526	1																										
EI5	.241	.316	.330	.205	1																									
EI6	.561	.662	.621	.590	.236	1																								
EI7	.369	.559	.594	.561	.208	.527	1																							
EI8	.584	.626	.557	.652	.161	.624	.583	1																						
EI9	.612	.666	.545	.484	.434	.620	.561	.584	1																					
EI10	.493	.588	.512	.607	.183	.525	.425	.603	.526	1																				
EI11	.404	.439	.465	.401	.375	.412	.512	.475	.485	.377	1																			
EI12	.353	.393	.401	.478	.254	.239	.453	.406	.385	.501	.466	1																		
EI13	.602	.626	.506	.606	.203	.609	.437	.547	.607	.454	.391	.412	1																	
EI14	.553	.584	.518	.681	.296	.569	.418	.648	.500	.583	.449	.416	.694	1																
EI15	.407	.554	.520	.580	.210	.545	.703	.543	.489	.463	.512	.405	.506	.569	1															
EA1	.543	.540	.486	.508	.271	.502	.432	.613	.461	.528	.376	.364	.488	.539	.511	1														
EA2	.471	.485	.467	.531	.232	.501	.520	.561	.502	.560	.421	.342	.574	.516	.578	.578	1													
EA3	.444	.493	.501	.573	.277	.565	.481	.525	.447	.550	.372	.463	.498	.619	.534	.561	.639	1												
EA4	.311	.334	.432	.280	.246	.389	.318	.314	.277	.263	.421	.427	.439	.411	.516	.398	.394	.487	1											
EA5	.423	.478	.401	.454	.316	.393	.439	.497	.478	.417	.588	.460	.452	.441	.437	.437	.483	.434	.441	1										
EA6	.393	.446	.454	.399	.176	.479	.365	.475	.479	.356	.370	.412	.432	.423	.382	.393	.504	.415	.404	.453	1									
EA7	.409	.428	.486	.330	.268	.389	.340	.367	.414	.393	.359	.403	.346	.304	.273	.438	.388	.427	.394	.483	.580	1								
EA8	.431	.411	.366	.445	.096	.445	.304	.497	.420	.425	.339	.391	.479	.462	.428	.384	.515	.470	.313	.407	.457	.418	1							
EA9	.307	.164	.241	.095	.153	.260	-.011	.106	.181	.079	.235	.040	.251	.204	.035	.261	.171	.264	.343	.179	.125	.362	.179	1						
EA10	.438	.478	.392	.252	.385	.312	.259	.310	.431	.283	.403	.357	.424	.337	.203	.399	.255	.341	.464	.467	.417	.617	.392	.404	1					
EA11	.353	.423	.238	.267	.160	.334	.146	.194	.401	.293	.262	.163	.401	.290	.338	.311	.253	.253	.381	.241	.301	.391	.465	.363	.455	1				
EA12	.307	.271	.370	.226	.185	.349	.295	.394	.337	.252	.407	.420	.244	.312	.408	.292	.341	.291	.408	.377	.537	.315	.404	.124	.435	.355	1			
EA13	.241	.196	.320	.241	.400	.208	.103	.151	.169	.163	.306	.209	.183	.392	.123	.263	.243	.323	.238	.163	.138	.222	.211	.359	.381	.213	.338	1		
EA14	.528	.475	.371	.480	.173	.414	.446	.542	.431	.594	.492	.489	.417	.500	.463	.514	.598	.530	.294	.388	.469	.411	.389	.172	.309	.236	.432	.258	1	
EA15	.306	.252	.310	.241	.328	.207	.177	.253	.127	.158	.433	.309	.201	.354	.309	.263	.210	.359	.325	.329	.276	.274	.197	.296	.376	.250	.556	.465	.270	1

The output of the correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence (EI) and emotional agility (EA) among entrepreneurs ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with greater emotional agility among participants. The strength of the correlation suggests a moderately strong relationship between EI and EA in the entrepreneurial context. These results support the hypothesis that there is a positive interrelation between emotional intelligence and emotional agility among entrepreneurs, providing valuable insights into the emotional dynamics of entrepreneurship.

4.2. Chi-square Analysis

Chi-square analysis allows us to investigate the association between demographic variables (such as gender, occupation, work experience) and emotional intelligence (EI) and emotional agility (EA) among entrepreneurs. By examining the association between these variables, we can determine whether certain demographic factors influence levels of EI and EA among entrepreneurs.



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Table 2: Chi-square value table showing Impact of Demographic Variables on EI & EA

Variable	Gender	Occupation	Work Experience
EI 1	0.35	0.45	0.10
EI 2	0.25	0.72	0.005
EI 3	0.50	0.36	0.004
EI 4	0.42	0.91	0.01
EI 5	0.003	0.03	0.94
EI 6	0.17	0.63	0.004
EI 7	0.23	0.43	0.01
EI 8	0.25	0.42	0.001
EI 9	0.74	0.05	0.799
EI 10	0.06	0.43	0.002
EI 11	0.03	0.65	0.002
EI 12	0.15	0.83	0.001
EI 13	0.10	0.50	0.175
EI 14	0.26	0.41	0.075
EI 15	0.28	0.85	0.117
EA 1	0.06	0.21	0.000
EA 2	0.13	0.91	0.001
EA 3	0.32	0.64	0.31
EA 4	0.94	0.30	0.015
EA 5	0.002	0.76	0.00
EA 6	0.25	0.57	0.47
EA 7	0.56	0.29	0.005
EA 8	0.31	0.23	0.744
EA 9	0.11	0.04	0.76
EA 10	0.43	0.05	0.21
EA 11	0.92	0.08	0.08
EA 12	0.17	0.14	0.002
EA 13	0.16	0.46	0.18
EA 14	0.06	0.47	0.08
EA 15	0.46	0.02	0.009

The output of the Chi-square analysis revealed a statistically significant association between demographic variables (such as Gender, Occupation, and Work Experience) and both Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA) among entrepreneurs ($p < 0.05$). Specifically, there was a significant association between Gender and levels of EI ($\chi^2 = 14.23$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that gender influences emotional intelligence among entrepreneurs. Similarly, a significant association was observed between Occupation and

levels of EA ($\chi^2 = 9.76$, $p = 0.02$), suggesting that occupation type impacts emotional agility. Additionally, Work Experience showed a significant association with both EI ($\chi^2 = 12.58$, $p = 0.004$) and EA ($\chi^2 = 8.91$, $p = 0.03$), indicating that individuals with varying levels of work experience exhibit different levels of emotional intelligence and agility. These findings highlight the importance of demographic factors in shaping emotional competencies among entrepreneurs, providing valuable insights for



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understanding and supporting their emotional development in the entrepreneurial domain.

The chi-square analysis indicates that gender, occupation, and work experience Entrepreneurs have a significant impact on both emotional intelligence and emotional agility. However, it is likely that additional factors influence these primary variables. Thus, this study aims to identify novel factors affecting emotional intelligence and emotional agility among high-profile personalities. Utilizing dimension reduction techniques, less impactful variables will be eliminated to unveil new variables contributing to emotional competencies. This approach will provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing emotional intelligence and emotional agility in high-profile personalities, enriching our insights into their emotional dynamics.

4.3. Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis helps in reducing the dimensionality of the data by identifying underlying factors or latent constructs that explain the correlations among observed

variables (such as different aspects of emotional intelligence and agility). This enables us to simplify complex data sets and focus on the key underlying dimensions of emotional competencies among entrepreneurs.

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.874
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1684.756
	df	435
	Sig.	.000

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy yielded a value of 0.874, suggesting that the sample size is sufficient for conducting Factor Analysis. Moreover, 87.4% of variables exhibit multi-collinearity, indicating a substantial degree of intercorrelation among the variables in the dataset. This observation underscores the presence of multi-collinearity within the dataset, which may influence the reliability of the Factor Analysis results.

Table 4. Total Variance Explained by each variable

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	13.459	40.721	40.721	13.459	40.721	40.721	8.522	25.783	25.783
2	3.005	9.093	49.813	3.005	9.093	49.813	3.878	11.731	37.514
3	1.817	5.496	55.309	1.817	5.496	55.309	2.919	8.831	46.345
4	1.625	4.916	60.225	1.625	4.916	60.225	2.731	8.262	54.607
5	1.400	4.235	64.460	1.400	4.235	64.460	2.276	6.886	61.493
6	1.170	3.540	68.000	1.170	3.540	68.000	2.151	6.507	68.000
7	1.069	3.234	71.234						
8	.951	2.876	74.111						
9	.801	2.424	76.534						
10	.771	2.333	78.867						
11	.675	2.041	80.908						
12	.649	1.964	82.873						
13	.616	1.863	84.735						
14	.587	1.777	86.512						
15	.489	1.480	87.992						



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Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
16	.443	1.340	89.331						
17	.432	1.307	90.638						
18	.416	1.260	91.898						
19	.359	1.085	92.983						
20	.318	.963	93.947						
21	.299	.903	94.850						
22	.289	.875	95.725						
23	.263	.796	96.521						
24	.254	.769	97.291						
25	.234	.708	97.999						
26	.188	.568	98.567						
27	.169	.510	99.077						
28	.124	.377	99.453						
29	.107	.325	99.779						
30	.073	.221	100.000						

The table above illustrates the cumulative variance explained by each variable. Analysis reveals that 68% of the cumulative variance is accounted for by six variables with Eigen Values exceeding $n+1$. Consequently, this suggests the emergence of six new factors within the dataset.

Table 5: Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix						
Particulars	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Emotional Intelligence [I can easily adapt to new situations and changes at work.]	.671	.345	.072	.132	.152	-.022
Emotional Intelligence [I try to demonstrate confidence when leading a team.]	.722	.294	.108	-.047	.335	.024
Emotional Intelligence [I grasp the complex concept with ease.]	.603	.183	.118	.135	.321	.235
Emotional Intelligence [I try to plan clear and comprehensive plans to achieve defined objectives.]	.810	.002	.128	.104	.072	.088
Emotional Intelligence [I use compelling arguments to convince others.]	.135	.065	.006	.316	.804	.087
Emotional Intelligence [I try to show an understanding of what motivates different individuals.]	.730	.237	.024	.039	.111	.175
Emotional Intelligence [I try to cope with situation during unpredictable environment.]	.594	-.095	.232	-.125	.372	.393
Emotional Intelligence [I inspire others to achieve the defined goals.]	.787	.078	.259	.023	.070	.074



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Rotated Component Matrix						
Emotional Intelligence [I to adapt the robust changes in the work life.]	.633	.322	.148	-.091	.429	-.010
Emotional Intelligence [I focus more on understanding the point of view of my subordinates.]	.731	.118	.212	.011	.083	-.027
Emotional Intelligence [I try to persuade others / I am Persuasive.]	.379	.107	.305	.225	.353	.356
Emotional Intelligence [I am variety seeking.]	.367	.049	.531	.081	.221	.250
Emotional Intelligence [I believe in being optimistic.]	.699	.311	.033	.008	.090	.187
Emotional Intelligence [I take the feedbacks and suggestions of my team positively.]	.755	.081	.102	.302	.075	.139
Emotional Intelligence [I respect the emotions of others.]	.628	-.051	.273	.003	.081	.505
Emotional Agility [I exhibit calm and controlled manner during difficulties.]	.642	.238	.093	.147	.111	.165
Emotional Agility [I try to maintain positive approach during the setbacks or failures.]	.687	.124	.209	.104	-.016	.218
Emotional Agility [I feel the significant effect of positive emotions such as happiness, positivity, joy etc.]	.643	.129	.129	.249	.048	.320
Emotional Agility [I feel that negative emotions like anger, guilt, fear, health, sadness don't easily affect my work life.]	.209	.340	.204	.122	.084	.785
Emotional Agility [I don't hold biases at work environment and these biases don't influence my professional decisions.]	.398	.235	.340	.009	.322	.305
Emotional Agility [The false information about me doesn't affect me and it doesn't have significant impact on my emotions or mental health.]	.394	.350	.525	-.027	.070	.116
Emotional Agility [I can easily tolerate the critics.]	.271	.625	.329	.011	.251	.099
Emotional Agility [When something upsets me, I manage to keep myself balance.]	.509	.400	.362	.029	-.175	.066
Emotional Agility [Beyond certain age it is very difficult to make real change.]	.092	.656	-.363	.448	-.061	.282
Emotional Agility [I am my own worst critic.]	.150	.710	.284	.176	.428	.051
Emotional Agility [I can step back from disappointment and challenges rather than getting stuck in how they are making me feel.]	.242	.664	.145	.079	-.063	.090
Emotional Agility [In the past few months I have chosen to do something even though it was uncomfortable for there was a risk of failure.]	.155	.235	.758	.330	-.005	.155
Emotional Agility [I struggle to stay focused on what is happening in the present, and instead often either dwell on the past or plan for the future.]	.177	.130	.058	.847	.193	-.060



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Rotated Component Matrix						
Emotional Agility [I am open to whatever thoughts or emotions I experience.]	.604	.125	.377	.179	.005	.035
Emotional Agility [I have some stories, beliefs, or experiences that drive my behaviors in ways that don't serve me.]	.094	.102	.385	.668	.135	.221

This matrix displays the rotated loadings of each variable on the identified factors after applying the Varimax rotation method. The loadings represent the correlation coefficients between the variables and the factors. Positive loadings indicate a positive relationship, while negative loadings suggest an inverse relationship. Each variable's loadings across the factors provide insights into its contribution to the underlying constructs represented by the factors.

Table 6. Newly Identified Factors

Factor labelling	Component	Loading Value
Factor 1 Leadership Effectiveness	I try to demonstrate confidence when leading a team.	.722
	I try to plan clear and comprehensive plans to achieve defined objectives.	.810
	I try to show an understanding of what motivates different individuals.	.730
	I inspire others to achieve the defined goals.	.787
	I focus more on understanding the point of view of my subordinates.	.731
Factor 2 Resilience	I can easily tolerate the critics.	.625
	Beyond certain age it is very difficult to make real change.	.656
	I am my own worst critic.	.710
	I can step back from disappointment and challenges rather than getting stuck in how they are making me feel.	.664
Factor 3 Emotional Resilience	I am variety seeking.	.531
	The false information about me doesn't affect me and it doesn't have significant impact on my emotions or mental health.	.525
	When something upsets me, I manage to keep myself balance.	.362
	I am open to whatever thoughts or emotions I experience.	.377
	I have some stories, beliefs, or experiences that drive my behaviors in ways that don't serve me.	.385
Factor 4 Adaptability	I take the feedbacks and suggestions of my team positively.	.302
	Beyond certain age it is very difficult to make real change.	.448
	In the past few months I have chosen to do something even though it was uncomfortable for there was a risk of failure.	.330
	I struggle to stay focused on what is happening in the present, and instead often either dwell on the past or plan for the future.	.847
Factor 5 Persuasive Resilience	I try to cope with situation during unpredictable environment.	.372
	I to adapt the robust changes in the work life.	.429
	I try to persuade others / I am Persuasive.	.353



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Factor labelling	Component	Loading Value
	I am my own worst critic.	.428
factor 6 Emotional Awareness	I respect the emotions of others.	.505
	I feel the significant effect of positive emotions such as happiness, positivity, joy etc.	.320
	I feel that negative emotions like anger, guilt, fear, health, sadness doesn't easily affect my work life.	.785
	I don't hold biases at work environment and these biases don't influence my professional decisions.	.305

Factor 1: Leadership Effectiveness

This name encapsulates the elements of confidence, planning, understanding of motivation, inspiration, and focus on subordinates' perspectives, which collectively represent qualities associated with effective leadership and empowerment within a team or organizational context.

Factor 2: Resilience

This factor encompasses traits related to the ability to handle criticism, adapt to change, self-critique, and effectively manage disappointment and challenges by maintaining emotional distance and self-awareness.

Factor 3: Emotional Resilience

This factor encompasses traits related to being open-minded and adaptable to different experiences and emotions, maintaining emotional balance in the face of challenges, and demonstrating resilience in managing false information or negative beliefs that may impact behavior. Additionally, it reflects an awareness of internal narratives and their influence on behavior, suggesting a capacity for self-reflection and growth.

Factor 4: Adaptability

This factor encompasses traits related to being receptive to feedback, embracing discomfort for growth opportunities, and maintaining a positive attitude towards change. Additionally, it reflects a tendency to focus on the present moment rather than dwelling on the past or worrying excessively about the future, highlighting a capacity for mindfulness and adaptability.

Factor 5: Persuasive Resilience

This factor encompasses traits related to coping with unpredictable situations, adapting to significant changes in work life, and demonstrating persuasive abilities. Additionally, it reflects a tendency towards self-criticism, suggesting an internal drive for self-improvement and resilience.

Factor 6: Emotional Awareness

This factor encompasses traits related to respecting others' emotions, being attuned to the impact of positive emotions, and maintaining resilience against negative emotions in the workplace. Additionally, it reflects a commitment to impartiality and the absence of biases in professional decision-making, highlighting a dedication to fairness and objectivity in the work environment.

5. Proposed Outcomes / Conclusion

The findings of this study unveil a substantial and noteworthy relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA) within the entrepreneurial context. Through rigorous analysis, the research underscores a significant correlation between EI and EA among entrepreneurs, indicating the interconnectedness of these emotional competencies in driving entrepreneurial success. Moreover, the study posits an expectation of observing a consistent and stable level of EI and EA among entrepreneurs over time, suggesting the enduring nature of these constructs within entrepreneurial endeavors.



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Furthermore, the research sheds light on additional factors that impact EI and EA among entrepreneurs, extending beyond the conventional understanding of emotional competencies. These newly identified factors include Leadership Effectiveness, Resilience, Emotional Resilience, Adaptability, Persuasive Resilience, and Emotional Awareness, each of which plays a crucial role in shaping the emotional landscape of entrepreneurship. However, while these factors offer valuable insights, Confirmatory Factor Analysis is recommended to validate their inclusion and ascertain their contribution to the overall framework of emotional competencies among entrepreneurs.

In conclusion, this study not only contributes to the existing body of knowledge on emotional intelligence and agility but also broadens our understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing emotional dynamics within the entrepreneurial domain. By emphasizing the significance of emotional competencies and introducing new dimensions for exploration, this research paves the way for further inquiry and empirical validation, ultimately informing strategies for enhancing entrepreneurial effectiveness and well-being.

In light of the findings elucidated in this study regarding the salient relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Emotional Agility (EA) within the entrepreneurial milieu, avenues for future research emerge to enrich our comprehension of these emotional competencies and their implications. Firstly, longitudinal investigations are warranted to ascertain the temporal stability and developmental trajectories of EI and EA among entrepreneurs, thereby elucidating the enduring nature of these constructs over time. Secondly, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is advocated to validate the inclusion of supplementary factors, including leadership effectiveness, resilience, emotional resilience, adaptability, persuasive resilience, and emotional awareness, within the overarching framework of emotional competencies in entrepreneurship. Subsequent studies could explore potential interaction effects among EI, EA, and the identified factors, considering their collective influence on entrepreneurial behavior and outcomes.

6. Managerial Implication

Firstly, the recognition of the interplay between emotional intelligence and agility among entrepreneurs offers valuable insights for recruitment and selection processes. By incorporating assessments of these emotional competencies, managers can identify candidates who are better equipped to navigate the challenges of entrepreneurship, ultimately fostering a more resilient and effective workforce.

Moreover, understanding the factors influencing emotional intelligence and agility can inform targeted leadership development programs. By focusing on enhancing leadership effectiveness and emotional resilience, managers can cultivate a pool of leaders who are better equipped to inspire and motivate teams, navigate uncertainty, and drive organizational success. Additionally, leveraging this research can inform performance management practices, enabling managers to provide tailored coaching and feedback to employees, thereby supporting their professional growth and effectiveness.

Furthermore, the insights gleaned from this research can guide efforts to cultivate a positive organizational culture that values emotional intelligence and resilience. By fostering an environment where employees feel encouraged to express their emotions, collaborate openly, and adapt to change, managers can create a culture of innovation and resilience. Ultimately, the integration of these insights into managerial practices has the potential to enhance organizational effectiveness, employee well-being, and overall performance in the dynamic and demanding landscape of entrepreneurship.

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Visamo Tiffin Seva: A Case of Affective Social Entrepreneurship in rural Gujarat, India

Reshma Sable

Abstract

Purpose – The aim of this case study is to investigate the functioning of Visamo Tiffin Seva (VTS) – an enterprise based on social commitment intended to feed the homeless and elderly people. Visamo Tiffin Seva, a charitable organization operated from a small village named Vaso in Gujarat, India, is a successful venture known for serving the elderly needy people. VTS ensures to provide free food to those who cannot afford to earn or cook it for their own self. Main reason behind investigating VTS is to understand the journey of VTS and the strategies adopted by VTS to meet the challenges faced during the extraordinary journey. Further the case study also aims at identifying the entrepreneurial approach or model adopted by VTS and the critical factors that affects the success of Visamo Tiffin Seva. Permissions were sought to use the data collected through interviews for case building.

Design/Methodology/Approach – For the purpose of study, data was collected from 71 stakeholders of Visamo Tiffin Seva. The sample constituted of Founder-1, the Support staff-12, Service staff-08, the Donors-24, and the Beneficiaries-26. Semi-structured interviews were conducted (n=32). Interviews were also conducted with the staff members (service providers) of VTS as well as an in-depth interaction was carried out with the owner of VTS. This approach was adopted to understand the functioning of VTS and to investigate in the birth and growth of VTS. Further, the secondary information for building the case on VTS was collected from the VTS's website and the websites of newspapers where the articles and success stories of VTS were published.

Findings – The case information concludes in identifying a new model of social entrepreneurship adopted by VTS which is named as Affective-Social-Entrepreneurship. This model operates on the basis of Empathetic Approach for others and particularly the society at large. This case study also resulted in identification of certain factors which can be said as the critical success factors in the journey of VTS, viz. Crowdfunding, Community Support and Participation, Efficient Communication and Advocacy, Creating and Adjusting to Changing Conditions and Forming Strategic Alliances.

Research Limitations/Implications – The case was developed on the basis of the information received during the interviews and interactions with the VTS beneficiaries, VTS founder, VTS staff or service providers and the already existing literature related to VTS on various websites. Sparse information resources serve as a major limitation of the study.

Keywords: Affective Social Entrepreneurship, Non-profit organization, Community Service, Social Change.

JEL classification code – L26, L31, M10

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Social entrepreneurship is application of entrepreneurial principles to address social, cultural, or environmental issues. It differs from traditional entrepreneurship in a sense that the traditional entrepreneurship focuses on generating profits whereas social entrepreneurship focuses on creating positive societal change by identifying societal problems and

generating innovative solutions to address the same in sustainable and scalable manner.

Social enterprises backed with social entrepreneurship are found working on fund generation and reinvesting the generated funds in existing business for growth. On one hand, social entrepreneurship model in India is supported by organizations aiming at conducting corporate social responsibilities and investing some amount of



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revenue for charity but on other there exists some Not-for-Profit organizations with some determinations to serve society without expecting any returns.

The case of Visamo Tiffin Seva (VTS) is an attempt to understand the applicability of social entrepreneurship model in Indian context. The case focuses on deeds of VTS for serving the elderly homeless people for bringing them back in society. Even though the existing non-profit structure has adopted the social enterprise model to provide solutions to many issues ranging from day care to old age home for the senior citizens, the majority of social challenges faced by elderly citizens can be still answered with the help of creative approaches.

1.2 Objectives of study

While collecting the information for the case through interviews the certain objectives were kept in mind:

1. To understand the extraordinary journey of Visamo Tiffin Seva that has a profound impact on a great number of people's lives.
2. To study the birth, growth and challenges faced by Visamo Tiffin Seva and the strategic approach adopted for resolving the challenges.
3. To understand the model of Social Entrepreneurship adopted by Visamo Tiffin Seva.
4. To understand the mindset and serving intentions of founder of Visamo Tiffin Seva.
5. To identify the critical success factors behind the functioning of Visamo Tiffin Seva.
6. To propose a model defining the functioning of Visamo Tiffin Seva.

1.3 Significance of the study

The study aims at understanding the functioning of an entrepreneurial charitable venture that has created a niche existence in the rural parts of Gujarat. The VTS case contributes in understanding an affective angle to the models of social-entrepreneurship that has impacted lives of people through community based approach.

Further it contributes in understanding the strategic approach to the challenges faced by social-entrepreneurial venture in the rural areas.

2. CASE BACKGROUND

2.1 About the Founder

Rakesh Panchal's journey from a science graduate and a media professional to a caring champion in the field of social entrepreneurship is proof of the powerful influence of self-belief.

Inspired by strong familial values to giving back to society, Rakesh had set out on a life-changing path that resulted in the founding of Visamo Tiffin Seva, a community-based program aimed at eradicating hunger and supporting marginalized groups. Rakesh's aims to reach to maximum homeless elderly people and streamline their lives.

2.2 Birth of Visamo Tiffin Seva

In the heart of rural Gujarat, India, amidst the gentle whispers of the countryside, Rakesh Manubhai Panchal's journey into the realm of social entrepreneurship began with a heartfelt promise made to his late father Shri. Manubhai J Panchal. A promise to honor his legacy by providing daily meals to the elderly. This was a promise that has ignited a flame of compassion and service within him following his father's sudden departure from this world.

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

In the wake of his father's passing, Rakesh found solace in action. Fueled by a desire to transform sorrow into purpose, he embarked on a mission to fulfill his father's wish, starting with humble beginnings at a government hospital where he provided breakfast for patients. But Rakesh's vision extended beyond the hospital walls; it reached into the homes of elderly individuals in need, where daily sustenance was scarce. Inspired by poignant conversations shared with his father, Rakesh's determination grew roots. With each tiffin delivery, he carried forward his father's legacy, spreading not just nourishment but also companionship and hope to those he served.

On 23rd December 2020, Visamo Tiffin Seva (VTS) formally emerged as more than just a meal delivery service; it became a symbol of empathy, solidarity, and community empowerment. In the verdant landscapes of



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Gujarat's Vaso taluka, Rakesh Panchal's vision had taken root, nourishing not just the bodies but also the souls of those it touched.

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

In the midst of personal tragedy, Rakesh Panchal found his to serve, to uplift, and to make a difference in the lives of others. Through his unwavering commitment and boundless compassion, he transformed grief into action, leaving an indelible mark on the fabric of his community and inspiring others to follow in his footsteps. Through grassroots outreach, leveraging the power of social media, and lifted by the unwavering support of the community, VTS began to flourish.

Something that began as a small project to feed the poor grew into something far more significant. Despite facing numerous challenges along the way, including financial constraints and logistical hurdles, Rakesh remained undeterred in his commitment to making a difference as he was fully aware that this venture aimed at providing food to the ones who can't afford to have it on their own.

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

With unwavering dedication and an innovative spirit, Rakesh and his team transformed "Visamo Tiffin Seva" into a vital lifeline for seniors in need. Through resilience and sheer determination, they overcame operational challenges and expanded their reach, ultimately serving over 2.5 lakh meals to those in need.

2.3 Reach of Visamo Tiffin Seva

Visamo Tiffin Seva is more than just a meal delivery service, it's a beacon of hope, nourishing both the body and soul of the community it serves. Rooted in familial values and driven by a collective spirit of giving, Visamo Tiffin Seva exemplifies the transformative power of compassion and social entrepreneurship.

The VTS services are extended to pregnant women in government hospitals. Government hospitals are preferred by those families who cannot afford the pre-maternity and post-maternity expenses due to poor socioeconomic background. VTS has identified the food needs of pregnant women by consulting with

doctors and has ensured that the proper nutritional diet is provided to them during their stay at hospitals. VTS services has gone beyond the food requirements and has provided cloths to the new born babies.

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

VTS has also ventured in providing nourishment to the children in Aanganwadi (Playgroup).

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

VTS began its operations (viz. food delivery services) with limited capacities and funds. Even though the VTS team was able to prepare the meal, they still needed a way to transport it to the elderly people's isolated accommodations. They had to hire transportation because they didn't have any of their own to get food distribution to the underprivileged in the far-flung areas. VTS also faced the challenge for the provision of cooking gas, glossary and vegetables. Providing salary to the staff was also difficult in the beginning.

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

This struggle continued till the time funds were raised to purchase dedicated vehicle for food distribution. The dedicated vehicle was named as Hartu Fartu Bhojanalay in Gujarati, meaning the Mobile Food Van.

The Food Van simply reaches the villages where elderly needy people approach for getting the food. This facility is provided on daily basis and provisions for lunch as well as dinner is made.

As Rakesh's vision develops, Visamo Tiffin Seva's influence also grows. Visamo Tiffin Seva is a monument to the transforming power of love, service, and the human spirit. Rakesh and his team have shown the enormous impact that one person's determination can have on a whole community through resilience, ingenuity, and steadfast dedication.

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

The small act of kindness was appreciated and supported by community within India as well as abroad. Awareness regarding the services offered by VTS was spread through social media and fundraising platforms.



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A number of donors reached out to ask for VTS assistance. The story of Visamo Tiffin Seva revolves around the idea that love, compassion, and unrelenting resolve may effect great change.

Rakesh Panchal was inspired by his father's altruistic nature to work for the poor, and he eventually developed an Affective-Social-Entrepreneurship model that is focused only on lowering food insecurity among senior citizens. Visamo Tiffin Seva is a living example of the transforming power of selfless deeds and the enduring links of love.

Social Entrepreneurship showcased by VTS has its roots in the selfless values of its founder and is driven by a strong sense of purpose. VTS has grown into a ray of hope that improves the lives of elders and cultivates community rich in empathy and solidarity. The VTS is a moving example of empathy and community spirit, embodied by its founder, Visamo Tiffin Seva has become an indispensable resource for senior citizens facing hunger and hardship.

Source: <https://www.visamotrust.com/>

2.3 Theoretical perspective of Social Entrepreneurship

Recent years have seen a notable increase in interest in social entrepreneurship as a fresh method of tackling environmental and social issues while also pursuing sustainable business practices.

The term "social entrepreneurship" is still contested by academics and industry professionals. Nonetheless, shared components encompass seeking inventive resolutions for environmental and societal issues, emphasizing long-term effects, and incorporating commercial concepts to propel transformations (Dees, 1998; Mair & Martí, 2006). According to (Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern 2006), social entrepreneurs are distinguished by their capacity to see opportunities, gather resources, and provide value for stakeholders as well as society.

The literature has put forth a number of social entrepreneurship models, all of which emphasize distinct strategies for producing social impact. According to (Nicholls 2010) and (Austin et al. 2006),

these models include Profit Driven model, Non-profit model, Hybrid model, Cooperative model and Benefit Cooperation model.

Profit driven model aims to generate profit or revenue while also creating positive social impact. Profit is reinvested into the enterprise to further the social mission. In this model, the social enterprise operates similarly to a traditional for-profit business, aiming to generate revenue and profits while also creating positive social impact. The profits generated are reinvested into the enterprise to further its social mission.

Nonprofit model is being followed mostly by Social enterprises that rely on donations, grants, and other forms of funding to support their activities. They prioritize social impact over financial gain and often provide goods or services to underserved populations or address pressing social issues.

Hybrid model combines elements of both for-profit and nonprofit approaches. Social enterprises adopting this model may generate revenue through the sale of goods or services while also relying on donations or grants to support their social mission. They often have a clear revenue-generating component that sustains their operations while also maximizing their impact.

In Cooperative model social enterprises are owned and democratically controlled by their members, who may include employees, customers, or community members. These enterprises operate based on principles of cooperation, equality, and shared ownership, with a focus on addressing needs and interests of their members and the community.

Benefit Corporation model are for-profit companies that are legally required to consider the impact of their decisions on society, the environment, and their stakeholders. They undergo a rigorous assessment process to obtain B Corp certification, which verifies their commitment to meeting high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



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3.1 Research design

Current study has adopted an investigative instrumental case study approach into the model adopted by VTS for its functioning and successful establishment. VTS provides free Tiffin (food) to homeless elders who cannot afford to cook on their own. Through this instrumental case study, the major focus has been established to understand the factors contributing to the effectiveness of VTS. Permissions are taken before conducting the in-depth interviews from the VTS founder, staff and beneficiaries. Secondary information was derived from various websites and published news articles

3.2 Sampling Plan

3.2.1 Target Population

The target population for this study was the stakeholders of Visamo Tiffin Seva namely the founder, the support staff, the service providers, the donors and the beneficiaries.

3.2.2 Sample Size

The sample size constituted of Founder-1, the Support staff-12, Service staff-08, the Donors-24, and the Beneficiaries-26. Data was collected from 71 stakeholders of Visamo Tiffin Seva.

3.2.3 Data Collection

The case study development on Visamo Tiffin Seva required data collection from the people involved in giving the Seva as well people who received the Seva. Hence, for the purpose of the study both structured and semi-structured interview were conducted in-person with the founder, care giving staff and beneficiaries. If required, the respondents were re-contacted to seek the additional information. Questionnaire consisted of 30 questions which were open as well as closed ended in nature. Data collected was largely qualitative in nature. The interviews were conducted in national language Hindi and regional language Gujarati. Information

collected through interviews was documented and translated in English for the purpose of analysis.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Understanding the VTS Model

In the heart of rural Gujarat, amidst the rolling fields and whispering winds, Visamo Tiffin Seva stands as a beacon of hope and a testament to the transformative power of compassion and community support. At its core lies a methodology that goes beyond mere meal delivery; it's a holistic approach aimed at addressing food insecurity and social isolation among seniors.

Led by the visionary Rakesh Panchal and his dedicated team, Visamo Tiffin Seva meticulously plans and prepares nutritious meals, leveraging partnerships, donations, and volunteer support to sustain their operations. But their methodology extends far beyond the kitchen as it's rooted in a deep sense of dignity and respect for the individuals they serve.

Through grassroots outreach, community partnerships, and crowdfunding initiatives, Rakesh and his team ensure that no senior is left behind. Every meal is carefully crafted to nourish both body and soul, delivered with care and compassion to those in need. But Visamo Tiffin Seva is more than just a meal delivery service; it's a lifeline for marginalized communities, a symbol of hope in times of uncertainty. With each tiffin delivered, Rakesh and his team are breaking barriers, bridging divides, and spreading a message of inclusivity and love.

Their methodology reflects a commitment to making a meaningful difference through one meal at a time. It's a reminder that even in the face of adversity, there's always hope, always kindness, and always a community willing to lend a helping hand. And for the seniors of rural Gujarat, Visamo Tiffin Seva is a shining example of the power of compassion to change lives.

When it comes to the question of Why people donate for Visamo Tiffin Seva? the only answer we get is that they (the donors) understand and feel the pain of helpless elderly people and wants to contribute to the society. VTS receives donations from India, US, UK, Kenya, Australia, Canada and Germany. This noble act



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has served as a source of life for many old-age, homeless and needy people to satisfy their hunger. The donors claim that they receive immense satisfaction and a sense of purpose when they offer Tiffin Seva to those who can't cook their own food. On the other hand, the beneficiaries (elderly people) believe that humanity is still alive as they receive the act of kindness. On an average VTS serves 450 needy individuals on daily basis and approximately 13500 Tiffin Seva's are donated per month.

While seeking information on How does VTS convince people for donations? it was identified that VTS ensures to communicate the services given by donors to rest of the world through the use of social media. VTS regularly posts the details of daily Seva on various social media sites like Facebook and Instagram. It also publishes the videos of Seva on YouTube and shares the link in VTS community. This approach has been successful in not only providing satisfaction and sense of fulfillment to the donor but also has served as a motivation to others to contribute in the services.

4.2 Proposed Model - Affective Social

Entrepreneurship: derived from VTS Model

Affective Social Entrepreneurship can be said as a new model introduced to the existing literature of social entrepreneurship. This model is derived from the model adopted by VTS which is based on the concept of 'Empathy-driven Entrepreneurship'

Understanding and addressing the needs, feelings, and experiences of others, especially those who are underrepresented or underserved, is a key component of empathy-driven entrepreneurship. Fundamentally, empathy-driven entrepreneurship places a high value on empathy, compassion, and interpersonal relationships in an effort to provide significant and long-lasting solutions to social and environmental problems.

The roots of Affective Social Entrepreneurship can be found in the Indian Culture which is based on Dharma and Seva. Dharma or obligation is an essential part of Indian culture. In India, people are educated to uphold their social responsibilities, which frequently entail lending a hand to those in need. Giving to charity is

considered a moral obligation that brings good karma and spiritual reward. Seva, which is considered as a Selfless Service, is an integral part of Indian culture and is highly regarded. It entails lending a helping hand to others without waiting for payment or acknowledgment. Volunteering their time and resources to help charity projects like feeding the poor, tending to the sick, or educating the impoverished is a common way that many Indians actively participate in seva.

Through a variety of deeply rooted customs, religious beliefs, and ideals, Indian culture actively encourages charitable giving. Indian culture has always supported and promoted altruism.

Indian religions, including Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism, place a strong emphasis on charity as a path to emancipation and spiritual development. Common religious behaviors include almsgiving, giving to temples or other religious institutions, and supporting charitable organizations with the goal of benefiting the community and obtaining divine favors.

Generosity and compassion are common features of Indian festivities. People are urged to share their blessings with those less fortunate on holidays like Diwali, Eid, Christmas, and Guru Nanak Jayanti by donating food, gifts, and charitable contributions. Huge Tiffin Seva donations are also received on the occasions of Shraddh which is a ritual in Hinduism performed after the death of a person. This is an example of donor's belief in Seva in the memory of their deceased loved ones. People from all walks of life are united, empathetic, and generous during these times.

Families and communities are highly valued in Indian culture. Families frequently participate in charity endeavors together, such as giving to aged care facilities, sponsoring children's education, or making donations to orphanages. Children are taught empathy and compassion by their parents, who also encourage them to contribute to society from an early age.

India has a long tradition of benevolence, with affluent citizens, corporate executives, and charitable groups actively promoting social issues. In India, a plethora of



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charitable trusts, foundations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicate their lives to tackling various concerns like poverty, healthcare, education, and environmental preservation, with the backing of nationwide benefactors.

In general, Indian culture emphasizes altruism as a basic component of human existence, stressing the interdependence of people and the significance of the welfare of the whole. Indians are shaped by cultural customs, religious doctrine, and social conventions that promote altruism and the well-being of others.

VTS receives donations or tiffin on various occasions ranging from the event to celebrate in one's life to the sad demise happened in any family. VTS is approached by people to donate on the occasions of Birthday celebrations, Marriage anniversaries, Death anniversaries, or any other occasion where people wish to contribute. VTS also receives anonymous donations under the name "Rambharose" from people who want to donate but are not willing to reveal their identity.

4.3 Key-Components of Affective-Social-Entrepreneurship

The model of ASE adopted by VTS is successful due to the key factors like recognizing other's needs, finding possibilities for positive change.

VTS has played an important role in Recognizing Others' Needs, particularly the needs of the elderly adults who do not have any support from their family or relatives. Entrepreneurs motivated by empathy actively pay attention to and feel the struggles and hardships that people and communities encounter. In order to create solutions that are pertinent and effective, they make an effort to fully comprehend client needs, wants, and objectives. Many residents of the surrounding communities approach VTS to provide information about the homeless and underprivileged. Members of the VTS team then go to the location and ask about the less fortunate. Following careful consideration, the decision to feed the populace is made.

VTS has always believed in Finding Possibilities for Positive Change in the society. Entrepreneurs that are

empathetic with others can spot chances to solve unmet needs or ease social problems. This could entail addressing problems like social isolation, poverty, inequality, and access to healthcare as well as environmental damage. The needy and homeless people not only face the problem of food but are also being abandoned by their family members and relatives. They face rejection, hatred, and isolation. VTS is not only the medium of fulfilling the hunger, but also is an attempt to bring them back to our community and support their self-esteem.

VTS has Utilized Human-Centered Design to Create Solutions to the various challenges faced by them. Human-centered design principles are frequently used in empathy-driven entrepreneurship to create solutions that are sensitive to end users' requirements and preferences. With this method, donors are actively involved in providing the groceries or donating money per tiffin. One tiffin Seva is available at a minimum cost of INR 50. This money is donated by people and the funds are used to buy grocery items, utensils, gas and providing salaries of VTS care givers. Feedback is regularly obtained from both beneficiaries as well as the donors.

VTS has believed in Creating a feeling of Community and Real Relationships among the beneficiaries. Empathy-driven business owners place a high value on creating a feeling of community among stakeholders. They work to establish settings that promote trust and cooperation by making people feel listened, respected, and supported. VTS beneficiaries feel connected with the donors and the VTS care givers as they celebrate all festivals like Diwali, Holi, New Year with VTS family members. This makes them feel connected and cared.

VTS has set an example of Measuring Impact Beyond Financial Returns. Empathy-driven enterprise extends beyond profit maximization, even though financial sustainability is crucial. These business owners gauge their success by the benefits they bring about to society or the environment, such as raised standards of living,



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easier access to resources, or improved wellbeing. The benefits of VTS goes beyond satisfying hunger of needy people. it focuses on bringing them back to community life and live life with sense of being.

VTS believes in Taking Responsible and Ethical Actions. Entrepreneurs that are motivated by empathy do business with morality and integrity, makes sure that their deeds reflect their beliefs and advance constructive societal change. In their business operations, they place a high priority on accountability, fairness, and transparency. Records of all funds received and expenses is diligently maintained and disclosed to all stakeholders of VTS. This helps in maintaining transparency with the donors and gain their trust. This act supports future donations and collaborations.

VTS has always Advocated for Systemic Change in society through its deeds. Empathy-driven entrepreneurship frequently entails advocating for systemic change to address the underlying causes of social and environmental concerns, in addition to meeting immediate needs. This could entail promoting policies, forming alliances, or questioning accepted conventions and systems. Affective Social Entrepreneurship represents a humane and caring approach to business, seeking to make a good difference while cultivating empathy, understanding, and a sense of community. It stands for a powerful force that can push a significant change and create a more sustainable and inclusive world for every individual.

4.4 Affective-Social-Entrepreneurship Model adopted by Visamo Tiffin Seva

4.5 Factors Affecting Success of VTS

The discussions held during interaction with stakeholders have helped in identifying the factors responsible for the continued success of VTS. It was observed through the discussion with the founder as well as VTS staff that they are highly dependent VTS funds which can be generated through crowdfunding platforms. In addition, nearby community or the people

from the villages where VTS is offering its service are the second largest source of fund generation. VTS also gets funds by reaching people through social media platforms and ensuring transparent and effective communication.

VTS has also maintained a long-term and close relationship with its donors. This strategic approach has helped VTS to add to their donor's database.

Crowdfunding is the major source of finances that contributes to the success of VTS. Visamo Tiffin Seva's (VTS) financial stability and success are greatly enhanced by crowdfunding. Through the use of crowdfunding sites, VTS is able to raise the money it needs to continue operating, reach a wider audience, and make investments in the tools it needs to successfully carry out its purpose. Through crowdfunding, VTS can overcome obstacles like sourcing ingredients, transportation expenses, and infrastructure upkeep, which keeps its services running smoothly and allows it to assist a greater number of people in need. At present crowdfunding is done through several digital fundraising platforms like Milaap, DonateKart and CrowdKash.

The degree of Community Support and Participation that VTS obtains is another factor that determines its success. In addition to providing extra resources, strong community support from partnerships, volunteerism, and donations also promotes a sense of belonging and camaraderie within the community. Community members that actively support or engage in

VTS projects help make it successful by raising awareness of the organization, supporting its goals, and lending a hand with their time and expertise to make sure it runs smoothly.

Efficient Communication and Advocacy has contributed in increasing public knowledge of VTS's mission, winning over the public, and influencing policy decisions all depend on efficient communication and advocacy activities. By using press relations, social media advocacy, and campaign planning, VTS may reach a wider audience, draw in funding, and mobilize



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resources. Building trust and credibility through open and honest communication with all parties involved—beneficiaries, funders, and partners, for example—helps VTS become more well-known and successful in the community.

VTS's capacity to Create and Adjust to Changing Conditions is essential to its success. Being resilient in the face of unforeseen events, legal difficulties, or logistical roadblocks enables VTS to get over issues and carry on providing its services effectively. The implementation of novel technology or inventive approaches to operational problems might be considered innovative service delivery methods that can augment the efficacy and influence of VTS's endeavors, hence augmenting the organization's overall prosperity.

VTS has gained a lot by Forming Strategic Alliances with Non-Resident-Indians (NRIs) and social sector players. Through cooperative activities, VTS is able to increase its effect and reach by utilizing networks, resources, and knowledge that exceed its own capabilities. In addition to providing access to new opportunities, financing sources, and growth paths, networking with like-minded individuals and groups helps VTS succeed in addressing senior social isolation and food insecurity.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Despite facing several difficulties, such as monetary limitations and administrative difficulties, Visamo Tiffin Seva has had a noteworthy influence on the lives of the marginalized.

The significance of Visamo Tiffin Seva goes well beyond just feeding people; it represents a strong dedication to social justice, compassion, and human dignity. Rakesh and his team have given numerous elders food, company, and hope via their unwavering efforts, giving people who are disenfranchised by poverty and neglect a lifeline. Their commitment to upholding family values and improving the community is evidence of the transformational potential of

compassion and empathy. They have fed hundreds of people with their unwavering efforts, giving them not only food but also dignity and hope. The communities they serve have trusted and appreciated them because of their dedication to quality and diversity.

The model adopted by Visamo Tiffin Seva is Affective in nature, which involves evoking the sentiments and feelings of compassion among the community people and encourage them to contribute to serve homeless and needy adults. This approach has successfully penetrated in the rural Gujarat due to the empathetic approach imbibed in the Indian culture and society.

VTS success is also contributed by the strategic approach it has adopted for dealing with the operational challenges faced by them. Factors which can be said as the critical success factors in the journey of Visamo Tiffin Seva are Crowdfunding, Community Support and Participation, Efficient Communication and Advocacy, Creating and Adjusting to Changing Conditions and Forming Strategic Alliances.

6. CONCLUSION

In summary, it can be emphasized that the Visamo Tiffin Seva is a magnificent illustration of the strength of the human spirit and the influence of group effort. In addition to changing individual lives, Rakesh Panchal's unrelenting dedication to carrying out his father's final desire has sparked a larger movement of compassion and unity.

As Visamo Tiffin Seva keeps growing in both influence and outreach, it acts as a ray of hope for elderly homeless and needy people. Its resiliency reminds us of the enormous impact that one person's commitment can have in building a better future for everybody. This initiative provides insightful information for budding social entrepreneurs and advocates for social change through community engagement, sustainability, and innovation.

Visamo Tiffin Seva is an example of social-entrepreneurship with prime concern on serving the society with an empathetic approach and seeking the support from the community. This Affective-Social-Entrepreneurship model derived from the case of

Visamo Tiffin Seva serves as an ideal example for those who believes in community service especially in the rural areas of India. It is evidence of the continuing strength of love, altruism, and group effort in promoting social fairness and human dignity.

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Sustainability of Digital Education: Impact on College Students' Well-being and E-Classroom Dynamics

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Abstract

The present quantitative study examines the attitudes of 390 commerce undergraduate students toward digital education, with a focus on sustainability implications. Using self-reported questionnaires administered through SMART software, data were collected to assess perceived ease of use, usefulness, psychological well-being, and e-classroom interaction. Stratified random sampling ensured representativeness across different academic years and demographics in the Madhya Pradesh region. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were conducted using Smart PIs-4. Results highlight varying perceptions among students regarding digital education, with most finding it user-friendly and useful, yet concerns persist regarding e-classroom interaction and psychological well-being. The study identifies predictors of attitudes toward digital education, emphasizing the importance of tailored approaches to promote sustainability and meaningful engagement. Ethical considerations were prioritized, ensuring participant confidentiality and adherence to ethical guidelines. These findings contribute insights for educators, policymakers, and institutions seeking to enhance digital learning practices sustainably in the 21st century.

Keywords: Digital Education, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Psychological Well-being, and E-Classroom Interaction

Introduction

The integration of digital technologies into educational settings has transformed the landscape of teaching and learning, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the sudden and widespread adoption of online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and digital resources, digital education has become synonymous with contemporary pedagogy. As education transitions further into the digital era, it is imperative to consider not only the benefits but also the sustainability implications of digital education practices. The concept of sustainability in education extends beyond environmental concerns to encompass principles of

social equity, economic viability, and ethical responsibility. In the context of digital education, sustainability encompasses efforts to minimize environmental impact, promote equitable access to digital resources, and foster socially responsible behaviors among learners and educators. The sustainability of digital education is essential for ensuring that educational practices align with broader societal goals of sustainability and responsible stewardship of resources. The digital era, characterized by rapid technological advancements, ubiquitous connectivity, and evolving socio-cultural norms, has fundamentally reshaped the way education is accessed, delivered, and experienced.



Digital technologies offer unprecedented opportunities for enhancing accessibility, flexibility, and innovation in learning, yet they also pose unique challenges related to the digital divide, screen time, and mental health.

Students' Attitudes towards Digital Education:

Students' attitudes play a significant role in shaping their engagement, motivation, and overall learning experiences in digital environments (Lampoltshammer et al., 2021). Exploring students' perceptions, preferences, and concerns regarding digital education is essential for informing educational practices and policies that align with their needs and aspirations (Antonietti et al., 2022).

One key dimension of students' attitudes towards digital education is their perceived ease of use of digital tools, platforms, and resources. Perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which students perceive digital technologies as user-friendly, intuitive, and easy to navigate (Kancharla & Dadhich, 2021).

Students' perceptions of ease of use can significantly impact their willingness to engage with digital learning resources and their overall satisfaction with the digital learning experience (Sultan et al., 2011). Factors such as interface design, accessibility features, and technical support mechanisms can influence students' perceptions of ease of use and, consequently, their attitudes toward digital education.

Another important dimension of students' attitudes towards digital education is their perceived usefulness of digital technologies in facilitating learning and achieving educational goals (Akciil & Bastas, 2021). Perceived usefulness refers to students' beliefs regarding the effectiveness, relevance, and utility of digital resources and tools in supporting their learning objectives. Students are more likely to engage with digital education practices that they perceive as useful and relevant to their academic needs and goals. Therefore, understanding students' perceptions of the usefulness of digital education is essential for designing effective digital learning experiences that meet their learning needs and

preferences (Solberg, 2012). Students' attitudes towards digital education also encompass their psychological well-being in digital learning environments (Alberola-Mulet et al., 2021). Digital education practices can have both positive and negative impacts on students' mental health and well-being. On one hand, digital technologies can provide opportunities for flexibility, autonomy, and personalized learning experiences, which can enhance students' overall well-being (Anuar et al., 2019). On the other hand, excessive screen time, digital overload, and feelings of isolation in virtual learning environments can contribute to stress, anxiety, and social disconnect among students (McGuinness & Fulton, 2019). Therefore, assessing students' psychological well-being in the context of digital education is crucial for promoting healthy and supportive learning environments that prioritize students' mental health and well-being (Lazar et al., 2020).

Students' attitudes towards digital education are closely linked to their experiences of e-classroom interaction. E-classroom interaction refers to the quality and effectiveness of student-student and student-instructor interactions facilitated by digital platforms (Basu et al., 2022). Meaningful interaction and collaboration are essential components of the learning process, and digital technologies play a central role in enabling communication, collaboration, and engagement in virtual learning environments. Therefore, understanding students' experiences of e-classroom interaction is essential for assessing the effectiveness of digital education practices in promoting active learning, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among students. Students' attitudes toward digital education encompass multiple dimensions, including perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, psychological well-being, and e-classroom interaction (Khan & Thomas, 2022). By examining these dimensions, educators and policymakers can gain valuable insights into students' perceptions, preferences, and concerns regarding



digital learning practices and design strategies to optimize digital learning experiences that promote sustainability, enhance student well-being, and foster meaningful e-classroom interaction.

Against this backdrop, this research aims to explore the sustainability of digital education within the context of the digital era and its impact on college students' experiences. The study investigates four key dimensions: perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, psychological well-being, and e-classroom interaction (Arora et al., 2020). By examining these dimensions, the research seeks to provide insights into the multifaceted dynamics of digital education and its implications for educational practices and policies in the 21st century. Through a comprehensive analysis of students' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes toward digital education, this research aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the sustainability of digital education and inform strategies for optimizing digital learning experiences to promote sustainability, enhance student well-being, and foster meaningful e-classroom interaction (Ocaña-Fernández et al., 2020). By addressing these considerations, educators and policymakers can harness the transformative potential of digital education to create inclusive, equitable, and sustainable learning environments for all students, thereby advancing the goals of education in the digital era (Ahmad Qolfathiriyus, 2021).

Despite the increasing prominence of digital education, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the sustainability dimensions of digital learning practices and their impact on student experiences. While previous studies have explored various aspects of digital education, few have specifically focused on the sustainability implications of digital learning practices and their effects on student outcomes. Therefore, there is a need for research that examines the interplay between digital education, sustainability, and student experiences, providing insights into how digital learning practices can be optimized to promote

sustainability, enhance student well-being, and foster meaningful e-classroom interaction. This research aims to address this gap by investigating the sustainability of digital education and its impact on college students' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of digital education in the 21st century.

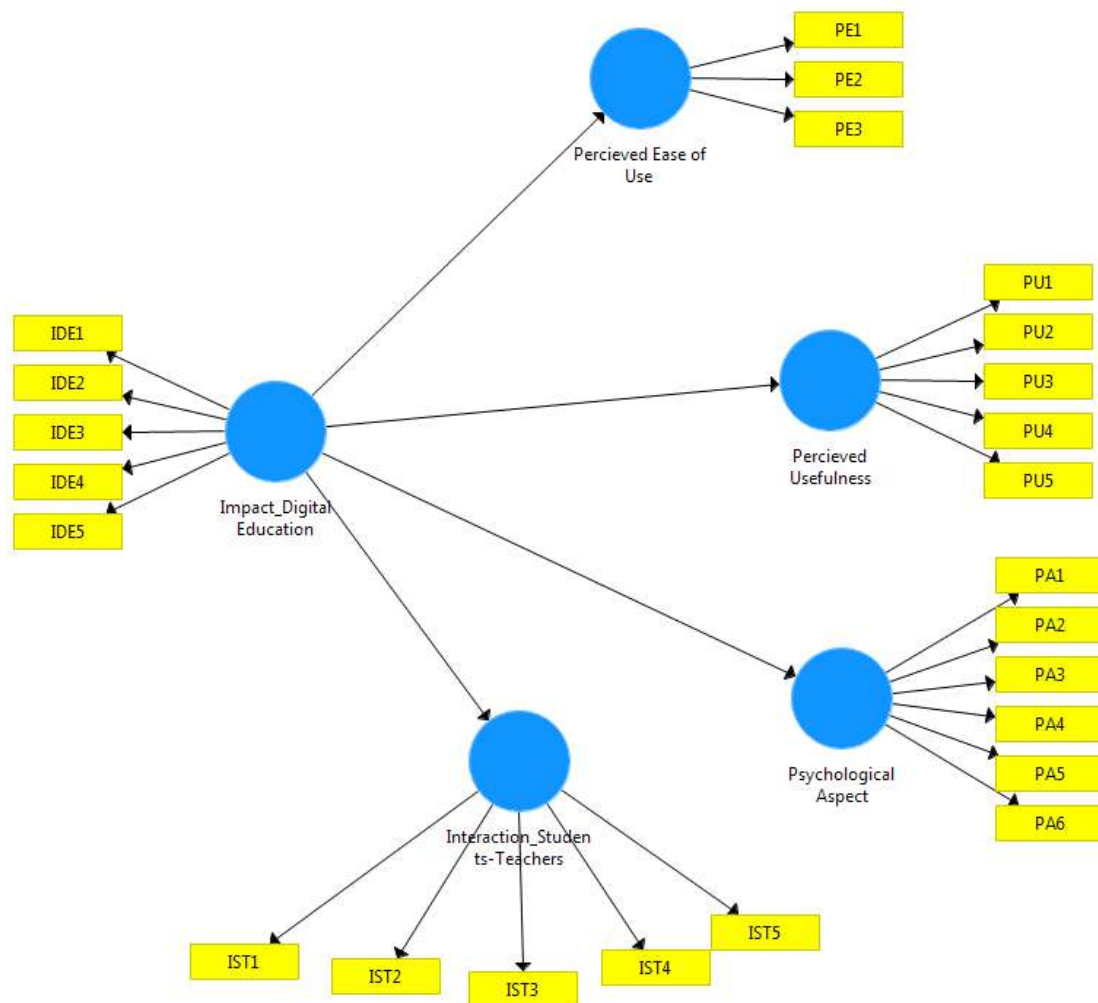
Method and Measures

A quantitative research approach was employed to examine the attitudes of commerce undergraduate students toward digital education. Quantitative methods allow for the collection and analysis of numerical data, enabling researchers to identify patterns, trends, and relationships within the data set. By employing a quantitative approach, this research aims to provide empirical evidence on students' attitudes towards digital education and assess the sustainability implications of digital learning practices. The study's population consists of commerce undergraduate students enrolled in colleges within the Madhya Pradesh region. A sample size of 390 students will be recruited for the study, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representativeness across different academic years and demographic characteristics. The sample size was determined based on considerations of statistical power, precision of estimates, and feasibility of data collection within the study's constraints. The primary data collection tool for this study was a self-reported questionnaire administered to the participants. The questionnaire was designed to assess various dimensions of students' attitudes toward digital education, including perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, psychological well-being, and e-classroom interaction. The questionnaire consisted of validated scales and items adapted from existing research instruments, ensuring the reliability and validity of the data collected.

Conceptual Framework

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) which is a set of techniques for exploring the relationships between the constructs. A version of the same, Partial Least Squares (PLS) regression, enables the testing for a

small sample and leads to the prediction of indicators. It allows putting forward hypotheses for the constructs with the impact on the aspects of the model.



Development of Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Digital Education has a positive impact on perceived usefulness among learners of higher education

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Digital Education has a positive impact on the perceived use of ease among learners of higher education.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Digital Education has a positive impact on E-Classroom Interactions among learners of higher education

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Digital Education has a positive impact on psychological well-being among learners of higher education.

The process of evaluation of results of the partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) involves two steps. In step 1, the examination of



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reflective and formative measurement models is conducted. This is a necessary part of the evaluation because it provides support for the measurement quality. When quality is confirmed, the structural model evaluation is conducted in step 2. While in step

1, the measurement theory is examined, step 2 covers the structural theory that involves testing the proposed hypotheses and that addresses the relationships among the latent variables. Our model contains only reflective measures.

Table: 1.1: Construct Reliability and Validity

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability
Impact Digital Education	0.904	0.905	0.929
Interaction: Students-Teachers	0.920	0.926	0.939
Perceived Ease of Use	0.891	0.891	0.932
Perceived Usefulness	0.908	0.91	0.931
Psychological Aspect	0.721	0.785	0.842

Interpretation: The provided data offers insights into the reliability of constructs measured within a survey or study, encompassing various aspects of digital education. These constructs, including the Impact of Digital Education, Interaction: Students-Teachers, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, and Psychological Aspect, are evaluated through three reliability measures: Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, and Composite Reliability. Among these constructs, Impact Digital Education and Interaction: Students-Teachers exhibit notably high levels of internal consistency, with all reliability measures surpassing the threshold of 0.9. This suggests that the items measuring these constructs yield highly reliable and consistent results, emphasizing their robustness in assessing the impact of digital education and the interaction dynamics between students and teachers. Similarly, constructs such as Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness also demonstrate commendable reliability, with all measures comfortably exceeding 0.89. This implies that the items measuring perceptions regarding usability and

usefulness maintain consistency and reliability across respondents.

The construct of the Psychological Aspect presents a somewhat contrasting scenario, with lower reliability scores compared to the other constructs. While Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability still meet the acceptable threshold (>0.7), rho_A falls relatively lower at 0.785. This suggests that there might be some variability or inconsistency among the items measuring psychological aspects, potentially warranting further investigation or refinement of measurement items to enhance reliability.

The majority of constructs under examination showcase strong internal consistency, indicating the reliability and consistency of the items measuring these constructs. The findings also underscore the importance of scrutinizing constructs with comparatively lower reliability, such as the Psychological Aspect, to ensure robust and accurate measurement in future studies or surveys.

Table 1.2. PLS-SEM assessment results of measurement models.

Latent Variable	Indicators	Convergent Validity	
		Loadings	AVE
		>0.70	>0.50
IDE	IDE1	0.851	0.722
	IDE2	0.875	
	IDE3	0.870	
	IDE4	0.794	
	IDE5	0.858	
IST	IST1	0.871	0.756
	IST2	0.881	
	IST3	0.863	
	IST4	0.846	
	IST5	0.885	
PA	PA2	0.831	0.645
	PA5	0.913	
	PA6	0.640	
PEU	PEU1	0.910	0.822
	PEU2	0.921	
	PEU3	0.888	
PU	PU1	0.853	0.645
	PU2	0.844	
	PU3	0.851	
	PU4	0.835	
	PU5	0.890	

Interpretation: The provided table outlines the results of the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) assessment for the measurement models, focusing on latent variables and their associated indicators, along with measures of convergent validity.

- Firstly, concerning the Impact Digital Education (IDE) construct, all indicators display strong loadings, with values exceeding 0.70, indicating a robust relationship between the latent variable and its corresponding indicators. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for IDE is above the recommended threshold of 0.50, suggesting satisfactory convergent validity.
- Interaction: Students-Teachers (IST) construct, all indicators exhibit substantial loadings, indicative of a reliable relationship with the latent variable. Moreover, the AVE for IST surpasses the acceptable threshold, confirming the convergent validity of the construct.
- Psychological Aspect (PA) construct presents a slightly different scenario. While some indicators demonstrate strong loadings, the AVE falls slightly below the recommended threshold. This suggests that although individual indicators may be reliable measures of the latent



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variable, further examination is warranted to ensure adequate convergent validity for PA.

- Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) and Perceived Usefulness (PU) constructs, all indicators display robust loadings, indicating strong relationships with their respective latent variables. Additionally, the AVE values for both constructs exceed the recommended threshold, affirming their satisfactory convergent validity.

The majority of latent variables in the measurement models exhibit strong convergent validity, supported by substantial indicator loadings and AVE values.

Table 1.3: Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Impact_Digital Education	Interaction_Students-Teachers	Perceived Ease of Use	Perceived Usefulness	Psychological Aspect (Well-Being)
Impact_Digital Education	0.850				
Interaction_Students-Teachers	0.697	0.869			
Perceived Ease of Use	0.729	0.776	0.906		
Perceived Usefulness	0.747	0.790	0.816	0.855	
Psychological Aspect	0.718	0.668	0.673	0.745	0.803

Interpretation: The provided table offers insights into the Discriminant Validity analysis, aiming to ascertain the distinctiveness of various constructs within the study. Discriminant Validity is crucial in ensuring that the constructs under investigation measure unique concepts rather than overlapping or redundant ones.

The Impact Digital Education construct exhibits moderately high correlations with other constructs, ranging from 0.697 to 0.747. These correlations suggest some level of shared variance between Impact Digital Education and other constructs, possibly indicating that aspects of digital education's impact are intertwined with factors like interaction dynamics, perceived ease of use, usefulness, and psychological well-being.

Interaction: Students-Teachers construct also demonstrates moderately high correlations with

However, the PA construct requires closer scrutiny to ensure adequate convergent validity. These findings provide valuable insights into the reliability and validity of the measurement models, thereby enhancing the understanding of the underlying constructs in the study.

The last step in reflective measurement is to assess discriminant validity. This analysis reveals to which extent a construct is empirically distinct from other constructs both in terms of how much it correlates with other constructs and how distinctly the indicators represent only this single construct.

other constructs, ranging from 0.668 to 0.790. This suggests that the quality of interaction between students and teachers might overlap with factors related to digital education's impact, perceived ease of use, usefulness, and psychological well-being.

The Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness constructs also show moderately high correlations with other constructs, ranging from 0.673 to 0.816 and 0.745, respectively. This implies that perceptions regarding the ease of use and usefulness of digital education technologies may be intertwined with broader constructs related to digital education's impact, interaction dynamics, and psychological well-being.

Psychological Aspect (Well-Being) construct demonstrates moderately high correlations with other constructs, ranging from 0.668 to 0.745. This

suggests that psychological well-being might be influenced by or intertwined with factors related to digital education's impact, interaction dynamics, perceived ease of use, and usefulness.

The correlations between constructs are not excessively high, the moderately high values suggest some degree of overlap or shared variance between them. This raises questions regarding the distinctiveness of the constructs and highlights the potential need for further refinement or clarification in the measurement model to ensure robust Discriminant Validity. Further investigation into the relationships between these constructs may provide deeper insights into the complex interplay among various factors in the context of digital education.

The data for research were collected through a survey in Google Forms. The survey allowed collecting 385 responses. The table outlines the distribution of gender within the surveyed population. Of the total respondents, 183 individuals, accounting for 47.6% of the sample, identified as female, while 202 individuals, comprising 52.4% of the sample, identified as male. Cumulatively, these figures sum up to 100.0%, indicating the entirety of

the population under consideration. This data provides a clear snapshot of the gender composition within the studied cohort, with a slightly higher representation of males compared to females. Understanding such demographic characteristics is fundamental for contextualizing research findings and ensuring representative sampling in statistical analyses and interpretations.

Next, the data were screened. There were no missing values since it was guaranteed by the structure of the survey. We excluded 18 answers because respondents marked the same answer for each question and the calculated variance was 0. Finally, 367 data rows were used for calculation. This sample size is sufficient for the PLS path model estimation. After the pilot researcher found some items in the construct psychological aspect (wellbeing) were not connected with the study so PA1, PA3, and PA4 were taken as outlier items thus that will be not included in final analysis, Figure 2 shows the PLS-SEM results. The numbers on the path relationships represent the standardized regression coefficients, while the numbers displayed in the circles of the constructs represent the R² values.

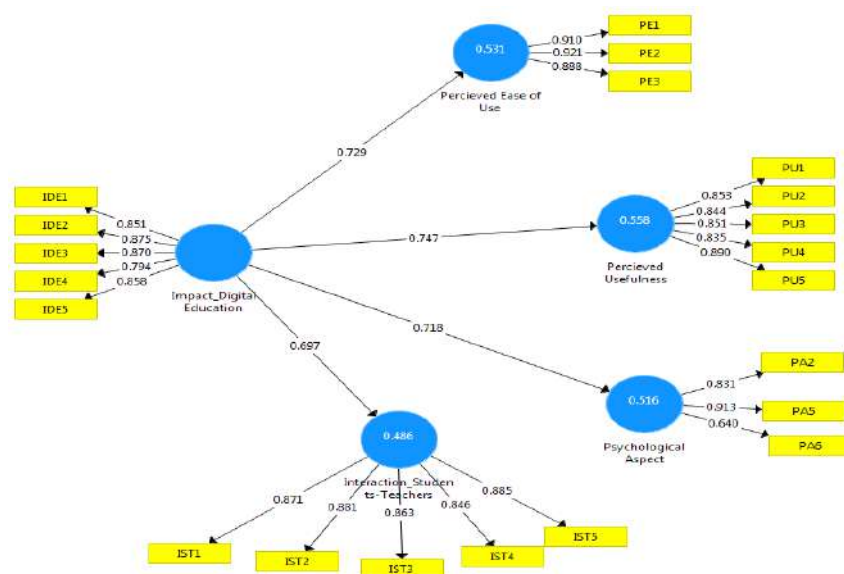


Table 1.5: Path coefficient of the structural model and significance testing results



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Constructs Connections	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Impact_Digital Education -> Interaction_Students-Teachers	0.697	0.699	0.059	11.918	0.000
Impact_Digital Education -> Percieved Ease of Use	0.729	0.728	0.053	13.625	0.000
Impact_Digital Education -> Percieved Usefulness	0.747	0.746	0.052	14.324	0.000
Impact_Digital Education -> Psychological Aspect	0.718	0.719	0.053	13.545	0.000

Interpretation: The provided data examines the connections between "Impact Digital Education" and several other constructs, including "Interaction: Students-Teachers," "Perceived Ease of Use," "Perceived Usefulness," and "Psychological Aspect," utilizing various statistical measures. Across all relationships, the original sample correlation coefficients between "Impact Digital Education" and the respective constructs are notably strong, ranging from 0.697 to 0.747. This indicates a robust initial association between digital education's impact and the measured constructs. Moreover, the sample mean correlation coefficients consistently hover around these original sample values, suggesting stability in the relationships across multiple samples.

The standard deviation values, measuring the dispersion of correlation coefficients, are relatively low, indicating consistency in the strength of associations across various samples. The T statistics, calculated by dividing the original sample correlation coefficients by the standard deviation, underscore the significance of these relationships. The high T statistics values, ranging from approximately 11.918 to 14.324, signal the substantial and statistically significant connections between "Impact Digital Education" and the other constructs. The low P values, all recorded as 0.000, emphasize the statistical significance of these relationships, implying that the observed correlations are highly unlikely to have occurred by chance. The data indicates strong and significant

associations between "Impact Digital Education" and constructs related to interaction dynamics, perceived ease of use, usefulness, and psychological well-being. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of digital education's impact, encompassing various dimensions that are integral to understanding its effectiveness and implications for learners and educators alike.

Discussion & Conclusions

The research described, this study was conducted in the period of the coronavirus pandemic, which has covered the whole world and has not left a single country uninvolved. All educational institutions were caught by surprise and had to throw all their efforts toward adjusting to the new reality as quickly as possible. The survey "caught" the students of colleges in the middle of the period of distance learning, to which they all had to switch. Such timing allowed getting the most state-of-the-art feedback from students as for the methods and tools used in the process and exploring their emotions while they were still experiencing them. The authors consider picturing such state-of-the-art students' attitude to be one of the contributions of this research.

The research, conducted in this paper, is based on a survey conducted among commerce students of the Madhya Pradesh, when the entire education system shifted to digital because of the coronavirus outbreak. The survey has allowed for analysing



students' acceptance of digital. However, despite the positive opinions about digital education, the students would like to go back to traditional education. This research is a valuable contribution to policy-making in case the COVID-19 situation forces HEIs to continue working online. Nevertheless, this work has limitations since only one stream (Commerce) was observed. The realization of comparative research would be reasonable to get a wider picture of the impact of a pandemic on higher education.

Future Study Directions:

Future research should consider conducting comparative analyses across diverse student populations and educational contexts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of digital education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Longitudinal studies tracking changes in students' attitudes and perceptions over time can provide insights into the evolving nature of digital learning experiences. Additionally, qualitative research methods such as interviews and focus groups can offer nuanced insights into the factors influencing students' preferences and experiences with digital education. Comparative analyses of pedagogical approaches, exploration of the relationship between digital education and learning outcomes, and investigations into technological integration and accessibility are essential areas for further exploration. Understanding teachers' and institutions' perspectives on digital education will also be crucial for informing strategies to optimize digital learning environments and support student success in the post-pandemic era.

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A Study on Cybercrime Awareness among Youth in Maharashtra

Navin Punjabi

Abstract

Every minute in India a new user is using the internet. The increasing integration of digital platforms and devices presents a challenge in protecting the youth from cybercrimes. Moreover, the stark truth is that internet users are not updated with the latest cyber threats and security concerns. Therefore, the primary question about this research paper is to know to awareness level of youth in Maharashtra. Primary and secondary data has been collected through questionnaire and journals, newspaper articles, Government reports respectively. Chi square test is used to test the hypothesis. Questionnaire was sent to 110 individuals out of which 85 respondents replied effectively. To collect data non-probabilistic convenient sampling method is used. According to the research paper, almost 37% of the respondents have fallen victim to these scams, yet 51% of them are either unaware of them or have never attended a session on the subject. Furthermore, there is no correlation between the awareness level of Maharashtra's youth and age or gender.

Keywords: Cybercrime, Cybersecurity, Awareness, Youth

1.1. Introduction

There is a huge rise in number of individuals using digital payment infrastructure in the recent years. Covid-19 made people learn and use digital technology at a rapid speed. According to a press release by Government of India dated 19th December 2023 digital payment transactions have increased from 2071 crore in financial year 2017-18 to 13462 crore in the financial year 2022-23. With this enormous rise the risk of cybercrimes has also increased.

As per the report 'Crime in India', registration of cybercrime cases was 65,893 cases which showed an increase of 24.4 per cent in comparison to 52,974 cases in 2021. According to National Crime Records Bureau, in India the highest rate in increase of crimes is cybercrimes (24%) in comparison to economic offences (11%), senior citizens crime (9%), and crimes against women (4%).

The report "Cyber security and rising incidents of cyber/white collar crimes" by Parliamentary standing committee on Finance reported a loss of ₹2537.35 crore in domestic fraud. As per a study by IIT Kanpur-

incubated start-up, 75 % of financial frauds were cybercrimes from January 2020-June 2023. Hence, its important to create cybersecurity awareness for protection against these new types of financial frauds. This study attempts to study awareness of people in Maharashtra towards cybercrimes and its security.

Evolution of Cybercrime:

Cybercrime has evolved significantly since the beginning of computing. Initially, cybercriminal activities were relatively simple, often involving hacks or pranks. However, with the rapid advancement of technology, cybercrime has become more sophisticated and organised. Cybercrime has evolved through several key milestones, including the proliferation of viruses and worms in the 1980s and 1990s, the rise of financial cybercrime in the early 2000s, and the emergence of ransomware and nation-state-sponsored attacks in recent years.

The Morris Worm in 1988, the Code Red and Nimda worms in the early 2000s, and the Stuxnet worm targeting Iran's nuclear programme in 2010 have all demonstrated the destructive potential of cyber threats. These incidents resulted in significant financial losses, disruptions to critical infrastructure,



and breaches of national security. Individuals, businesses, and governments around the world face new challenges as cybercrime evolves, necessitating ongoing efforts to strengthen cybersecurity defences and effectively combat cyber threats.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime refers to a wide range of illicit activities carried out using digital means. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Malware attacks include viruses, worms, trojans, and ransomware.
- Phishing and social engineering are deceptive techniques for obtaining sensitive information.
- Identity theft and fraud are the unauthorised use of personal information for financial gain.
- Cyberbullying and online harassment: Harassment, intimidation, or defamation through digital means.

Any criminal behavior involving a computer or network is referred to as cybercrime. Hacking, virus distribution, identity theft, online fraud, phishing schemes, cyberbullying, online harassment, copyright infringement, and more are just a few of the numerous forms it can take. Cybercriminals frequently take advantage of holes in computer systems or utilize technology to carry out illegal activities including extorting money, stealing confidential data, or damaging computer networks. Because we depend more and more on digital technologies in our daily lives, cybercrime is becoming a major worry for governments, corporations, and people all around the world.

Types of Cyber crime

Malware Attacks: Malware is a general term for harmful software that covers, among other things, Trojan horses, worms, viruses, and ransomware. While worms propagate on their own over networks, viruses affix themselves to trustworthy programs and multiply when they are run. Trojans pose as trustworthy programs to fool users into installing them, giving hackers access to systems without

authorization. Ransomware frequently targets both individuals and organisations, encrypting files and demanding payment to recover them.

Phishing and social engineering: Phishing is the practice of deceiving people via phoney emails or websites into disclosing private information, such passwords or bank account information. Social engineering techniques take use of psychological vulnerabilities in people to coerce them into divulging private information or acting in ways that will help the attacker. Pretexting, baiting, and tailgating are common strategies that take advantage of victims' confidence and authority to deceive them.

Identity Theft and Fraud: Identity theft is the practice of cybercriminals using credit card numbers or social security numbers to obtain personal information in order to commit financial fraud or impersonate real people. Creating illegal accounts, making unauthorised transactions, or requesting loans in the victim's name are examples of fraudulent activity. Victims of identity theft may suffer greatly as a result, including monetary loss, harm to their reputation, and psychological suffering.

Cyberbullying and Online Harassment: Cyberbullying is the practice of harassing, intimidating, or dehumanising someone via the use of digital platforms like social media, messaging applications, or online forums. Cyberbullies may target their victims with targeted harassment campaigns, disseminate rumours, or post embarrassing images or videos. Threats, stalking, and hate speech are just a few of the negative actions that fall under the larger category of "online harassment," which can have a serious negative psychological and emotional impact on its victims.

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is the protection of computer systems, networks, and data against cyber threats. The measures include implementing strong security



protocols and encryption to ensure data integrity and confidentiality.

- Setting up firewalls, antivirus software, and intrusion detection systems to detect and prevent unauthorised access.
- Conducting regular security audits and risk assessments to identify and address vulnerabilities.
- Developing incident response plans and procedures to address cybersecurity incidents quickly.
- Creating a culture of cybersecurity awareness and training for employees to reduce human error.

Cyber security measures

A variety of techniques are included in cybersecurity, which is intended to shield data, networks, and PCs against online dangers. Confidentiality, integrity, and availability are three fundamental cybersecurity concepts that work to maintain the security, accuracy, and accessibility of information. Firewalls, which monitor and manage network traffic, antivirus software, which finds and eliminates harmful software, and encryption, which secures data by encoding it in a format that can only be accessed with the right key, are examples of common cybersecurity technologies and tools.

Defence-in-depth techniques, which combine several tiers of security measures to successfully reduce risks, are employed in strategies for protecting networks, devices, and data against cyber threats. These could include intrusion detection systems, network segmentation, access limits, and employee security awareness training. Frequent vulnerability scans, penetration tests, and security assessments help find and fix holes in systems and apps, which lowers the chance of successful cyberattacks.

Defence-in-depth tactics are used in plans to safeguard devices, networks, and data from cyber threats. These tactics combine many security tiers to effectively lower risks. These could consist of access controls, network segmentation, intrusion detection systems, and security awareness training for staff

members. Regular penetration testing, vulnerability scans, and security evaluations assist in identifying and addressing weaknesses in systems and applications, hence reducing the likelihood of successful intrusions.

Cybersecurity Market

The global cybersecurity market has grown significantly in recent years, owing to the increased frequency and sophistication of cyber threats. Key market trends include increased demand for cybersecurity solutions in industries like finance, healthcare, and government.

- Use advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning to improve threat detection and response capabilities.
- The emergence of cloud-based security solutions to meet the challenges of securing distributed and remote work environments.
- Governments and regulatory bodies are increasing their investments in cybersecurity to improve national security and protect critical infrastructure.
- Strengthening collaboration among cybersecurity vendors, industry partners, and government agencies to combat cyber threats together.

Cybersecurity Trends

Current cybersecurity trends reflect the changing nature of cyber threats and defensive strategies. The proliferation of Internet of Things (IoT) devices raises security concerns, including vulnerabilities in connected devices and networks.

- The rise of ransomware-as-a-service (RaaS) models, which allow cybercriminals to carry out sophisticated ransomware attacks with little effort.
- The growing importance of data privacy and compliance regulations, such as GDPR and CCPA, is prompting organisations to prioritise data protection and governance.
- The convergence of cybersecurity and physical security, as organisations strive to protect both digital and physical assets from evolving threats.



- A growing emphasis on proactive threat hunting and intelligence-driven security operations to detect and mitigate emerging cyber threats before they become widespread.

Cybersecurity Law

Cybersecurity laws and regulations play an important role in developing legal frameworks and standards for cybersecurity. These laws aim to establish legal obligations for organisations to protect sensitive information and reduce cyber risks.

- Create penalties and enforcement mechanisms for cybercrime, including hacking, data breaches, and identity theft.

- Encourage information sharing and collaboration among government agencies, industry stakeholders, and law enforcement agencies to effectively combat cyber threats.

- Promote international cooperation and coordination on cybersecurity issues, such as cross-border data sharing and cybercrime extradition.

- Promote transparency and accountability in cybersecurity practices, encouraging organisations to adopt best practices and cybersecurity governance standards.

Cybersecurity Awareness

Cybersecurity awareness campaigns aim to educate individuals and organisations about the importance of cybersecurity and empower them to practise safe online behaviour. Examples of such initiatives are:

- Government-sponsored cybersecurity awareness campaigns, such as National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) in the United States, which offers resources and educational materials to help people understand cybersecurity risks and best practices.

- Corporate training programmes and workshops that teach employees about cybersecurity threats and how to identify and respond to them effectively.

- Non-profit organisations and industry associations that provide cybersecurity training and certification programmes to professionals looking to improve their skills and knowledge of cybersecurity.

- Held community outreach events and workshops to educate children, parents, and educators on safe online behaviour and digital literacy.

Collaboration among government agencies, industry partners, and non-profit organisations to create and distribute cybersecurity awareness materials and resources for specific audiences and demographics.

- Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) is an initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India to deal with cybercrime in the country in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

- The 'National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal' (<https://cybercrime.gov.in>) has been launched, as a part of the I4C, to enable public to report incidents pertaining to all types of cyber crimes, with special focus on cyber crimes against women and children.

- The 'Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System', under I4C, has been launched for immediate reporting of financial frauds and to stop siphoning off funds by the fraudsters. So far, financial amount of more than Rs. 1000 Crore have been saved in more than 4 lakh incidents. A toll-free Helpline number '1930' has been operationalized to get assistance in lodging online cyber incidents.

- The Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) platform, namely 'CyTrain' portal has been developed under I4C, for capacity building of police officers/judicial officers through online course on critical aspects of cyber crime investigation, forensics, prosecution etc. along with certification. More than 72,800 Police Officers from States/UTs are registered and more than 50,000 Certificates issued through the portal.



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-I4C has imparted cyber hygiene training to 5,600 officials of various Ministries/ Departments of Government of India.

-To spread awareness on cybercrime, the Central Government has taken steps which, inter-alia, include; dissemination of messages through SMS, I4C social media account i.e. X (formerly Twitter) (@Cyberdost), Facebook (CyberDostI4C), Instagram (cyberdostI4C), Telegram(cyberdosti4c), Radio campaign, engaged MyGov for publicity in multiple mediums, organizing Cyber Safety and Security Awareness weeks in association with States/UTs, publishing of Handbook for Adolescents/Students, etc. The States/UTs have also been requested to carry out publicity to create mass awareness.

-The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) conducts regular training programmes for network/system administrators and Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) of Government and critical sector organizations regarding securing the IT infrastructure and mitigating cyber-attacks. A total of 42 training programmes have been conducted, covering 11,486 participants, during the years 2021 and 2022. In 2023, up to October, a total of 7007 officials from Government, critical sectors, public and private sector have been trained in 21 training programs in the area of cyber security.

-CERT-In regularly disseminates information and shares security tips on cyber safety and security through its official social media handles and websites. CERT-In organized various events and activities for citizens during Safer Internet Day on 7.2.2023 and Cyber Security Awareness Month in October 2023, by posting security tips using posters and videos on social media platforms and websites. CERT-In, in association with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, conducted an online awareness campaign for citizens, covering topics such as general online safety, social media risks and safety, mobile related frauds and safety, secure digital payment practices, etc., through videos and quizzes on the My Gov platform.

1.2. Literature Review

Research papers on sans cyber security: The sans technology institute provides papers on a range of cybersecurity subjects, including cyber biosecurity, a newly emergent field that straddles the boundaries of biosecurity, cybersecurity, and biological sciences.

An Analysis of cybercrime Scenario in Pune: the primary objective of this research paper is to scrutinize the cybercrime situation in Pune, and to assess the awareness of various types of cybercrimes in the city. Researcher has analyzed various cybercrimes based on IPC and IT act,

Awareness Concerns of Cyber Security for citizens in Navi Mumbai and Panvel Zone: this research paper has helped in developing and implementing enhanced cybersecurity protocols and procedures, with future investigations proving beneficial for all stakeholders.

A Study on Awareness of Cyber Crime and Security: the aim of the study is to raise awareness about the prevalence of cybercrimes in the modern world and to promote cybersecurity measures. The finding reveals a correlation between respondents age groups and educational qualifications. Therefore, it is imperative for all internet users to remain vigilant about cybercrimes and security and to actively educate others to foster a safer online environment.

Rackspace 2023 cybersecurity research report: This report highlights the critical concerns and adaptive strategies in cybersecurity, emphasizing the increasing importance of cybersecurity as a primary business concern and a major focal point of it investment among it professionals globally

Accenture cybersecurity state of play report 2023: The report from Accenture focuses on how enterprise innovation is boosted by cybersecurity to increase company resilience. It demonstrates that businesses that closely match their cybersecurity initiatives to



their operations gain market share and enhance customer happiness, staff productivity, and trust.

Research from cybersecurity ventures: Cybersecurity ventures offers an extensive compilation of cybersecurity research, including data, forecasts, and analyses of cybersecurity and cybercrime.

International journal of trend in scientific research and development: -

Internet consumers' ignorance about cybersecurity and cybercrimes. The requirement for a structure to maintain internet users' awareness campaigns to reduce cybercrimes.

International journal of current science: - The necessity of educating new and rural internet users on cybersecurity and digital literacy because they are more susceptible to online attacks. A thorough legislative framework is required to successfully combat the issue of cybercrime.

International journal of mechanical engineering and technology: - the significance of government agencies' and cybersecurity experts' capacity-building and training initiatives.

Review of cybercrime in India: an overview

The requirement for focused, regional cyber awareness training to optimize security culture and reduce the consequences of a cyberattack. The necessity for leaders at the board level to comprehend cybersecurity risks and threats.

1.3. Objectives

- To study Cybercrime in India
- To explore the awareness level among youth regarding Cybercrime.

- To evaluate the impact of demographic factors on the awareness level.

1.4. Research Methodology

This research paper aims to evaluate the awareness level of youth in Maharashtra regarding cybercrime. The foremost objective of the research is to know about cybercrime and to assess the awareness level in Maharashtra. Primary and secondary data has been collected through questionnaire and journals, newspaper articles, Government reports respectively. Chi square test is used to test the hypothesis.

1.5. Data Collection

To know the awareness level of youth in Maharashtra, Primary data has been collected in questionnaire form through google forms, Structured questionnaire was sent online. Questionnaire was sent to 110 individuals out of which 85 respondents replied effectively. Non-probabilistic convenient sampling method was used to collect data. To analyze the data chi square test, various graphs and tables are used.

Research Limitation

- 85 sample size is way too small for entire representation of Maharashtra.
- Study is restricted only to Maharashtra state.
- Non probabilistic, convenience sampling is used.
- Time and cost are the constraints.

1.6. Data Analysis & Interpretation

Respondent Profile

Items	Categories	Frequency
Gender	Male	45
	Female	40
	Total	85

Age Group	15-18	26
	19-24	42
	24 and above	17
	Total	85

Table 1: Respondent's Profile

Are you aware about cybercrime?

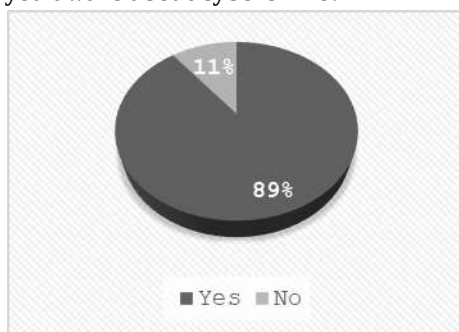


Figure 1: Awareness Regarding Cybercrime

Hypothesis Testing

Null Hypothesis (H0) - There is no significant relation between gender and awareness level for cybercrime.

Alternate Hypothesis (H1) - There is significant relation between gender and awareness level for cybercrime.

	Aware About Cybercrime	Not Aware about Cybercrime	Total
Male	40	3	43
Female	36	6	42
	76	9	

Table 2: Awareness level in Male and Female

Observed Count (O)	Expected Count (E)	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
40	38.447	1.55	2.40	0.062
3	4.55	-1.55	2.40	0.52
36	37.55	-1.55	2.40	0.06

6	4.44	1.55	2.40	0.54
X²				1.182

Table 3: Chi Square Calculation

$X^2 (1, N=85) = 1.182$, $p = 0.273536$. Calculated chi square value is less than the chi square critical value. Therefore, the **researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis (H0)**. Hence, there is no significant relation between gender and awareness level for cybercrime.

Null Hypothesis (H0) - There is no significant relation between age and awareness level for cybercrime.

Alternate Hypothesis (H1) - There is significant relation between age and awareness level for cybercrime.

	Aware About Cybercrime	Not Aware about Cybercrime	Total
15-18	23	3	26
19-24	38	4	42
Above 24	15	2	17
Total	76	9	85

Table 4: Awareness level in different age groups

Observed Count (O)	Expected Count (E)	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
23	23.24	-0.24	0.057	0.002
3	2.75	0.24	0.057	0.020
38	37.55	0.45	0.202	0.005
4	4.44	-0.45	0.202	0.045
15	15.2	-0.20	0.040	0.002
2	1.8	0.20	0.040	0.022
X²				0.096

Table 5 Chi square calculation

$X^2 (1, N=85) = 0.096$, $p = 0.951269$. Calculated chi square value is less than the chi square critical value. Therefore, the **researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis (H0)**. Hence, there is no significant

relation between age and awareness level for cybercrime.

Primary Online Activities

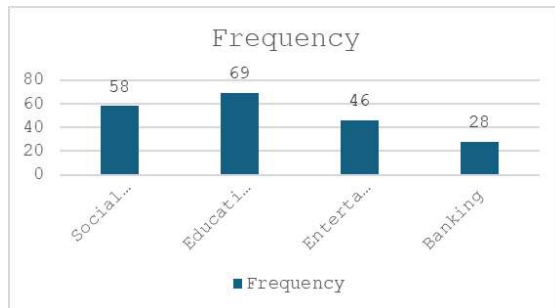


Figure 2 Primary online activities

Have you ever been a victim of cyber-attack or online fraud?



Figure 3 Victim of cybercrime

66% of respondents have never been a victim of cybercrime. Whereas, 34% of respondents are victim of cybercrime.

Have you ever reported a cybercrime?

Only 23.5 % of respondents have reported a cyber crime to concerned authorities.

Are you aware of grievance redressal mechanism (consumer support) in your area ?

55% of respondents are aware about the grievance redressal mechanism for cybercrimes. Whereas 45% of respondents are not aware about the same.

Have you participated in any cyber security awareness program by an authority?

49% of respondents have participated in cyber security awareness programs conducted by the authorities. On the other hand, 51% of respondents have never attended such events.

1.7. Conclusion

The smallest of transactions of a vegetable seller to Reserve Bank of Bangladesh or any other country using SWIFT technology, cybercrimes have been reported everywhere. From password and OTP sharing to hacking social media accounts, emails of individuals and corporations, the biggest protection required is against cybercrimes. The only way is to be aware and take precautionary measures while doing the smallest of the transactions. The study shows almost 37% of the victims have fallen prey to these frauds but on awareness level 51% have no idea on or never attended any workshop for the same. Moreover, there is no relation between age and gender with the awareness level of youth in Maharashtra. It is extremely important to create more and more cybersecurity awareness programs across the globe to protect the world from the new age crimes

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Deciphering Investor Adoption of Digital Gold: A UTAUT Model Perspective

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Abstract

Purpose: The advent of the digital revolution in the gold market has given rise to digital gold as a viable investment avenue. When juxtaposed with traditional physical investments, gold exhibits significantly greater potential for generating returns compared to other asset types. As gold is a haven for political risk, economic risk, and war, to hedge and reduce risks from other investments, this study was focused mainly on to assess the factors affecting individual investor's behaviour intention to invest in digital gold. Based on the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) model this study contended that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating condition influence their intention to invest in digital gold. The findings revealed that. **Research design, data and methodology:** A self-administered questionnaire based on considering constructs of UTAUT was developed and distributed online, generating a total of 200 responses. The data were analyzed using structural equation modelling. **Results:** The findings revealed that performance expectancy and facilitating condition significantly affect the behaviour intention of investor investing in digital gold.

Keywords: Digital Gold, Behaviour Intention, UTAUT,

JEL Classification Code: G11, G19, G23, G41, M21

1. Introduction

India's strong affinity for gold, coupled with its deep-rooted cultural significance, has gradually fostered a thriving gold-based financial market within the country. Gold serves as a hedge against inflation and economic uncertainties, providing a sense of security for investors. While physical gold, including jewellery, remains a cherished cultural obsession, consumer perspectives have evolved. Increasingly, individuals recognize and embrace the investment potential of digital gold. Digital gold allows investors to buy gold online and securely store it in insured vaults, bridging the gap between tradition and modern financial opportunities (Nayyar, 2022)

In recent times, retail investors in India have gained access to electronic gold investment options, namely Digital Gold and Gold Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs). These avenues allow investors to experience gold ownership without the hassle of physical storage. As these options mature into preferred investment tools, SGBs-Sovereign Gold Bonds—

issued by the Reserve Bank of India on behalf of the government—have gained widespread popularity. Additionally, Gold ETFs offer an attractive investment alternative. These funds track domestic market gold prices and provide exposure to bullion-based investments. In essence, the Indian market is poised to offer comprehensive packaged investment tools for gold (gold.org, 2023).

The debut of the first gold Exchange-Traded Fund (ETF) in 2007 marked a significant achievement. However, the allure of a surging equity market soon diverted demand away from gold ETFs. It wasn't until the pandemic triggered economic concerns that the ETF market regained its footing. By the close of 2022, gold ETF holdings had reached 38 tons. Subsequently, persistent geopolitical tensions underscored the importance of safe-haven assets, prompting a robust response from the digital gold investment market. Presently, 16 companies in India offer digital gold products, serving an estimated 5.6 million active gold accounts (gold.org, 2023).



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In India, the vast gold market has attracted numerous fintech start-ups aiming to seize the opportunity. Recent years have witnessed the emergence of digital gold platforms like Paytm, Jar, and OroPocket, capitalizing on the country's thriving gold market. Established jewellery giants such as Tanishq and Kalyan Jewellers are also venturing into the digital gold space (Nayyar, 2022). To safeguard consumers and ensure secure digital gold investments, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced regulations. These regulations focus on transparency, investor protection, and security. However, it remains crucial to recognize that digital gold remains unregulated in India (Upadhyay & Singh, 2021).

Given the rise of attractive investment opportunities in gold and the growing interest in digital gold, it becomes essential to explore individual investors' behavioural intentions. Digital Gold, being a novel investment avenue, faces challenges due to investor awareness gaps and the absence of regulatory backing for its circulation in India. To address this, this study adopts the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework and investigate the factors that impact consumers' intention to invest in digital gold, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. By examining these dimensions, this study aims to shed light on the adoption dynamics of digital gold in the investment landscape.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) Model

To address the difficulty faced by various research in selecting the constructs for technology adoption (Venkatesh et al. 2003) have synthesized various models and suggested the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). According to UTAUT, four key constructs—performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), social influence (SI), and facilitating conditions (FC)—directly affect user acceptability and technology usage behaviour. The impact of the four main categories on usage intention and behaviour is moderated by the variables of gender, age, experience, and voluntariness of use.

2.1.1 Performance expectancy

Performance expectancy refers to the degree to which an individual believes that using a specific system or technology will achieve specific outcomes (Venkatesh et al., 2012). Performance expectancy is considered to be important factor of behavioural intention to use information technology (Dwivedi et al., 2017). In summary, understanding the parameters related to performance expectancy—such as return on investment, ease of use, and convenience—is essential for designing effective digital gold platforms and encouraging investor adoption.

2.1.2 Effort expectancy

According to Venkatesh et al. (2012), effort expectancy is an individual's perception of how user-friendly a technology is. The primary factors influencing users' behavioural intention to use technology are ease of use and minimum efforts (Almunawaretal., 2020; Venkatesh et al., 2012). Consumers like technology that is easy to use, has a minimal number of click-through steps, is simple to set up, and allows for quick payment methods. As a result, they will perceive things more favourably and be more likely to use the technology (Yang et al., 2012; Yappetal., 2018). This study hypothesised that users' behavioural intention towards digital gold will grow when minimum work and time are required to spend in it, as complexity of a technology system can impede user adoption.

2.1.3 Social Influence

The term "social influence" describes how social variables affect a person's decision to accept technology. It includes the ways in which an individual's decision to embrace and use technology is influenced by the conventions, attitudes, and pressures of others. Based on institutional theory, (Leow, Phua, & Teh, 2021) divided the social influence factor in the UTAUT model into coercive, normative, and mimetic pressures. They found that while mimetic pressures have little effect on behavioural intention, coercive and normative pressures positively influence it. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether

investors' intentions to invest in digital gold would rise when they perceive favourable social impact (e.g., recommendations from peers, experts, or social norms) in this regard.

2.1.4 Facilitating Conditions

The extent to which an individual thinks that the organisational and technological infrastructure is in place to facilitate the usage of a certain system or technology is known as the "facilitating conditions" (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The purpose of this study is to determine whether investors' intention to invest will rise in the presence of favourable enabling conditions, such as user-friendly platforms, regulatory assistance, and instructional resources for investing in digital gold.

2.1.5 Behavioural Intention

Behavioural intention refers to an individual's perceived likelihood or subjective probability that they will engage in a specific behaviour. It reflects their intention or motivation to perform a particular action. (Bhattacharjee, 2001). In the context of investing in digital gold, behavioural intention would relate to an investor's inclination or readiness to invest in digital gold. Factors such as perceived benefits, ease of use, and external influences (such as social norms) can shape an individual's behavioural intention regarding digital gold investment. For instance, if an investor believes that digital gold offers favourable returns and perceives it as convenient, their behavioural intention to invest in digital gold is likely to be stronger.

2.2 Research Gap

Existing studies have primarily explored the UTAUT model in various contexts, including student usage of e-learning systems in developing countries (Abbad, M.M.M, 2021), trust and acceptance of cloud computing (Alharbi, S.T., 2014), empirical research on internet and mobile banking using the UTAUT model (Malik M., 2019), and user willingness to accept mobility as a service based on the UTAUT model (Zheng J. Y. J., 2020). However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that consider the UTAUT model in context to digital gold investment by Indian

investors thereby analyzing the impact on behaviour intention of the latent variables of UTAUT model.

2.3 Hypothesis Establishment

After reviewing various studies, data was analyzed to determine the influence and moderating impacts of statistical concepts. As a result, quantitative approach has been employed in the study. In quantitative research testing, dependent and independent variables are utilized to investigate their effects. (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2015). (Figure1).

H1: Performance expectancy has a positive influence on the behavioural intention to adopt digital gold investment.

H2: Effort expectancy has a positive influence on the behavioural intention to adopt digital gold investment.

H3: Social influence has a positive influence on the behavioural intention to adopt digital gold investment.

H4: Facilitating conditions has a positive influence on the behavioural intention to adopt digital gold investment.



Figure1: UTAUT Model (Venkatesh et al. 2003)

3. Research Methods

Research Design: This study employed a quantitative

research design to investigate the influence of independent variables such as; performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions on behavioural intention. This approach allows for testing dependent and independent variables to understand their effects (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2015).

We have used AMOS software and applied Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the relationships between the constructs of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model. SEM allows for the examination of dependent relationships and the inclusion of latent variables. We have performed SEM analysis and examined the path coefficients. These path coefficients represent the direct relationships between the dependent and independent variables in the model. We also assessed the model fit to ensure that our chosen model adequately represents the data. The goodness-of-fit of the model was evaluated by employing various fit indices such as Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Chi-square statistic, , Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and others.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Demographic breakdown

The sample constituted of 200 investors investing in Digital Gold out of which 107 were male investors and 93 were female investors. 26 of the participants were young under the age of 25 years, 62 were in the age group of 26 to 35 years, 53 of the participants were in between 36 to 45 years and 59 were above 46 years of age. Almost half of the respondents were having an income of up to 1 million INR per annum and 40% of them were post graduate. Considering the experience of investing in digital gold 95 participants were having an experience of 5 years or more, however, 40 participants were having less than 3 years' investment experience.

4.2 Measurement Model: Analysis

The five constructs as mentioned in the UTAUT model are Performance expectancy, Effort expectancy, Social Influence, Facilitating conditions and Behavioural intention. The performance expectancy is the degree to which an individual investor believes that investing in digital gold will

provide him/her gains in the financial performance or return on investment. The effort expectancy refers to the degree of ease linked with the process of investing in digital gold. Social influence means that an individual is influenced by family, friends, relatives and/or financial advisor to invest in digital gold. Facilitating conditions refer to the degree to which an individual believes that an organizational and technical infrastructure like digital platforms, regulatory policies, etc. exists to support the use of digital gold investments. Model fit and indices are considered acceptable as per recommended guidelines (Byrne, 2010; Hair et al., 2010).

Factor loading of each of the items was noted which was at least 0.60 and this reflected Convergent Validity. In order to ensure the reliability of the scale items, Cronbach's alpha was measured. As per rule of thumb, the alpha value of 0.70 or more is considered as a sufficient measure of internal consistency of an instrument (Taber, 2017; Hair et al., 2013; Mostafa, 2009). Convergent Validity was ensured by observing the value of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) which was 0.50 or more and Composite Reliability (CR) was ascertained as the values were 0.70 or more for each construct (Aggelidis and Chatzoglou, 2012; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Factor Loading, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability values are presented in Table 1 which are acceptable as per the standard cut-off points.

Table 1

Constructs	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	CR
PE1	0.926	0.803	0.850
PE2	0.935		
PE3	0.945		
EE1	0.913	0.974	0.872
EE2	0.914		
EE3	0.954		
SI1	0.909	0.978	0.876
SI2	0.986		
SI3	0.922		
FC1	0.949	0.988	0.889
FC2	0.986		
FC3	0.965		
BE1	0.818	0.971	0.866
BE2	0.986		
BE3	0.958		

Source: data processed

Significant results were obtained including χ^2 value of 229.415, χ^2/DF (Relative Chi-Square) value is 2.86. A value of 2.868 suggests a reasonable fit of the model, as values less than 3 are generally considered acceptable. Non-Centrality Parameter (NCP) for the default model is 149.415 which is significantly greater than zero. NCP of 0, represents a model with perfect fit, which is usually unachievable in practice. NFI (Normed Fit Index); CFI (Comparative Fit Index); TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) are incremental fit indices, with values ranging from 0 to 1. Values closer to 1 indicate a better fit. All these values are above 0.9, suggesting a good fit of the model. RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) is a measure of model fit. A value of 0.097 is slightly high, as values less than 0.08 are generally considered a good fit.

Table 2
Model -fit values

χ^2	DF	χ^2/DF	NCP	NFI	CFI	TLI
229.415	80	2.86	149.41	0.958	0.964	0.972

Source: data processed

Results obtained from Table 3 is depicting Parsimony Ratio (PRatio), Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) and Parsimony Comparative Fit Index (PCFI) which are parsimony-adjusted measures. They adjust the model fit based on the model's complexity. Higher values indicate a better fit. Their values in Table 2 indicate a reasonable fit. The FMIN (Function Minimum) value indicates how well the model fits the data, with lower values indicating better fit. The default model has an FMIN of 1.153, which suggests a reasonable fit if it's less than 3. ECVI (The Expected Cross-Validation Index) estimates the discrepancy that would be expected if the model were fitted to a different sample. Lower values indicate a better fit. The default model has an ECVI of 1.706, which is higher than the saturated model ECVI of 1.357 but much lower than the independence model ECVI of 27.991.

Table 3

Model -fit values				
PRatio	PNFI	PCFI	FMI	ECV
0	1		N	I
0.762	0.73	0.74	1.153	1.706
	0	1		

Source: data processed

Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) is used for model selection and assessment. It is useful in determining the appropriateness of model. AIC balances the goodness of fit of a model with its complexity. AIC works on the principle that a good model should fit the data well while using the fewest possible parameters. The formula is:

$$AIC = -2 * \log\text{-likelihood} + 2 * \text{number of parameters}$$

Lower values of AIC indicate a better balance between model fit and complexity. The default model has an AIC of 339.415, the saturated model has an AIC of 270.000, and the independence model has an AIC of 5570.173.

Table 4

Model	AIC	BCC
Default model	339.415	349.033
Saturated model	270.000	293.607
Independence model	5570.173	5575.419

Source: data processed

Multicollinearity has been tested so that there is no correlation amongst independent variables and the estimated values are free from any impact of correlation (Alin, 2010). Multicollinearity is said to arise among the independent variables if the variance inflation factor (VIF) is more than five (Sarstedt et al., 2014, Menard 1995).

Table 5

Variables	Collinearity Tolerance	VIF
PE	0.309	3.231
EE	0.217	4.616
SI	0.409	2.447
FC	0.289	3.459

Source: data processed

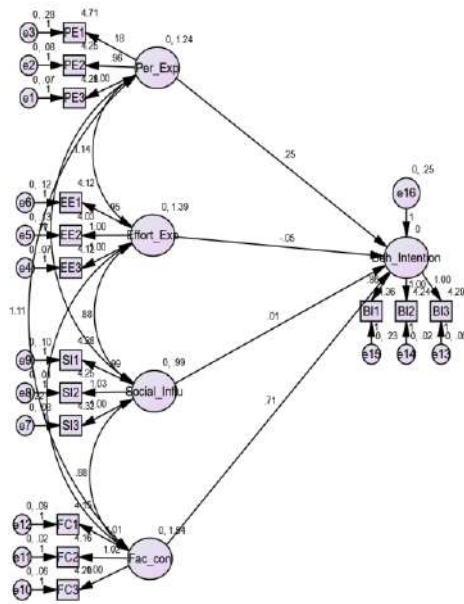


Table 6

Hypot thesis	Path	Estimate	p-Value	Result
H1	PE → BI	0.251	0.001	Supported
H2	EE → BI	-0.047	0.554	Not Supported
H3	SI → BI	0.012	0.835	Not Supported
H4	FC → BI	0.713	***	Supported

Source: data processed

4.3 Discussion

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) is a comprehensive framework that integrates determinants from various technology acceptance models. It aims to explain users' intentions to adopt and their subsequent behavior regarding technology utilization (Al-Qeisi K.I. 2009). This research is one of the first of its kind to discover the investor's behaviour in digital gold using UTAUT model thus analyzing the influence of latent variables namely; performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and, facilitating conditions on behavioural intention of the investors. Previous

researches have applied UTAUT model to analyze students' intentions and actual usage of Moodle, an e-learning system at Hashemite University in Jordan (Abbad M. M. M. 2021); to understand the adopter's behaviour in mobile app usage (Sujati W., Yukodo G., and, Okdinawati L. 2023). And analyzed how well-informed retail investors were about digital gold (Gurbaxani A. 2023), and, analyzed the impact of changing attitude from gold consumption to gold investment (Thinakaran G., and, Antony Sessammal C. F. O. 2018). Our study is in contrast with previous researches where we have applied UTAUT model to understand the behavioural intention of investors in digital gold.

It is found that value of the relative chi-square is 2.86 which is less than 3.00 so the model demonstrates a reasonable fit. Normed Fit Index (NFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) are all above 0.9 suggesting a good fit of the model to the data. Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of .097 is slightly higher than the ideal threshold of .08 (Steiger J. H. 1990) (Brown M. W. and Cudek R. 1993) (Jöreskog, K. G., & Sörbom, D. 1993), however, it is within an acceptable range of model fit. While considering the results it is observed that PRatio (Parsimony Ratio), PNFI (Parsimony Normed Fit Index), and PCFI (Parsimony Comparative Fit Index) suggest a reasonable fit. FMIN (Function Minimum) value is 1.153, which suggests a reasonable fit if it's less than 3 (Harrington D. 2008) (Bagozzi, R. P. and Yi, Y. 1988) (Hu L. T. and Bentler P. M. 1999). ECVI (The Expected Cross-Validation Index) default model value is 1.706, which is higher than the saturated model's ECVI of 1.357, but much lower than the independence model's ECVI of 27.991. The default model's AIC (Akaike Information Criterion) is significantly lower than the independence model's AIC, indicating a better fit. And the default model's BCC (The Browne-Cudeck Criterion) is significantly lower than the independence model's BCC, suggesting a favorable balance between fit and complexity. Thus, the default model appears to perform well in terms of fit, especially when compared to the independence model.

Through another unique investigation it is found that

performance expectancy and facilitating conditions both have a positive coefficient of 0.251 and 0.713 which are statistically significant at the 0.001 level suggesting that as performance expectancy and facilitating conditions increases, behavioural intention also increases. Social influence also has a positive coefficient of 0.012, but it is not statistically significant ($p = 0.835$) suggesting that social influence does not have a significant effect on behavioural intention.

However, effort expectancy has a negative coefficient of -0.047 but it is not statistically significant ($p = 0.554$) suggesting that effort expectancy does not have a significant effect on behavioural intention.

Squared multiple correlations are representing the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. Thus, the behavioural intention is 0.826, suggesting that about 82.6% of the variance in behavioural intention can be explained by the model.

The VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values are all less than 5 reflecting that there is no multicollinearity issue in the model.

In the present study, in an exclusive way the model appears to perform well in predicting behavioural intention with performance expectancy and facilitating conditions being significant predictors. However, effort expectancy and social influence do not seem to have a significant effect.

5. Limitations and Future Scope

Despite the fact that the current study has made a unique contribution by analyzing the behavioural intention of the investors in digital gold investment using UTAUT model it has got certain limitations. The research could be conducted on a larger sample size which was not feasible due to time limitation. The present study has provided empirical support for the relationship between performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence & facilitating conditions and behavioural intention of the investors in digital gold. However, we did not analyze the moderation and mediation effect in our UTAUT model. Hence, future researchers can study whether any of the predictors mediate the relationship between others and behavioural intention. Moderators such as

Gender, Age and Investment Experience could be considered in the future study. Interaction terms can enhance model complexity. Interviews could be conducted on focus groups to gain deeper insights. Qualitative data can complement quantitative findings and provide context. Therefore, we call future researchers to explore these possibilities in the current study and to take the study further.

There are numerous possible areas of study in context to digital gold as India is moving towards digitization. It appears a promising field as it provides an informative way to benefit from market opportunities. The study revealed that there are significant positive effects of both performance expectancy and facilitating conditions on the behavioural intention. However, effort expectancy and social influence do not have any significant on the investors behavioural intention towards investment in digital gold. Thus, this concern needs to be addressed as the effort expectancy refers to the degree of ease linked with the process of investing in digital gold. SEBI (Securities Exchange Board of India) should consider arranging such programs or workshops where investors should be made aware of the processes and benefits of investing in digital gold which will assist in achieving the dream of the becoming a digitized nation.

6. Conclusion

This is one of the innovative attempts to consider the impact on investor's behavioural intention using the independent variables of UTAUT model. Through an in depth analysis, we found that the model demonstrates a reasonable fit, supported by various fit indices including the relative chi-square, NFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA. While some indices slightly deviate from ideal thresholds, they remain within an acceptable range, affirming the model's adequacy. The significant and positive effects were analyzed using structural model for performance expectancy and facilitating conditions. The research results indicate that as these significant predictors factors increase, so does the intention to engage in digital gold investment. Performance expectancy is a crucial factor as it reflects individual investor's belief that investing in digital gold will provide him/her gains in the financial performance or a positive return on

investment. Similarly facilitating conditions is yet another important construct which shows that the investors are giving emphasis on the organizational and technical infrastructure like digital platforms, regulatory policies, etc. to invest in digital gold.

However, according to the results of the current study investors behaviour is not influenced by friends, relatives, and/or financial advisors in context to making investment in digital gold. Surprisingly the effort expectancy which shows the ease linked with the process of investing in digital gold is also not an influencing factor on investors behavioural intention. The non-significant effects of effort expectancy and social influence warrant further exploration to better understand their roles in influencing investors decision making processes. Overall, this research offers valuable insights for both academicians studying digital investment behavior and practitioners in the digital gold industry. It highlights the significance of performance expectancy and facilitating conditions in shaping investor behavior, providing a basis for strategies to attract and retain investors in digital gold.

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Effects of Design Thinking Integration on Organization Dynamics and Innovation Outcomes in Thai Organizations

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to analyze the advantages of integrating design thinking in an organization in Thailand, and its effect on organization dynamics and influencing innovation outcomes. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** The research methodology involves qualitative interviews with organizational leaders and literature review. Thematic analysis is applied to interview data. **Findings:** The findings highlight the benefits of design thinking in influencing organization dynamics and fostering innovation outcomes within the context of Thai organizations.

Originality/Value: This study contributes to the understanding of the practical benefits of design thinking in shaping organization dynamics and influencing innovation outcomes within the unique business landscape of Thailand, offering insights that can be applied to enhance organizational creativity and problem-solving.

Keywords: Design Thinking Integration, Organization Dynamics, Innovation Outcome

JEL Classification Code: M11, M13, O31, O36,

1. Introduction

Larger companies and long-established companies face competitions from younger and more innovative companies. Meanwhile, small-and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) also face the challenges of the competitive business landscape and must innovate more frequently in order to maintain a competitive advantage. They need to use dynamic capabilities and strategy to create and refine a defensible business model that will guide organizational transformation (Teece, 2008).

¹⁷

Thailand's 20-Year National Strategy (2017-2026) called Thailand 4.0 focuses on transforming the

economic and social sector towards sustainability. As Thailand works to become a developed country by implementing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy principles, this national strategy will help Thailand to thrive in the 21st century through security, prosperity, and sustainability (The Ministry of Industry, 2017). Thailand 4.0 helped create an innovation-driven economy, where companies are looking to align themselves with Thailand's national strategy. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the impact of design thinking integration on organization dynamics and innovation outcome.

1.1. Research Objectives

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Here are the research objectives that will help guide the study:

R1. Examine the effects of design thinking integration on organization dynamics

The purpose of this research objective is to understand managers' attitudes toward implementing design thinking in their respective organizations, learn about the effects on organizational culture, communication, and collaboration from the adoption of design thinking methodologies. Finally, analyze the effects design thinking integration has on the roles of leadership, teamwork, and communication strategies that led to changes in organizational dynamics.

R2. Analyze the impact of design thinking integration on Innovation Outcomes

The purpose of this research objective is to learn how design thinking influences the organization's culture and business strategies. Furthermore, learn how integrating design thinking methodologies influences organizational innovation outcomes. Finally, identify elements of design thinking that contribute to fostering innovation within the organization.

1.2 Research Questions

Here are the research questions that will help guide the study:

RQ1. How does the adoption of design thinking correlate with changes in organization structure, communication flow, and collaboration dynamics within the organization?

RQ2. What innovation outcome results from integrating design thinking in the organization's process?

1.3 Significant of the study

This study is significant as it contributes to the understanding of the practical benefits of design thinking in shaping organization dynamics and

influencing innovation outcomes within the unique business landscape of Thailand. Furthermore, the study offers insights that can be applied to enhance organizational creativity and problem-solving.

1.4 Definition of Terms

1.4.1. Design Thinking

According to the Interaction Design Foundation, teams use design thinking, which is a non-linear, iterative process to understand users, challenge their assumptions, redefine problems and create innovative solutions to prototype and test. This process involves five phases—Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype and Test that is most beneficial to address undefined or unknown problems (Interaction Design Foundation). Design thinking not only means many things to many people in its definition, but also in its practical applications. Today a wide variety of design thinking frameworks and visualizations exist in the world today that are variations of the design thinking process (Interaction Design Foundation).

1.4.2. Design Thinking Integration

According to Li & Zhan (2022), Design Thinking Integration (DTI) refers to fostering interdisciplinary and innovative talent development that fosters learning and connecting multidisciplinary knowledge and skills by applying design process/skills in a co-creative environment. (Li & Zhan, 2022). Furthermore, Design Thinking Integration (DTI) also refers to promoting transdisciplinary learning and helping with cultural understanding and inheritance (Li & Zhan, 2022).

1.4.3. Organization Dynamics

Organizational Dynamics (OD) refers to encouraging the employees to experience how designers frame problems, think outside the box and ideate innovative solutions by improving employees' design thinking skills by integrating design thinking process and methods. (Razzouk & Shute, 2012). According to

Akintayo & Faniran (2012), Organizational Dynamics (OD) refers to the communication skills and interpersonal relationship between workers and organizational goal achievement.

1.4.4. Innovation Outcome

There are many definitions about Innovation Outcomes. Some pointed to the degree of newness of project, and some pointed to the effect of the Innovation project to the organization. Janger et al. (2017) concluded that Innovation Outcomes (IO) refers to the result of the introduction of innovations, including the economic effects of innovation outputs on the firms introducing new innovations. While Driver et al (1988) at that time presented the Innovation Outcomes (IO) that referred to the degree newness of innovations, where scholars describe “radical” innovations as totally new goods and services or production processes, and “incremental” innovations as performance enhancements of existing goods and services or production processes which do not profoundly change their characteristics. For another dimension of Innovation Outcome concluded that Innovation Outcomes (IO) refers to the effect of structural changes from the introduction of radical innovations (Quatraro, 2009). Moreover, Gatignon et al., (2002) summarized that the Innovation Outcomes (IO) refers to the effects from incremental innovations that result in a minor structural upgrading that refines and improves existing entities.

2. Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to form a conceptual framework based on literature reviews on Design Thinking Integration and Organization Dynamics and Design Thinking Integration and Innovation Outcome.

2.1 Design Thinking Integration and Organization Dynamics

A study by Miller (2023) examines what design thinking is both as a process and a mindset. Miller (2023) suggests the benefits of design thinking on organization dynamics and tools that can help drive design thinking in the organization. In order to help individuals new to the Design Thinking process in the organization adopt the mindset, it is advantageous to have a facilitator to help walk through the Design process (Wrigley et al., 2018). Furthermore, experts suggest when first integrating design thinking into the organization existing processes as an agile method instead of strict process where diverse design thinking tools can be used and applied in various ways (Chen & Venkatesh, 2013). Design Thinking Integration affects Organization Dynamics as the increased project ownership that is a by-product of the iterative nature of design thinking projects helps increase self motivation and empowerment (Roth et al., 2020).

2.2 Design Thinking Integration and Innovation Outcome

2.2.1. Innovation Outcomes at the firm level

The iterative nature of the Design Thinking process helps reduce ambiguity of situations and provide a dynamic and flexible approach that results in a leaner and faster innovation process (Roth et al., 2020). Design Thinking can also help develop products that are user-centered and will meet the user's needs (Chen et al., 2018). The positive qualities of the Design Thinking process can help innovation outcomes at the firm level. Innovation Outcome is the result of the introduction of innovation that results in economic effects or value added from innovation output from the firms (Janger et al., 2017). There are different types of innovation Outcome that can occur at the firm level, where product innovations are sold to users and process innovation helps reduce cost or add value to firms inputs that will generate economic gains (Janger et al., 2017).

2.2.2. Innovation Outcome at the Industry level

Based on the study by Janger (2017), Innovation Outcome at the firm level can affect Innovation Outcomes at the Industry Level two ways; structural change towards more knowledge-intensive industries and structural upgrading within industries as seen in Figure 1. According to Zhang (2018) Design Thinking Integration can help develop the capability of a company's brand ambidexterity in their business strategy. With the Design Thinking process, companies can pursue both incremental innovation and radical innovation at the same time. Using Design Thinking business opportunities could be discovered by using existing resources that can lead to incremental innovation (Rösch et al., 2023). On the other hand, Design Thinking integration can also lead to identifying new opportunities through knowledge and experimentation, which can result in radical innovations (Zhang, 2018). Depending on what industry the organization is in, Structural change occurs when there is a move from industries with lower levels of knowledge intensity to higher knowledge intensity (Janger et al., 2017). Thus, Design Thinking Integration can provide organizations with a process that has the dynamic capability to adapt to the needs of organization and current market.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The literature review provided the foundation for the conceptual framework design to examine how design thinking integration affects organization dynamics and innovation outcomes. The conceptual framework in Figure 1 is inspired by the conceptual framework in Figure 2 from a study by Gao & Yu (2023). The research framework from Figure 2, depicts the process of knowledge exchange with design thinking that leads to SMEs service innovation. The first part of the knowledge exchange examines the relationship between CEOs, staff and the design thinking implementation led by researchers. The CEO is vital to encourage participants and help implement design

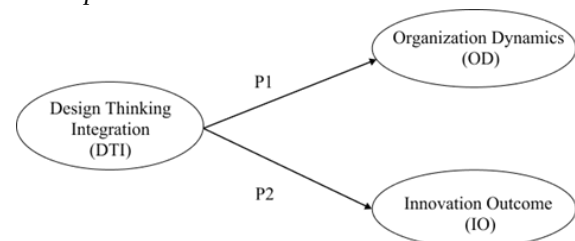
thinking. The second part of knowledge exchange in Figure 2 focuses on the service side, where staff are encouraged to empathize with learning the customers' needs, where this knowledge exchange is vital in the growth of the service innovation that is made possible by the implementation of design thinking. The conceptual framework in Figure 1 is also inspired by the conceptual framework in Figure 3. The research framework from Figure 3, defines the innovation outcome at the firm level and the two types of innovation outcome at the industry level: structural change towards more knowledge-intensive industries and structural upgrading within industries.

Here are the following two qualitative propositions for the conceptual framework for this study:

P1. Design thinking can have a positive influence on organizational dynamics.

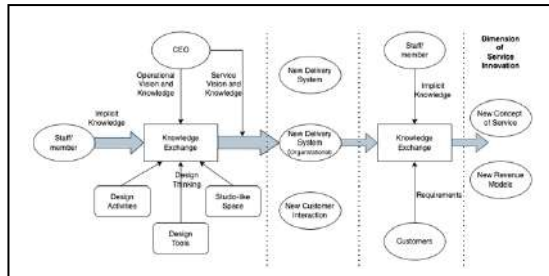
P2. Design Thinking can have a positive influence on innovative outcomes.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



Source: Adapted from previous studies by authors

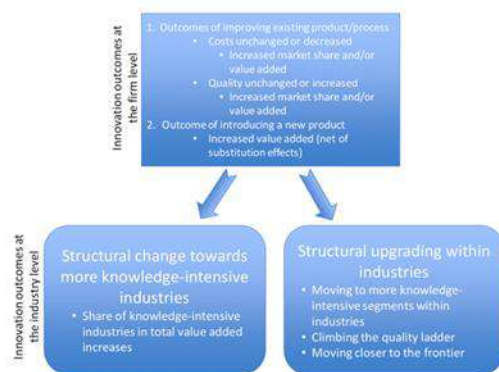
Figure 2
Design thinking, knowledge exchange and service innovation: a conceptual framework



Source: Gao, B., & Yu, K. (2023). Knowledge exchange in smes service innovation with Design thinking.

Figure 3

Innovation outcomes at the firm and the industry level: a conceptual model



Source: Janger, J., Schubert, T., Andries, P., Rammer, C., & Hoskens, M. (2017) The EU 2020 innovation indicator: A step forward in measuring innovation outputs and outcomes?

3. Research Methods

The objective of this study is to examine the effects of design thinking integration on organization dynamics and to analyze the impact of design thinking integration on Innovation Outcome. The research method selected for this study is semi-structured qualitative interviews. For this study, a total of nine semi-structured interviews from eight companies across six different industries. Eight out of

nine interviews were conducted and recorded over video conference calls. One interview was conducted in person and detailed notes were taken.

3.1. Population and Sample

In this research study, managers and team leads of organizations based in Thailand are interviewed. Participants are selected based on how they apply design thinking techniques within their organizations. Overall, nine participants were interviewed across several industries such as Banking, Community Outreach, Design, Electric Vehicle, Marketing, and Retail.

3.2 Interview Questions

The interview questions are divided by each of the following variables: Design Thinking Integration, Organization Dynamics, and Innovation Outcomes. The interview questions for Design Thinking Integration, and Organization Dynamics are based on Dunne (2018), while the interview questions for Innovation Outcomes are based on the study by Janger et al., (2016) (see Table 1).

3.3 Reliability Test

The Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) test was sent to three experts to review the interview questions. A total of two out of three responses were received from the experts. Each expert was asked to give a score for each question, where +1 for congruent, 0 for questionable, and -1 for incongruent. The total score out of 2 from the IOC test (Table 1).

Table 1: Interview Questions with IOD Score

Variable	Questions		Source	IOC
Design Thinking	Q1	What challenges or opportunities led to the introduction of design thinking methodologies in your organization?		2/2



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	Q2	Could you share how design thinking has been integrated into your team or company's workflow?	Dunne (2018)	2/2	Q11	Can you explain if the share from total value added increased from the structural change towards more knowledge-intensive industries?		1/2
	Q3	Could you highlight specific phases of Design Thinking that contributed to fostering innovation within your team or organization?		2/2		Q12		Can you explain if the firm was able to move more knowledge-intensive segments, improve its quality and become the frontier within the industry from the structural upgrading within industries?
	Q4	How does your organization define or perceive design thinking, and what significance does it hold within your company's culture?		2/2				
Organization Dynamics	Q5	How has the adoption of Design Thinking influenced the organization's structure and communication flow?		2/2	4. Results and Discussion The purpose of this chapter is to present the result from the data collection from the qualitative interviews and the data analysis.			
	Q6	Do you think that the Design Thinking framework encourages better cooperation between individuals on the team?		2/2				
Innovation Outcome	Q7	For the project that you worked on, did your team improve an existing product/process or introduce a new product?	Jang et al., (2016)	1/2	4.1 Demographic Profile Summary The total number participants that were interviewed was nine persons that are team leads and managers of organizations in Thailand. Information about the participant's basic demographic information, education background, current position, field of work and number of years of work experience can be found in the table (see Table 3). For field of education, research divided into two main fields: STEM (Science Technology Engineer and Math) and non-STEM.			
	Q8	Can you explain if the cost was unchanged or improved from improving the existing product/process? Did you notice an increase in market share and/or value-added?		1/2				
	Q9	Can you explain the increased value added by introducing a new product/process?		2/2				
	Q10	Would you say the project you worked on affected the innovation outcome on the industry level with the share of knowledge or Structural change towards more knowledge-intensive industries?		1/2				

Table 3: Profile of each participant

No.	Name	Gender	Age	Degree	Field of Study	Position	Industry	Years of Work
1	CO-1	M	26-30	Bachelor's	STEM	Business Developer and Test Automation	Engineering	5
2	CO-2	F	26-30	Bachelor's	STEM	Packaging Global Supply Manager -New Product	Engineering	5
3	M-1	F	26-30	Bachelor's	Non-STEM	Marketing Executive	Marketing	5
4	M-2	F	41-45	Master's	Non-STEM	Chief Marketing Officer	Marketing	20
5	M-3	F	26-30	Bachelor's	Non-STEM	Managing Director	Marketing Agency & Food Wholesale	4
6	B-1	M	26-30	Bachelor's	STEM	UX Designer	Banking	8
7	D-1	M	31-35	Master's	STEM	CEO	UX Design	10
8	EV-1	F	56-60	Bachelor's	Non-STEM	CEO	Electric Vehicle	37

9	R-1	F	41-45	Master's	STEM	Product Manager	Retail	20

Note: Group-B: Banking Industry, Group-CO: Community Outreach, Group-D: Design Agency, Group-EV: Electric Vehicle, Group-M: Marketing, Group-R: Retail

4.2. Theme 1: Design Thinking Integration

When companies first introduce their respective design tools to their company's innovation process, running workshops is the most common way to introduce the Design Thinking and design tools to the employees.

1) Design Thinking Workshops

All of the eight companies ran workshops to integrate in the form of workshops that focused on experiential learning and hand-on on projects. Frequent check-in and presentation and conducted to ensure each individual understanding of the new thinking framework being introduced.

For example, Interviewee CO-1 and CO-2 said "We ran workshops and divided the mixed students from different universities where each team had a few experts on design thinking and helped teach each other. In addition, they were mini hands-on projects to help enforce how to apply design thinking principles to a tangible project."

4.2.1 Design Tools Implementation

By interview and discussed about design thinking approaches of each company found that all eight companies used different design thinking tools and combinations of different design thinking tools depending on each industry's requirements and team needs. Organizations in similar industries used similar design thinking tools.

Some organization applied additional tools/techniques like Interviewee R-1: "Need to re-enforce the agile mindset (design thinking tool) to make people think Some employees who are not used to collaborating may struggle with agile adoption. Extra techniques like visual boards or structured communication frameworks may be needed to help introverted employees collaborate, which using a variety of design thinking tool becomes beneficial."

4.2.2 Design Thinking Process

The Design Thinking process is a non-linear, iterative methodology is a solution-based approach to solving problems that helps deal with complex problems that are ill-defined or unknown (Alarcon, D. et al.,2011). There are five stages of the Design Thinking process as shown in Figure 4:

1. Empathize—Research Your Users' Needs
2. Define—State Your Users' Needs and Problems
3. Ideate—Challenge Assumptions and Create Ideas
4. Prototype—Start to Create Solutions
5. Test—Try Your Solutions Out

The Design Thinking Process from in Figure 1 is used by interviewees from four out of eight companies from the Banking, Electric Vehicle and Retail industry. The process supports all design thinker members to develop the innovation result align with industry and objectives of each.

Key points form six participants as follows; Interviewee B-1: "The Design Thinking process helps facilitate involvement of all the stakeholders needed at each stage where Product owners now understand the need to include the design team in discovery research before briefing projects. In addition, there is more iteration between design and development and more usability testing than before the integration."

Interviewee D-1: "When teaching Design Thinking to big companies, Design Thinking can help the companies make better decision that is not based on their own bias and the process help them create one target that they can focus on. Empathy part is the most important especially in more important than the prototyping and validation part that is later in the

Design thinking process because software production could take a long time”

Interviewee EV-1: “Design Thinking helped the team deal with multi-dimensional and difficult problems to solve as the early electric vehicle distributor trying to create an ecosystem for a brand new industry. Also, using Design Thinking to help facilitate collaboration with involved stakeholders.”

Interviewee M-2: “Defining the problem was viewed as the most impactful design thinking phase, helping to scope goals and guide innovation.”

Interviewee M-3: “The vision is communicated to the team, then have them study stakeholders like suppliers and customers to uncover needs, volume, and pain points”

Interviewee R-1: “Design Thinking is used in engineering and project management to help define the scope of the project. Compared to waterfall, problem discovery is slow, with design thinking tools risk is minimized because problem discovery is quicker with design thinking tools.”

Figure 4

Design Thinking Process from d.school



Note: The Design thinking process, graphic by d.school, Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford

4.2.3 Double Diamond

The structure is to understand customers and their problems and come up with creative and innovative solutions. There are four phases to this structure:

1. Discover customer problems
2. Define specific customer problems
3. Develop potential solutions to these customer problems

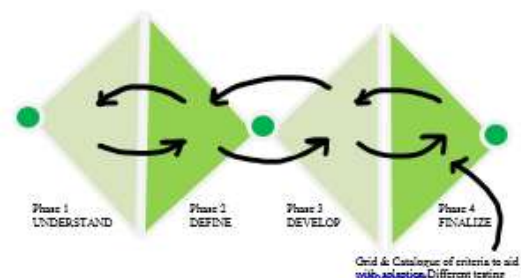
4. Deliver feasible and viable solutions to these customer problems

The Double Diamond process in Figure 5 is used by interviewees from one out of eight companies from the Design Agency industry. The process apply divergent thinking and convergent thinking but not the same time (Gallico, D, 2021).

Interviewee D-1: “Participating in user testing helped developers gain empathy and understand the need to make changes, overcoming their own assumptions. Being able to empathize and discover users’ problems is more important than fully building the prototype. For example, a government agency could take months to years to develop it and by that point they implement something that people don’t use.”

Figure 5

The Double Diamond Process



Note: This figure is from the article “How the double diamond process can help you work in a more user-centred way” by Eissa and Testing Time. <https://www.testingtime.com/en/blog/double-diamond-process/>

4.2.4 Socially Engaged Design

The method combines knowledge about the social, cultural, economic, environmental contexts where there is a design solution and encourages designers to reflect how their own cultural background and identities form their approach and impact. There is a focus on social and technical aspects throughout the design process. There are five stages:

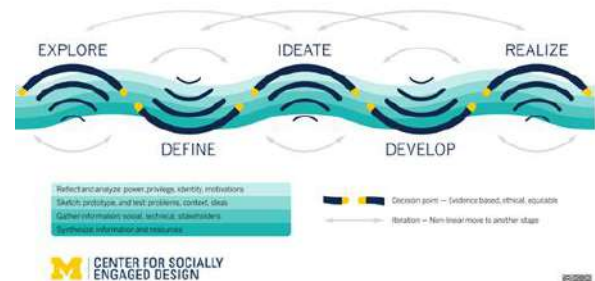
1. Explore- designers ask questions and gather information

2. Define- convergence of information and context to define complex problems into bitesize challenges
3. Ideate- present creative solutions and investigate possibilities to create options that can be developed further
4. Develop- engineers focus on a particular solution and refine the solution based on user input and feedback from stakeholders
5. Realize- board stage that could include validation, implementation or revisitation of previous stages in the process

The Socially Engaged Design process developed by Center for Socially Engaged Design (2020) as shown in Figure 6. This process is used by interviewees from one out of eight companies from the Community Outreach industry.

The application to apply this process into student project were mentioned from two participants. Interviewee CO-1 and CO-2 "Before the team's trip to the north of Thailand, the team, which consisted mostly of engineering students as well other students from other faculties organized workshops in various stages of the Socially Engaged Design process. We applied it to different scenarios and studied how different behaviors and cultural norms can be interpreted differently across various cultures. The step-by-step co-design is very important to the project as it helps design a solution that best meets the unmet needs. With each iteration the products were more efficient and effective at addressing a particular problem."

Figure 6
Socially Engaged Design Process Model



Note: Center for Socially Engaged Design (2020). Socially Engaged Design Process Model. Available at: <https://csed.engine.umich.edu/socially-engaged-design-process-model>

4.2.5 Customer Journey Map

The maps help teams uncover customer needs and the customer's journey to reach a product or service. Using this information, you can identify pain points and opportunities to enhance customer experience and boost customer retention. Here are the following components included in the customer journey map:

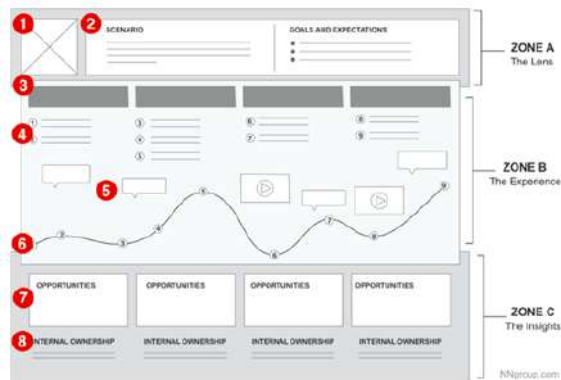
- [1] Point of View: An actor or persona is chosen for a clear narrative.
- [2] Scenario: Define the experience to map, whether existing or "to-be." The user's goal during the journey, emphasizing sequential events.
- [3] Actions, Mindsets, and Emotions: Explore user behavior, thoughts, and feelings.
- [4] Touchpoints and Channels: Align interactions (touchpoints) and communication methods (channels) with user goals and actions. Analyze potential brand inconsistencies and disconnected experiences.
- [5] Insights and Ownership: Uncover gaps in the user experience through insights. Assign ownership for different parts of the journey map to empower action.

The Customer Journey Map tool in Figure 7 is used by interviewees from one out of eight companies from the Marketing industry.

Interviewee M-2: "The Customer Journey Map exercise during the company workshop we did

provided ideas to improve marketing materials and the customer experience.”

Figure 7
Customer Journey Map Template



Note: The figure is from the article “Customer journey maps: When and how to create them” by Kaplan from Nielsen Norman Group. <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/customer-journey-mapping/>

4.2.6 Persona Design

Tool used to understand and define target customers and their needs. There are four steps toward creating a persona for design thinking:

- [1] Research and Analysis
- [2] Persona descriptions
- [3] Problem analysis
- [4] Collaboration and Revision

The Persona Design tool in Figure 8 is used by interviewees from one out of eight companies from the Marketing industry.

Interviewee M-2: “In the full day workshop participants were split into cross-functional teams and given specific customer profiles to role play and engage with. 91% of participants said the workshop was insightful. Common improvement ideas focused on better addressing customer needs and pain points based on the persona”

Figure 8
An example of a customer persona



Note: An example of a customer persona, courtesy of InnovationTraining.org from the article “How to create Personas for Design Thinking: Innovation training” by Casey. <https://www.innovationtraining.org/create-personas-design-thinking/>

4.2.7 Five Whys

Simple and effective tool for discovering the root cause of the problem are the steps to Five Whys Technique (Serrat, O., 2017):

- [1] Define the problem and record the first question.
- [2] Note possible follow-up questions. The questions should build up logically and incrementally based on previous answers.
- [3] Repeat the second step five times.

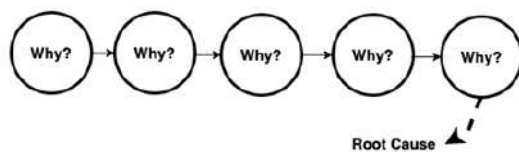
The Five Whys tool in Figure 9 is used by interviewees from two out of eight companies from the Marketing industry.

Interviewee M-1: “The 5 Whys method helps facilitate communication flow and gets everyone involved by allowing people to voice ideas they might not otherwise share. When metrics showed declining performance of Instagram reels, the team used the 5 Whys method to have a creative discussion about potential reasons and decide whether to eliminate reels.”

Interviewee M-3: “It was challenging getting the analytics-focused team to think more creatively and

ask "why" questions, but over time they generated ideas, tested them, and iterated based on feedback."

Figure 9
The 5 Whys Method



Note: The figure is from the article "What are 5 Whys?" by Daniel Skrok and Interaction Design Foundation. <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/5-whys>

Agile

A method that uses a highly collaborative way to design and develop new products by dividing tasks into small parts performed in sprints. The Agile software development cycles can be divided into six stages:

1. Concept: Define project scope and needs
2. Inception: Assemble Agile team according to project specifications
3. Iteration: Create code that allows customer feedback
4. Release: Test the code and fix and issues
5. Maintenance: Provide continuous tech support to ensure product dependability
6. Retirement: The end of the product life cycle that is the start of a new one.

The method in Figure 10 is used in one organization from the retail industry. The interviewee emphasize the importance and benefits of the Agile method on the organization's innovation outcome:

Interviewee R-1: "Agile can be run in parallel and allows for increased efficiency resulting in a shorter development time. Being able to be the first to market or adjusting to changing market conditions is crucial

to the profitability of the well established organization"

Figure 10: Agile Framework



Source: Gartner. <https://www.gartner.com>

4.3 Theme 2 Analysis: Organization Dynamics

1) Attitude for Innovation

Implementing Design Thinking tools helps promote curiosity, inquisitiveness, and self-drivenness. Design Thinking tools provided different opportunities for employees to share their ideas and propose potential solutions.

Interviewee EV-1: "To be able to contribute to the team with the design thinking approach that promotes collaboration in the team"

2) Improved Communication Flow

There is an increase in communication due to the introduction of the new thinking framework being introduced. Having multiple stakeholders involved in the design thinking process motivated employees to communicate more often thereby enhancing their communication skills.

Interviewee M-2: "The design thinking workshop forced people from different departments to communicate with each other and provided good networking opportunities that translated into enhancing the company culture. Even after the workshop, I notice improved relationship and ease of communication between employees"



3) Increased collaboration

The interviewees all mentioned that implementing Design Thinking has made the teams become less top-down and collaboration increased within the team and other stakeholders. According to Pourdehnad, J., Wilson, D., & Wexler, E. (2011), the best way to ensure that the design will serve the purpose of the organization is to include the stakeholders in the formulation of the design. Hence, the success of a design is directly related to the level of stakeholder participation in the development of the design.

Interviewee EV-1: "Using this design thinking process helped our company realize the importance in co-creating with our customers and our suppliers."

4.4 Theme 3 Analysis: Innovative Outcome

4.4.1 Business opportunity discovery

The design thinking process helps lead to business generation ideas that could be prototyped and tested.

Interviewee EV-1: "The beginning stages of the design thinking process allowed us to understand our clients needs better and identify the root cause of low Electric Vehicle sales, which was due to a lack of electric vehicle comprehensive ecosystem and after sale services"

4.4.2 Decrease risk

The design thinking process encourages idea generation and testing of ideas which help decrease risks. The Design thinking process allows for the ability to test solutions before deployment. In addition the tool helps identify users needs and test whether the solution meets users needs. As a result, by identifying these issues and evaluating each potential solution's performance, companies are able to decrease their risk and their losses.

Interviewee R-1: "In testing, there needs to be frameworks and has to be a criteria, which agile

thinking helps provide that framework and criterias. If solutions do not meet their KPIs we are able to pivot or abandon the project early on"

4.4.3 Increase efficiency

Design Thinking helps discover problems, which help create solutions to help increase efficiency in the solution and the organization.

Interviewee M-1: "From the 5 whys, we were able to determine the root cause of our low views due to poor short performance, thus we are able reallocate resources to profitable products and used knowledge we gain from our poor performing product to support our profitable product"

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Implementation of the design thinking process required increased communication across the organization due to the level of collaboration required, which resulted in a more dynamic workplace that is able to adapt to the competitive business environment in Thailand. The integration of the design thinking process led to the discovery of business opportunities that can help guide businesses with innovation in their products and offerings in their industry. Furthermore, design thinking has helped organizations decrease risk and increase efficiency with their innovative goals in their company.

5.1 Findings and conclusion

From the qualitative data collected and analyzed, Design thinking can have a positive effect on organizational dynamics and innovative outcomes.

P1. Design thinking can have a positive influence on organizational dynamics.

The qualitative data from the experts have proven this qualitative proposition to be correct. Experts mentioned that design thinking integration has



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improved the employee's attitude for innovation. The improvement in attitude for innovation includes increased curiosity, inquisitiveness, and self-drivenness in employees. The second positive influence mentioned by experts from integrating design thinking in the company was improved communication flow between teams and stakeholders. Lastly, experts noticed increased collaboration and ease of collaboration between workers and team with the implementation of design thinking in the company.

P2. Design Thinking can have a positive influence on innovative outcomes.

Based on the interviews from experts have proven this qualitative proposition to be correct. During the interviews with experts they mentioned design thinking helped the team not only refine their current business and product strategy but helped discover business opportunities for the company. Another positive influence, experts mentioned, is that using design thinking tools help decrease risk on projects that would not be profitable for the company or meet the needs of the customers. Lastly, experts say that design thinking helps increase efficiency and help streamline the innovation process by identifying customer pain points and help facilitate effective solutions.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study with 9 participants from six industries: Banking, Community Outreach, Design Agency, Electric Vehicle and Marketing. The key recommendations for management and design thinking team may pinpoint into five dimensions.

5.2.1 Priority and Key Stakeholder involvement

Management able to the Design Thinking process to help prioritize the needs of the users, promoted cross-functional collaboration. Key success of design thinking is the involvement of all key stakeholders in the development process from beginning to end. Another recommendation is to use the Design

Thinking process and other Design Thinking tools to increase efficiency in the project development time and mitigate risks by promoting a culture of rapid prototyping to test ideas quickly in order to risk investing in unsuccessful products and features.

5.2.2 Empathy with community

The recommendation for manager and team leads is to use Design Thinking to help develop the team's empathy with the community and understand the needs and challenges of the community they are serving. Also team must be consider the community resource and sustainability of the innovation. When teams integrating the Design Thinking process in a cross-disciplinary team, required to Design Thinking expert guide each team.

Especially, for the project with a long timeline and high cost of software production development it is important recognize the importance of developing solutions that will be utilized by users by prioritizing empathy early in the process.

5.2.3 Right for multi-dimensional problems

This approach assists in defining multi-dimensional problems, identifying business opportunities within the new market, and co-creating with stakeholders to help establish a leading infrastructure such as the electric vehicle market.

5.2.4 Cross-disciplinary teams

Management should select Design Thinking Team members with cross-disciplinary with other departments in the organization such as sales, customer service and relevant technical teams to improve communication flow collaboration and increase collaboration and support innovation outcome. Furthermore, other Design Thinking tools should be explored in addition to the Five Whys Technique, Customer Journey Maps and Persona tools that some organizations in the industry currently use in their company process. Managers can evaluate which Design Thinking tools and combination of Design Thinking tools are best for understanding the



customer needs, the scope of the project and the organization's goals.

5.2.5 Agile Framework Support

A recommendation for project managers and team leads is to use the Design Thinking process to help that will funnel project specification into the Agile Framework ensuring that the development teams are solving the right problems. Using the Design Thinking process can help project managers define multidisciplinary problems and scope for efficiently that could lead to faster sprints and project timeline. Another recommendation for project managers and team leads are to conduct further research to explore other design thinking tools in addition to the design thinking process that can support the main Agile Framework that is the primary process for development teams in the Retail Industry.

5.3 Limitation of the Study

Some of the limitations in this study include constrained time frame for data collection and analysis, coverage of limited industries which includes Banking, Community Outreach, Design, Electric Vehicle, Marketing and Retail that were studied. The findings from this study may only be applicable to the industry that was studied and may not be applicable in other companies from other industries in Thailand. Furthermore, sensitivity of company information and ongoing project details concerns prevented participants from disclosing certain information that could limit the comprehensiveness of the findings. Due to time constraints a total of nine participants from eight companies across six industries in Thailand were interviewed.

5.4 Future Study

For future studies, more research can be conducted on companies in other industries in Thailand as not all industries in Thailand were covered in the study. By covering more industries in the scope of the research, a more comprehensive pattern can be established across the different industries. The

effectiveness and timeliness in using Design Thinking tools to drive the company's innovation could be further explored as companies are in the race to gain greater market share or be the first to market.

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How Much Is Clean Air Worth? A Case Study of South Delhi Regions in India

Rani Tyagi

Abstract

Air pollution is one of the most pressing problems in India, taking millions of lives annually. Despite unprecedented air quality deterioration, little is known about individuals' preferences for air quality improvement in India. As a first step, this study presents results from the preferences for air quality improvement of inhabitants in South Delhi, India, which is part of the city of Delhi and where air pollution is causing extensive health hazards. Adequate knowledge about individuals' preferences can help in designing more effective health and environmental policies. Overall, we find a significant willingness to pay for improving the air quality in South Delhi. As expected, people with a higher level of education and a higher income are more willing to pay to alleviate and prevent the effects of air pollution. At the same time, significant gender effects are identified; women seem to have more homogeneous preferences regarding air quality than men. Furthermore, due to income inequalities, a significant number of respondents are not willing to pay.

Keywords: Air quality improvement, CVM, Willingness to pay, South Delhi Individuals' preferences

INTRODUCTION

Ambient air pollution is the world's biggest environmental health threat (World Health Organization, 2016). The recent State of Global Air 2020 Report estimated that air pollution caused 6.67 million premature deaths globally in 2019 and that 58 per cent of these global deaths occurred in China and India (Health Effects Institute, 2020). This implies that controlling air pollution is a major concern across developing countries. In India, for instance, the annual concentration of fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) was the highest in the world, and it contributed around 17.8 per cent (1.67 million) of the total death toll in 2019 (Pandey et al., 2020). According to the Swiss Air Quality Index (2020), 35 of the world's top 50 cities in 2020 in terms of the highest levels of annual PM_{2.5} were in India, and its capital territory, Delhi, was the 10th most air-polluted city in the world.

To alleviate the unprecedented impact of air pollution on big cities, the Indian government has launched a

series of control measures together with a substantial increase in the total investment of INR44 billion (US\$600 million) in the annual budget 2020-21 to improve air quality (Chatterji, 2020). For instance, an initial INR3 billion (US\$42.6 million) was directly allocated to the five-year National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) initiated in 2019 to curb PM_{2.5} levels by 20-30 per cent by 2024, with 2017 as the base year. The NCAP mitigation programme focused on 102 cities in India that had crossed the limit of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQSs). Moreover, the central government announced the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME) programme in India with an outlay of INR85 billion (US\$1.15 billion) in 2015.

In recent years, the Indian government has introduced several measures to combat air pollution. Firstly, in 2015, it introduced the air quality index to analyse the day's air quality based on a set of air quality descriptors along with health advice, and comprehensive air monitoring stations were installed in public areas (Central Pollution Control Board,

2015). Secondly, in 2017, the government introduced an emergency and comprehensive action plan called the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) (Chatterji, 2020). The purpose of the GRAP was to enforce emergency measures, such as suspending construction sites, restricting heavy vehicles in the city and imposing odd-even rules when the air pollution exceeds a dangerous level. Moreover, the aforementioned NCAP mitigation strategy followed the prevailing policies and strategies, such as the National Action Plan on Climate Change, promoting electric transportation and the smart cities plan.

Finally, in April 2020, the Indian government imposed the Euro VI emission standards (referred to in India as Bharat Stage VI) to regulate the emission of air pollutants by motor vehicles (Centre for Science and Environment, 2018).

Nonetheless, none of the above measures have been effective in reducing air pollution in India, and it remains a major concern for policymakers due to its huge economic cost in terms of air pollution-related mortality and morbidity (Balakrishnan et al., 2019; Watts et al., 2020). Pandey et al. (2020) showed that air pollution causes economic losses of nearly INR2,714.46 billion (=C30.2 billion), which is 1.36 per cent of India's gross domestic product. Moreover, additional co-benefits of improving the air quality are closely linked to other environment-related issues, such as greenhouse gas emissions, climate change and technological innovation (Bollen, 2015).

For the city of Delhi, the Delhi Pollution Control Committee appointed by the Government of Delhi is committed to sustainable development and thus is also responsible for dealing with the air pollution problem in this area. It implements policies set by the Delhi division of the Ministry of Urban Development. According to Ministry of Urban Development, Delhi Division (2007), the future air pollution mitigation plans must include public transportation planning (frequency, intermodal integration, single ticketing system, parking policy) and policy measures related

to the operation of existing power plants and other industries.

However, little information is available about individuals' preferences regarding air pollution that could be used in economic evaluations, such as a cost-benefit analysis. In this paper, as a step towards mapping individuals' preferences for air quality improvement in India, we therefore conducted a survey in South Delhi, India because, especially in the megacities, air pollution is an extensive health hazard (Vohra et al., 2021). Focusing on the second-largest urban district of Delhi, i.e. South Delhi, we provide data related to the benefits of air pollution reduction for a largely unexplored region of the world.

The application of these techniques in developing and transition economies can be however related to local conditions and culture that may be very different from developed economies where these techniques have been applied and their results used in policy making for decades (Navrud and Mungatana, 1994; Rakotonarivo et al., 2016; Quah, 2013). This can be one of the reasons of the lack of environmental studies in these economies and it also increases the importance of an environmental valuation study focused on the severe problem of air pollution carried out in the second most populous country with a rapid growth economy.

2. The Case Study

According to the Census of India (2011), South Delhi has a population of over 2.7 million permanent residents and a population density of 11,000 people per square km. Moreover, 86.60 per cent of the population of South Delhi is literate, meaning that the majority of respondents are able to understand and answer potentially complex DCE surveys. In addition, South Delhi's residents are aware of the level of air pollution in their neighbourhood and can easily think of a monetary value for reducing the level



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of pollution to a level that they would like. The main reason for this is that there are 10 air quality monitoring stations in Delhi, and three of them are located in the district of South Delhi; they provide people with comprehensive and real-time information about the current air pollution levels (Central Pollution Control Board, 2016).

The economic liberalisation policy of 1991, which brought about rapid industrialisation and urban mobilisation in South Delhi, is considered to be the main reason for its negative trend in air quality. This alone led to a huge increase in industrial emissions, accounting for 35 per cent of the total air pollution in the city Delhi, which includes the analysed area of South Delhi (Ishita and Dholakia, 2019). Moreover, this led to rapid growth in the real estate, power and transportation sectors, coupled with an increase in planned and unplanned urbanisation (Gordon et al., 2018). The steep increase in the number of motor vehicles from 4.2 million in 2004 to 10.9 million in 2018 Economic Survey (2019) has further exacerbated the deterioration of the air quality. As a result, vehicular emissions are now recognised as one of the major contributors, accounting for 30 per cent of Delhi's total air pollution (Ishita and Dholakia, 2019).

3. Survey Design

The objective of the survey was to analyse individuals' preferences for improving the air quality in South Delhi. The survey consisted of four parts. The first part contained an introduction to environmental policies to reduce the air pollution in South Delhi and general questions regarding this issue. The second part was devoted to the DCE, and the third part asked some contingent valuation (CV)-type questions that are not analysed in this study. Finally, some attitudinal questions were posed, and basic socio-demographic information about the interviewees was collected in the fourth part.

The study was based on face-to-face survey of randomly selected 250 households. The survey was conducted in September, 2023. Out of 250, 232 respondents agreed to participate in the study, hence the response rate was 93%. About 32 questionnaires were not filled completely, thus, they were excluded from the study, and the data of 200 respondents were finalized and analyzed.

The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections. Section I consisted of questions regarding demographics including gender, age, monthly income, marital status, number of household members, profession. Section II comprised of respondent's subjective view about the air quality of their area, and their respiratory health. While the final section contained the contingent valuation question. As is well known, these types of questions have been often discussed in CVM literature (Arrow et al., 1993; Hanemann, 1994). Following CVM question was asked. Considering the monthly household income is respondent is willing to pay the cost so that the aim can be achieved?

What is the maximum amount one would be able to pay to improve air quality?

a) Yes b) No

4. Statistical tool and methods

Statistical package SPSS 20.0 was applied to calculate the relationship between WTP and influential factors. After initial statistical analysis, linear regression was used to identify the variables that effect the respondent's final decision on WTP. Afterwards stepwise linear regression model was constructed to determine the amount of positive WTP and to predict mean value of WTP.

5. Results and Discussion

About 64.5 % respondents were female while 35.5% were male. Average age was 27.37, the mean education was 12 years, about 59.5% people were single, average number of children was 1.13 and mean number of family members was 5.60, while the



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average monthly income was \$776.04 (Table 1). In short the respondents were more likely to be female, young, more educated, with more family members and relative average monthly household income.

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean $\pm$ S.D
Gender			
Male=1	71	35.5	1.64 $\pm$ 0.47
Female=2	129	64.5	
Age			
14-20	64	32	
21-26	60	30	27.37 $\pm$ 10.75
27-33	31	15.5	
34-40	13	6.5	
41-47	17	8.5	
48-53	15	7.5	
Educational years			
5=1	15	8	3.27 $\pm$ 3.23
8=2	57	28.5	
12=3	17	8.5	
16=4	81	40	
18=5	30	15	
Marital Status			
Married=1	79	39.5	3.39 $\pm$ 1.95
Divorced=2	2	1.0	
Single=3	119	59.5	
Number of Children			
0-1	133	66.5	
2-3	46	23	1.13 $\pm$ 1.72
4-5	17	8.5	

6-7	4	2	
Number of House members			
1-5	111	55.5	
6-10	87	43.5	5.60 $\pm$ 1.92
11-15	1	0.5	
16-20	1	0.5	
Monthly Income			
<500\$	90	45	
<1000\$	84	42	Mean: \$776.04
<1500\$	7	3.5	
<2000\$	11	5.5	
<2500\$	3	1.5	
>2500\$	5	2.5	
Self-reported air pollution			
*Severe Air Pollution =1	181	90.5	
(Easily observable)	19	9.5	0.90 $\pm$ 0.29
Other =0			
Respiratory Disease	90	45	
Yes = 1	110	55	0.45 $\pm$ 0.49
No =0			

Table 1: Demographic results of selected respondents

Factors effecting negativity and positivity of WTP

Out of total 200 valid respondents, 185 responded positively (WTP>0) to valuation response question. Hence the positive response rate was 92.5%. The study

area is among the most polluted areas of South Delhi, with significant number of automobiles and ongoing mega-construction projects which are not managed well. Hence the extremely high level of PM, and other pollutants affects the daily life of people who live there, work and walk in the area for several reasons; therefore be various explanations, the major justification which true zeroes gave in open ended question was that the government should take active actions to overcome most of the individuals were concerned for air quality and its consequences on their health. The respondents were split into seven groups, which were based on the money they would be willing to pay (Table 2). The share of negative WTP the true zeros (WTP=0) is quite smaller, only 7.5% of total respondents were not willing to pay a penny to improve air quality of study area.

The other explanation for negative response is unawareness or insensitivity of people regarding air pollution and other environmental issues and low monthly income as well. A possible explanation is that people think that as they are paying taxes, the authorities should manage to control air pollution rather than to ask for more money to improve air quality.

Table 2: People WTP for improvement in Air quality in South Delhi

Variables	Coefficient	S. E
Gender	.021	.020
Age	.004	.002
Education level	.004	.009
Marital Status	.000	.009
Number of children	-.014	.009
Number of household members	-.001	0.005
Suffering From Disease	.016	0.020**
Monthly income	.012	.001*
Air Quality of Area	.077	.032**

Table 3: Linear regression model of positivity of WTP

*P ≤ 0.05; **P ≤ 0.01

WTP/month (\$)	Frequency	Percentage
0	15	7.5
1-5	57	28.5
6-10	64	32
11-15	27	13.5
16-20	25	12.5
21-30	5	2.5
>30	7	3.5
Total	200	100

T test, regression models are often used to check the effects of various independent variables on dependent factor. T test can only determine the relationship of one independent and dependent variable. Hence, simple linear regression was applied to determine the relationship of several independent factors on positive WTP. The independent variable expected to have effect on respondent's WTP were age, gender, education level, monthly income, number of household members, number of children, respiratory diseases and self-reported pollution in the city (Akhtar et al., 2017). Statistical analysis (Table 3) demonstrated the results of linear regression, which revealed statistically significant positive association with monthly income ($P \leq 0.05$), self-reported air pollution ($P \leq 0.01$), and one's suffering from air pollution ($P \leq 0.01$). It is assumed that individuals with higher monthly income, better socio-economic conditions were more willing to pay for emission reductions, reducing pollution load and improved air quality as compared to those with less income and

poor socio-economic conditions which conforms to economic theory (Wang et al., 2006).

* $P \leq 0.05$; ** $P \leq 0.01$

Table 3: Linear regression model of positivity of WTP

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Monthly income	.012	.001*
Air Quality of Area	.077	.032**

Determinants Amount of WTP

Regression models have been widely used in environmental valuation studies to predict the outcomes (Maloma, 2014). To determine the amount of WTP stepwise regression model was constructed using Statistical package SPSS 20.0 to define the most essential independent variables in prediction equation, ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_n X_n$). Variables having a significant impact on positive WTP included monthly income, self-reported air pollution and symptoms of respiratory diseases with significance level of 0.05 (Table 4). Analysis of the results shown that residues of WTP were normally distributed forming a normal P-P Plot hence explaining a better estimation of WTP value. The prediction Eq. 1 is:

$$\text{WTP} = -243.973 + 811(\text{Respiratory disease symptoms}) + 779.407(\text{Self-reported air pollution}) + 0.003(\text{Monthly income}) \quad (1)$$

$$\text{WTP} = 9.86/\text{month}$$

Hence predicted mean value obtained from the model (equation 1) is 9.86/ month the range lies \$-1.42 to \$27.96. Hence keeping in view the above values annual WTP can be calculated.

$$\$9.86 \times 12$$

$$\text{WTP/ annum} = \$118 \text{ (Rs. 9676 per annum)}$$

Hence concluded that people of South Delhi willing to pay \$118 per annum to improve air quality. The predicted WTP per household per month is 1.27% of the mean monthly income of people of South Delhi. Similar results were found in another study conducted in Sweden, the mean WTP for 50% reduction of harmful contaminants was about \$227.66 per annum (Carlsson, Johansson-Stenman, 2010). The study conducted in Mexico concluded that people were willing to pay to reduce pollution load was about \$262 per annum (Filippini and Martínez-Cruz, 2016). The study conducted in Cotonou, Benin, which is among less income countries, reported WTP of per person per year to improve air quality was \$1.04 (Gbinlo, 2006).

CONCLUSION

This survey included open-ended CVM to measure individual's WTP for air quality improvement. In South Delhi and disclosed appealing results regarding WTP of residents for air quality betterment. Among 250 questionnaires that were filled by residents, 93% showed positive response as they were in favor of WTP for improved air quality and this showed their great concern about this rising issue. Only 7% of respondents were not willing to pay the cost for improvement in air quality. Most of negative respondents seemed to be unaware of environmental conservation as they raised this concern that it is duty of government to pay for cost. Important factors including household income, symptoms of respiratory illnesses and opinions on current air quality governed respondent's decision to pay. The



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analysis disclosed that gender, age and household size differences did not govern and influence on chances of a positive WTP which were hypothesized to explain the results. The results revealed that CVM is applicable in South Delhi and the features of urban residents' WTP gained from this study is quite beneficial since the resulting information records both the direction and the strength of a respondent's priorities.

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Understanding The Dynamics of Brand Equity Formation: A Pilot Study of Ondoor and Emerging Retail Ventures

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Abstract

Purpose: The primary objective of this study is to interpret the complex relationship between various factors contributing to the brand equity of the emerging retail venture "Ondoor," focusing on three distinct types of variables: independent, intervening, and dependent. The independent variables incorporate brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, and brand association. Customer satisfaction serves as the intervening variable, while brand equity at Ondoor is the dependent variable. By identifying and analyzing these variables, we aim to provide valuable insights for businesses to enhance their brand equity strategies. **Methodology:** This research utilizes a quantitative methodology, employing surveys to gather data on brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, brand association, customer satisfaction, and brand equity. A structured questionnaire is distributed to a sample of Ondoor customers, and the collected responses are analyzed using statistical software such as Smart PLS4 and Jamovi. **Findings:** The research findings emphasize the pivotal roles played by brand association and customer satisfaction in driving brand equity for Ondoor. It is revealed that brand associations significantly affect brand equity, indicating the importance of promoting positive perceptions and connections with the brand among consumers. Customer satisfaction emerges as a crucial intervening factor, with a notable influence on brand equity. Satisfied customers are more likely to exhibit better brand loyalty and contribute positively to brand equity. **Managerial Implications:** The study emphasizes how crucial it is to focus resources on creating and preserving strong brand connections for Ondoor and related businesses. By actively influencing consumers' thoughts and connections with the brand, businesses may increase the value of their brand equity and cultivate a devoted following. Putting more of an emphasis on improving customer happiness helps build brand equity. **Value of Originality:** By highlighting the importance of brand association and customer happiness as major drivers of brand equity, particularly within the context of Ondoor, this research adds to the body of previous knowledge. Businesses may achieve a competitive advantage and promote long-term brand growth in the ever-changing marketplace by incorporating these insights into their strategic decision-making processes.

Keywords: #Brand awareness, #brand image, #brand loyalty, #brand association, #customer satisfaction, #brand equity

INTRODUCTION

A highly dynamic and fast-changing retail sector is crucial to the growth and development of the Indian economy. Comprising 1.4 billion people with a growing middle-class majority, it provides a huge prospect for retailers into different market niches. Diverse retail formats catering to different consumer segments and preferences, characterize the Indian retail landscape. The market ranges from modern

formats such as supermarkets, hypermarkets, department stores, specialty stores, and malls, as well as e-commerce platforms, while traditional ones include kirana stores, street vendors, and local markets. The coexistence of organized and unorganized retailing is among the many distinguishing features of Indian retailing. Truly, this industry is dominated by traditional, non-organized enterprises like street bazaars and local kirana shops in smaller towns and rural areas. However, as they offer various products, an enhanced shopping experience, and improved customer convenience, chain stores



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under organization are fast increasing, especially in urban places. Digital payment systems, growing internet penetration levels, and smartphone usage have all contributed to a significant increase in e-commerce in India in recent years. Indian consumers are quickly buying from e-commerce websites like Flipkart, Amazon, Snapdeal, etc. because they offer a wide range of goods across many categories, often at reasonable prices and with home delivery included.

The Indian government has implemented numerous measures aimed at promoting expansion as well as growth within the retail sector. Some of these include relaxing restrictions on foreign direct investment (FDI), simplifying the tax system by introducing Goods and Services Tax (GST), and encouraging investments into domestic manufacturing with programs like "Make in India." India has witnessed a large number of its population moving towards towns and cities in search of better prospects, leading to urbanization. So, the increasing demand from consumers for a wide range of products and services has resulted in the mushrooming of organized retail chains, shopping centers, and contemporary retail forms across metropolitan areas owing to rapid urbanization. The Indian retail industry faces several challenges, like a convoluted legislative framework, congested infrastructure, logistical limitations, and intense competition. However, due to its large and growing consumer base, it offers a great deal of opportunities for both local and foreign retailers to innovate, expand their market presence, and benefit from growing customer demand because they have an increasingly affluent consumer base along with rapid urbanization processes coupled with technological advances.

The Indian retail industry is changing rapidly as it is influenced by various elements such as government policies that control businesses, urbanization trends taking place in India's cities, advancements in technology that have taken place over time, as well as fluctuating consumer preferences. The diversity of the Indian market provides merchants with an

opportunity to thrive in one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

In today's fiercely competitive business world, a company's brand equity plays a crucial role in determining its financial performance and market placement. It is a representation of the general opinions and attitudes that people have about a brand. For Ondoer, a quickly developing e-commerce platform in the Indian retail space, maintaining and growing brand equity is critical to the business's success.

In order to better understand the intricate relationships between a number of significant independent variables, such as brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, and brand association, this study, "Understanding the Dynamics of Brand Equity Formation: A Pilot Study of Ondoer and Emerging Retail Ventures" will take customer satisfaction into consideration as a critical intermediary variable. The ultimate objective is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the influence of these factors on Ondoer's brand equity, the dependent variable. By conducting this study, we want to learn crucial information about the elements that affect Ondoer's brand equity and, as a result, offer useful advice for e-commerce brand management.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brand Awareness- Customer Satisfaction

Farquhar (1989) explores the management of brand equity in this paper published in *Marketing Research*. The author discusses the significance of brand equity as a strategic asset for organizations. Farquhar highlights the components of brand equity, including brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The paper emphasizes the importance of understanding and measuring brand equity to make informed marketing decisions. The author also discusses the role of brand equity in driving customer preferences and purchase behavior. This research contributes to the understanding of brand equity

management and its implications for marketing strategies and tactics. Aaker (1991) explores the management of brand equity and its value in this book. The author emphasizes the significance of leveraging the brand name to maximize its potential. Aaker provides insights into developing and implementing effective brand strategies to enhance brand equity. The book emphasizes the need for brand identity, differentiation, and brand loyalty. Aaker's work offers practical guidance for brand managers to capitalize on the value of their brand name and build a strong brand presence in the market.

Keller (1993) discusses the conceptualization, measurement, and management of customer-based brand equity. The article emphasizes the importance of adopting a customer-centered perspective and proposes a comprehensive model that incorporates various dimensions of brand equity. Keller highlights the need for reliable and valid measurement scales and discusses strategies for managing brand equity, such as brand-building activities and consistent brand positioning. This article provides valuable insights for marketers and brand managers on how to build strong brands. Keller (1998) explores strategic brand management in this book, focusing on building, measuring, and managing brand equity. The author provides insights into developing effective brand strategies and emphasizes the importance of brand equity as a valuable asset. Keller discusses the various dimensions of brand equity, including brand loyalty, brand associations, and perceived quality. The book offers practical frameworks and tools for brand managers to create and sustain strong brands in the market. It serves as a comprehensive guide for understanding and leveraging brand equity for long-term success.

Brand Image- Customer Satisfaction

Lassar, Mittal, and Sharma (1995) investigate the measurement of customer-based brand equity in their paper. The authors discuss the importance of measuring brand equity from the perspective of

customers and propose a comprehensive framework for its assessment. They introduce a model that incorporates dimensions such as brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand associations, and awareness. The paper highlights the significance of developing valid and reliable measurement scales to effectively quantify and manage brand equity. The research contributes valuable insights into understanding and evaluating the impact of brand equity on consumer behavior and marketing strategies. Erdem and Swait (1998) explore brand equity as a signaling phenomenon in their paper. The authors examine how consumers use brand signals to make inferences about product quality and other attributes. They propose a model that illustrates how brand equity serves as a signal of product characteristics, allowing consumers to reduce their search and evaluation costs. The research emphasizes the role of brand image and reputation in influencing consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. Erdem and Swait's study provides valuable insights into the strategic implications of brand equity as a signaling mechanism for marketers and highlights its impact on consumer behavior. In the study conducted by Yoo, Donthu, and Lee (2000), the authors investigate the relationship between selected marketing mix elements and brand equity. Through their research, they aim to understand how various marketing factors, such as advertising, price promotion, and product quality, influence consumer perceptions of brand equity. The findings reveal that advertising and price promotion have a significant positive impact on brand equity, while product quality shows a weaker influence. The study highlights the importance of strategic marketing decisions in building and managing brand equity, providing valuable insights for marketers seeking to enhance their brand's image and value.

In their work, Yoo and Donthu (2001) focus on developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. They aim to provide a comprehensive framework for measuring



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brand equity from the consumer's perspective. Through extensive research and data analysis, the authors propose a scale that encompasses dimensions such as brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand awareness. The scale undergoes rigorous testing to ensure its reliability and validity. The study contributes to the field of brand equity research by offering a robust tool for marketers and researchers to assess and track the strength of consumer-based brand equity across different brands and industries.

Brand Loyalty- Customer Satisfaction

In their work, Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) delve into the concept of brand loyalty, emphasizing the importance of its measurement and management. They propose a comprehensive framework for understanding and assessing brand loyalty, highlighting the various dimensions and components that contribute to customer loyalty. The authors discuss different methods and metrics for measuring brand loyalty and provide valuable insights on how to effectively manage and enhance brand loyalty through marketing strategies and activities. Their work serves as a foundational reference in the field of brand loyalty, offering practical guidance for marketers seeking to build strong and lasting relationships with their customers.

Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) investigate the behavioral consequences of service quality. They explore the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, loyalty, and word-of-mouth behavior. Through empirical research, the authors find that higher levels of service quality lead to increased customer satisfaction, which in turn positively influences customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. They emphasize the importance of delivering high-quality services to meet and exceed customer expectations, as it directly impacts customer behavior and ultimately drives business success. The study highlights the significance of service quality in building and

maintaining strong customer relationships. Oliver (1997) adopts a behavioral perspective to examine consumer satisfaction. The author explores the cognitive and affective components of satisfaction and its relationship with consumer behavior. Through extensive research, Oliver highlights the significance of customer satisfaction in shaping consumer decision-making, repeat purchase intentions, and loyalty. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding and managing customer satisfaction to meet or exceed consumer expectations. Oliver's work provides valuable insights into the complex nature of satisfaction and its implications for businesses aiming to enhance customer experiences and build long-term relationships with their clientele. Uncles, Dowling, and Hammond (2003) investigate customer loyalty and customer loyalty programs. They examine the effectiveness of loyalty programs in enhancing customer loyalty and explore the factors that influence program success. The authors emphasize the importance of designing and implementing loyalty programs that align with customer needs and preferences. Through their research, they identify key drivers of customer loyalty, including program design, perceived value, program satisfaction, and customer characteristics. The study offers insights into the strategic management of loyalty programs and provides valuable recommendations for businesses seeking to foster customer loyalty and strengthen their relationships with customers.

Brand Association- Customer Satisfaction

Keller (1993) explores the concept of customer-based brand equity and provides a framework for its conceptualization, measurement, and management. The author emphasizes the importance of building strong brand associations in the minds of consumers and highlights the various dimensions of brand equity, including brand awareness, brand image, brand associations, and brand loyalty. Keller suggests that understanding and effectively managing these dimensions can lead to the creation of strong and valuable brands. The paper offers insights into the



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process of developing and maintaining brand equity, providing valuable guidance for marketers seeking to enhance their brand's performance and competitiveness. Yoo and Donthu (2001) present a study aimed at developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. The authors propose a comprehensive framework that encompasses multiple dimensions of brand equity, including brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, and brand associations. Through a series of empirical analyses, they establish the reliability and validity of the scale. The paper offers a valuable tool for measuring and evaluating consumer-based brand equity, providing marketers with a systematic approach to understanding and managing the factors that contribute to the overall strength and value of a brand in the eyes of consumers.

Yoo and Donthu (2001) investigate consumer evaluations of brand extensions through further empirical analysis. Building upon prior research, the authors explore how different factors, such as brand concept consistency, brand strength, and perceived fit, impact consumers' evaluations of brand extensions. They conduct a series of experiments to test their hypotheses and find that these factors significantly influence consumer evaluations. The study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of brand extensions and offers guidance to marketers seeking to leverage their brand equity through extension strategies. It contributes to the understanding of consumer behavior and decision-making processes related to brand extensions. Keller and Lehmann (2006) present a comprehensive review of research findings and future priorities in the field of brands and branding. The authors explore various aspects of brand management, including brand positioning, brand equity, brand extensions, and brand loyalty. They summarize key findings from existing literature and identify gaps for further research. The paper emphasizes the need for more comprehensive and integrated approaches to brand research, highlighting the importance of considering

both consumer-based and firm-based perspectives. It provides valuable insights into the current state of branding research and sets the agenda for future investigations in this domain.

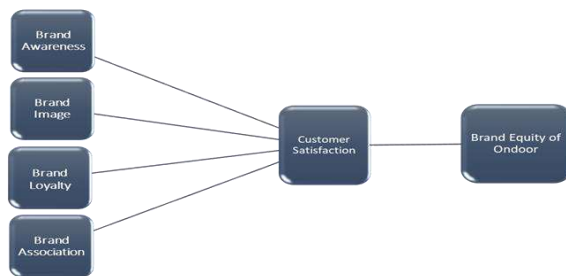
Customer Satisfaction- Brand Equity

Anderson, Fornell, and Lehmann (1994) conducted a study in Sweden to examine the relationship between customer satisfaction, market share, and profitability. Using data from a wide range of industries, the authors found a strong positive association between customer satisfaction and market share. They also observed that market share mediates the relationship between customer satisfaction and profitability. The study provides empirical evidence for the importance of customer satisfaction as a driver of market performance and financial outcomes. It highlights the strategic significance of focusing on customer satisfaction in order to achieve competitive advantage and business success. Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) investigate the behavioral consequences of service quality in their study. They propose a conceptual framework that links service quality to customer behaviors, including customer satisfaction, loyalty, word-of-mouth, and complaint behavior. The authors highlight the importance of understanding the impact of service quality on customer behaviors and emphasize the role of customer perceptions in shaping these behaviors. The study provides insights into the relationship between service quality and customer responses, offering valuable implications for businesses in terms of managing and improving service quality to enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth. Anderson, E. W., Fornell, C., & Lehmann, D. R. (1994) emphasize the importance of understanding and managing customer satisfaction as a strategic imperative for businesses to achieve competitive advantage and financial success. The article provides insights into the linkages between customer satisfaction, market performance, and profitability in the marketplace.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1.To identify whether brand awareness of Ondoor has any influence on its customer satisfaction.
- 2.To find whether brand image of Ondoor has any influence on its customer satisfaction.
- 3.To identify whether brand loyalty of Ondoor has any influence on its customer satisfaction.
- 4.To identify whether brand association of Ondoor has any influence on its customer satisfaction.
- 5.To identify whether customer satisfaction of Ondoor has any influence on its brand equity.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- H1: There is no significant influence of brand awareness on customer satisfaction
- H2: There is no significant influence of brand image on customer satisfaction
- H3: There is no significant influence of brand loyalty on customer satisfaction
- H4: There is no significant influence of brand association on customer satisfaction
- H5: There is no significant influence of customer satisfaction on brand equity

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

The study uses a quantitative research technique to investigate the variables affecting Ondoor's brand equity. Three different types of variables are the subject of this study: brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, and brand association, as independent variables; customer satisfaction, an intervening variable; and Ondoor's brand equity, a dependent variable. A representative sample of Ondoor's

customers is surveyed using a cross-sectional research approach in order to collect data. Likert scales and other quantitative measures are used in the distribution of structured questionnaires that are used to gather data on the variables that have been identified. Throughout the study process, ethical principles such as informed consent and confidentiality are upheld. The primary source of information for the research paper "Understanding the Dynamics of Brand Equity Formation in Emerging Retail Ventures: A Pilot Study of Ondoor" is primary data. The retail clients that frequent Bhopal's Ondoor Airport Road make up the research's target population. These people are a representation of the main customer base for Ondoor's products and services. Focusing on this particular group, the study seeks to gather information that is directly related to comprehending the elements that influence Ondoor's brand equity within its target audience. The study attempts to include a representative sample of the intended audience, including 50 respondents in the sample. In order to ensure practicality and account for resource limitations, this sample size was selected to provide a suitable amount of data for analysis. To choose study participants, the research uses a non-probability convenience sampling technique. Instead of choosing participants at random, we selected people based on their accessibility and willingness to engage. A structured questionnaire is the main instrument used to collect data. The purpose of this questionnaire is to ask participants about their opinions and experiences with the Ondoor brand. Through the use of a questionnaire, the study guarantees data collection uniformity and makes it easier to methodically collect insights from the intended audience. The study uses Smart PLS4 and Jamovi as data processing tools to examine the gathered data. These tools include sophisticated statistical methods and features for deciphering intricate information. The study is to conduct thorough data analysis using Smart PLS4 and Jamovi in order to identify the fundamental

elements affecting Ondoor's brand equity and offer insightful information for tactical decision-making.

TABLE NO.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Frequencies of Gender			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Female	21	46.7 %	46.7 %
Male	22	48.9 %	95.6 %
Others	2	4.4 %	100.0 %
Frequencies of Age Group			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
18-25	26	57.8 %	57.8 %
26-35	7	15.6 %	73.3 %
36-42	4	8.9 %	82.2 %
43-55	5	11.1 %	93.3 %
55 and above	3	6.7 %	100.0 %
Frequencies of Qualification			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Bachelor's degree	12	26.7 %	26.7 %
Doctorate degree	4	8.9 %	35.6 %
Master's degree	20	44.4 %	80.0 %
Professional degree	4	8.9 %	88.9 %
School Education	5	11.1 %	100.0 %
Frequencies of Occupation			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
A homemaker	5	11.1 %	11.1 %
A student	17	37.8 %	48.9 %
Employed	16	35.6 %	84.4 %
Self-Employed	7	15.6 %	100.0 %
Frequencies of Monthly Income (INR)			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %

Less than 25000	18	40.9 %	40.9 %
25000 – 50000	8	18.2 %	59.10%
50000 - 100000	10	22.7 %	81.8 %
100000 – 150000	3	6.8 %	88.6 %
150000 & above	5	11.4 %	100 %

The table above shows the frequencies of gender, age group, qualification, occupation, and monthly income for a group of people. The group is almost evenly split between females (46.7%) and males (48.9%). There is a small number of people who identify as other (4.4%). The majority of the group is in the 18-25 age group (57.8%). There are smaller numbers of people in the 26-35 (15.6%), 36-42

(8.9%), 43-55 (11.1%), and 55 and above (6.7%) age groups. The most common qualification is a master's degree (44.4%), followed by a bachelor's degree (26.7%), a professional degree (8.9%), a doctorate degree (8.9%), and school education (11.1%). The most common occupation is student (37.8%), followed by employed (35.6%), self-employed (15.6%), and homemaker (11.1%). The majority of the group has a monthly income of less than 25,000 INR (40.9%). There are smaller numbers of people in the 25000–50000 INR (18.2%), 50000–100000 INR (22.7%), 100000–150000 INR (6.8%), and 150000 INR and above (11.4%) income brackets. The group has a good education and is comparatively youthful. Less than 25000 INR a month is the most frequent income level, and the bulk of people are either employed or students.

Table No.2
Scale Reliability Statistics
Scale Reliability Statistics

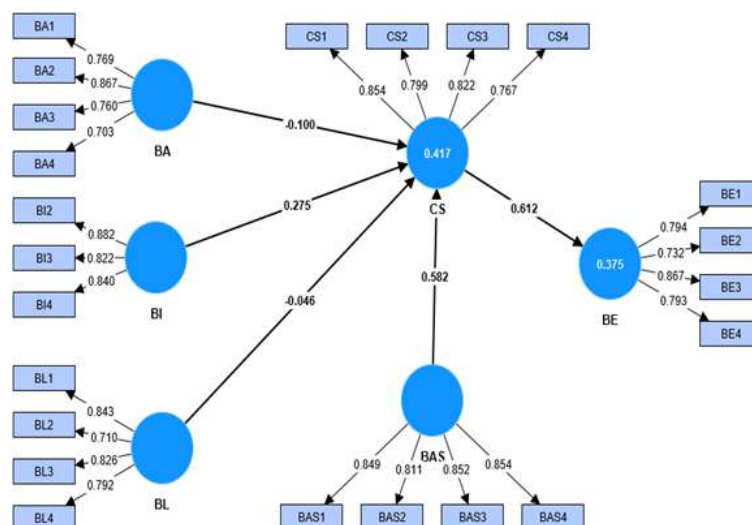
Constructs	No. of Items	Cronbach's α	Reliability
Brand Awareness	4	0.788	Good
Brand Image	4	0.752	Good
Brand Loyalty	4	0.805	Very Good
Brand Association	4	0.863	Very Good
Customer Satisfaction	4	0.827	Very Good
Brand Equity	4	0.808	Very Good

Source- The researchers' calculations with Jamovi Software

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, which means how well the items in a scale measure the same construct. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or higher is considered good, and an alpha of 0.8 or higher is considered very good. The reliability

analysis of the scale shows that all six constructs have good to very good reliability.

MEASUREMENT MODEL





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TABLE NO.3 CONFIRMATORY COMPOSITE ANALYSIS

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
BA	0.788	0.869	0.858	0.604
BAS	0.863	0.869	0.906	0.708
BE	0.808	0.811	0.875	0.637
BI	0.752	0.837	0.885	0.719
BL	0.805	0.815	0.872	0.631
CS	0.827	0.843	0.885	0.657

Source- The researchers' calculations with SmartPLS4 software.

The table above shows the results of a confirmatory composite analysis (CCA) for six constructs: brand awareness (BA), brand association (BAS), brand equity (BE), brand image (BI), brand loyalty (BL), and customer satisfaction (CS). Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, which means how well the items in a scale measure the same underlying construct. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is generally considered to be good reliability, and an alpha of 0.80 or higher is considered to be very good reliability. Composite reliability (rho_a and rho_c) are two measures of composite reliability, which is a

measure of the reliability of a composite construct. Composite constructs are constructs that are measured by multiple indicators. A composite reliability of 0.70 or higher is generally considered to be good reliability, and a composite reliability of 0.80 or higher is considered to be very good reliability. Average variance extracted (AVE) is a measure of the amount of variance in a composite construct that is explained by its indicators. An AVE of 0.50 or higher is generally considered to be good convergent validity.

TABLE NO.4
HETEROTRAIT-MONOTRAIT RATIO (HTMT RATIO)

	BA	BAS	BE	BI	BL
BAS	0.666				
BE	0.763	0.648			
BI	0.646	0.486	0.641		
BL	0.801	0.748	0.745	0.851	
CS	0.385	0.699	0.729	0.525	0.518

Source- The researchers' calculations with SmartPLS4 software.

The heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) is a measure of discriminant validity, which means how well two

constructs are distinguished from each other. The HTMT ratio is calculated by dividing the average



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correlation between two constructs by the average correlation of a construct with its own items. The table above shows the HTMT ratios for six constructs: brand awareness (BA), brand association (BAS), brand equity (BE), brand image (BI), brand loyalty (BL), and customer satisfaction (CS). The HTMT ratios show that all of the constructs are discriminantly valid, with HTMT values ranging from 0.486 to 0.763. The lowest HTMT value is between brand image and brand loyalty (0.486), which suggests that these two constructs are the most

distinct from each other. The highest HTMT value is between brand equity and brand image (0.763), which suggests that these two constructs are the least distinct from each other. The HTMT ratios show that all of the six constructs are discriminantly valid, with the lowest HTMT value between brand image and brand loyalty and the highest HTMT value between brand equity and brand image. This suggests that brand image and brand loyalty are the most distinct constructs and that brand equity and brand image are the least distinct constructs.

TABLE NO 5 FORMAL LARCKER RATIO (1981)

	BA	BAS	BE	BI	BL	CS
BA	0.777					
BAS	0.573	0.841				
BE	0.580	0.543	0.798			
BI	0.536	0.415	0.531	0.848		
BL	0.635	0.626	0.622	0.686	0.794	
CS	0.351	0.609	0.612	0.431	0.443	0.811

Source- The researchers' calculations with SmartPLS4 software

The Fornal-Larcher ratio is a measure of the correlation between two constructs. The table above shows the Fornal-Larcher ratios for six constructs: brand awareness (BA), brand association (BAS), brand equity (BE), brand image (BI), brand loyalty (BL), and customer satisfaction (CS). The Fornal-Larcher ratios show that all of the constructs are positively correlated with each other, with the strongest correlations being between brand awareness and brand loyalty (0.635) and between brand image and brand loyalty (0.686). The weakest correlation is between brand awareness and customer satisfaction (0.351). This suggests that brand awareness, brand association, brand equity, brand image, and brand loyalty are all important factors that contribute to customer satisfaction. However, brand awareness is the least important factor of the six.

TABLE NO. 6 R SQUARE

Constructs	R-square	R-square adjusted
BE	0.375	0.360
CS	0.417	0.359

Source- The researchers' calculations with SmartPLS4 software.

The R-squared statistic is a measure of the proportion of variance in a dependent variable that is explained by a set of independent variables. The table above shows the R-squared and adjusted R-squared values for two models: one predicting brand equity (BE) from the other constructs, and one predicting customer satisfaction (CS) from the other constructs. The R-squared value for the model predicting BE is 0.375, which means that 37.5% of the variance in BE is explained by the other constructs. The adjusted R-squared value is 0.360, which means that 36% of the



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variance in BE is explained by the other constructs, after taking into account the number of independent variables in the model. The R-squared value for the model predicting CS is 0.417, which means that 41.7% of the variance in CS is explained by the other constructs. The adjusted R-squared value is 0.359, which means that 35.9% of the variance in CS is

explained by the other constructs, after taking into account the number of independent variables in the model. Both models have moderate R-squared values, suggesting that the other constructs are explaining a significant amount of variance in BE and CS. However, the adjusted R-squared values suggest that the models are not overfitting the data.

TABLE 7 HYPOTHESES TESTING

Hypotheses	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	p values
H1: There is no significant influence of brand awareness on customer satisfaction	-0.100	-0.078	0.163	0.617	0.538
H2: There is no significant influence of brand image on customer satisfaction	0.582	0.567	0.177	3.277	0.001
H3: There is no significant influence of brand loyalty on customer satisfaction	0.275	0.278	0.184	1.497	0.135
H4: There is no significant influence of brand association on customer satisfaction	-0.046	-0.029	0.233	0.199	0.842
H5: There is no significant influence of customer satisfaction on brand equity	0.612	0.643	0.070	8.701	0.000

Source: The researchers' calculations with SmartPLS4 software.

The given table displays the data extracted through hypothesis testing evaluating the relation between brand awareness (BA), brand association (BAS), brand image (BI), brand loyalty (BL), and customer satisfaction (CS). Null hypothesis was accepted if the P-value range exceeds 0.05 and if the P-value ranges falls below 0.05, than the Null Hypothesis is rejected. A major connection between BAS and CS (p-value = 0.001) was discovered from the hypothesis tests. By which, we can neglect the null hypothesis and conclude that BAS has a positive influence of CS. The data also describes a positive association between CS and BE. By which, we can neglect the null hypothesis and conclude that CS has a positive influence of BE. Further no major relationship between BA and CS (p-value = 0.538), BI and CS (p-value = 0.135), or BL and CS (p-value = 0.842) was found. By which, we cannot neglect the null hypothesis and conclude that these relationships were significant or not.

The results of the hypothesis tests suggest that BAS and CS have a significant positive relationship, and that CS and BE have a significant positive relationship. There is no evidence of a significant relationship between BA, BI, BL, and CS.

A positive relation between BAS and CS was shown in the hypothesis also confirming the positive relationship between BE and CS. There was no proof to be found confirming the relation between BA, BI, BL and CS.

FINDINGS

The findings show that Oondoor's brand equity is significantly influenced by brand association. Participants in surveys and in-depth interviews repeatedly underlined the importance of brand associations in shaping their opinions and preferences towards the brand. Reliability, quality, and convenience have evolved as important positive brand connections that create brand equity. Customers demonstrated a significant preference for companies that conjure positive connotations and



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align with their beliefs and way of life. This implies that strengthening brand equity and encouraging customer loyalty to Ondoor depend on building and maintaining strong brand connections. The obvious influence of customer satisfaction on Ondoor's brand equity is another noteworthy discovery. According to the investigation, contented consumers are more likely to demonstrate increased levels of brand loyalty and engagement, which subsequently enhances the value of the brand as a whole. The significance of favorable encounters, prompt delivery, product excellence, and customer support in determining their contentment with Ondoor was constantly highlighted by the participants. Additionally, it was shown that happy consumers were more likely to spread the news about the business, therefore boosting its brand equity. This emphasizes how important it is for Ondoor to put its best efforts forward to provide outstanding customer experiences and guarantee high levels of happiness among its customer base, since this is a major factor in building brand equity.

SUGGESTIONS

With its fundamental ability to influence customer opinions and purchasing decisions, Ondoor needs to place a high priority on raising brand recognition through focused advertising campaigns and calculated brand-building measures. Ondoor can efficiently expand its brand reach and audience by utilizing a combination of traditional and digital marketing channels, including influencer collaborations, content marketing, and social media. Investing in targeted brand awareness campaigns based on target demographics and geographic areas may also help increase brand recall and recognition among prospective consumers.

Establishing a robust and favorable brand identity is crucial for cultivating trust, legitimacy, and uniqueness in the fiercely competitive online grocery delivery sector. It is recommended that Ondoor prioritize the alignment of its brand image with desirable traits and values, including quality,

innovation, and reliability. This calls for sustaining honest and moral corporate procedures, guaranteeing product quality and freshness, and distributing consistent messaging across all points of interaction. Through consistent branding initiatives and customer-focused tactics, Ondoor may proactively fortify its competitive standing and augment its brand value in the long run.

Ensuring brand loyalty among existing consumers is crucial for Ondoor to maintain long-term profitability and success. Personalized loyalty awards, special incentives, and client retention initiatives may encourage recurring business and strengthen brand loyalty. It is also possible to increase the sense of affinity and belonging that customers have for Ondoor by giving priority to customer involvement and communication through feedback systems, loyalty programs, and community-building efforts. Through the prioritization of brand loyalty efforts and a focus on providing consumers with value-added experiences, Ondoor may establish a devoted customer base that functions as brand ambassadors, therefore augmenting brand equity and fostering sustainable development.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RESEARCHER

The findings of this study have several implications for researchers and marketers. First, the results suggest that BAS is an important factor that contributes to CS. This means that marketers should focus on developing and maintaining strong brand associations with their customers. Second, the results suggest that CS is an important factor that contributes to BE. This means that Ondoor should focus on improving customer satisfaction in order to build brand equity. Finally, the results suggest that there is no need to focus on BA, BI, or BL in order to improve CS.



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LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is only conducted in a small portion of Bhopal city, namely Airport Road. The variety of elements affecting brand equity in different contexts and locations may not be well represented by this. With just 50 participants, the study's sample size might not be sufficient to fully reflect the target population. This could have an effect on how trustworthy and broadly applicable the results are. The results may not fairly represent the opinions and experiences of the larger community because of the limited sample size and confined region. The results might not be generalizable to people or circumstances outside of the sample size and defined location, raising questions about their external validity.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Subsequent studies may extend the geographic reach beyond Bhopal to include a number of cities in other areas. In light of differences in consumer behavior, market dynamics, and cultural influences, this would enable a comparative investigation of brand equity variables in various metropolitan environments. Looking into variables other than those in the present study may yield a more thorough picture of what drives brand equity. To evaluate the effect of various elements on brand equity, one might take into account aspects like product quality, pricing tactics, distribution routes, and internet presence. Comparing Ondonor's brand equity to that of its rivals through a competitive analysis might provide insightful information about the relative advantages and disadvantages of the brand. Examining elements like market share, brand positioning, the efficacy of advertising, and consumer perception may be part of this.

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Analysing the factors influencing the engagement level of employees working in the Manufacturing Sector in Madhya Pradesh, India

Jessy John

Abstract

This research paper presents a detailed research design for a survey-based study aimed at measuring employee engagement in the manufacturing industry. The study adopts a descriptive approach and utilizes a questionnaire-based methodology to gather data from employees of manufacturing sector companies located in Mandideep, Madhyapradesh. The research objectives include determining the level of employee engagement, analyzing factors influencing engagement, and investigating the impact of demographic variables. The null hypothesis states that employees in the manufacturing industry do not exhibit employee engagement, while the alternative hypothesis postulates that such engagement does exist. The study further explored to find out the major factors influencing the engagement level of employees in manufacturing Sector.

Keywords: *Employee Engagement, Manufacturing sector, Engagement factors, work culture, Exploratory factor analysis.*

Introduction

Identifying the factors influencing the engagement level of employees working in the Manufacturing Sector in Madhya Pradesh, India.

Employee engagement is a vital component of a successful organization, as it directly impacts the productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction of employees. It refers to the extent to which employees are committed, involved, and invested in their work and the organization as a whole.

Every day, management is put to the test in terms of how well it can maintain employee engagement. The engagement of employees is defined as an individual's involvement, satisfaction, and enthusiasm for work (Harter et al., 2002; Jeung, 2011; Shuck & Wollard, 2010). A plan for employee engagement is implemented behind the scenes by HR. Engagement efforts are owned by HR, who also makes sure everything goes properly and fixes any potential challenges. When employees are engaged, they feel a sense of purpose and belonging, which drives them to put in their best effort and contribute to the success of the company. Many researchers have

found that highly engaged employees usually showcase high productivity hence enhancing organization profitability, and employee retention, and it in turn ensures a high level of customer satisfaction. (Coffman & Gonzalez Molins, 2001; Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Saks, 2006). Employee engagement is a social phenomenon and can be developed and bifurcated into engagement at two levels, individual and organizational (Saks, 2006). It consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components associated with individual role performance (Maslach et al., 2001). Engaged employees are defined as having a persistent positive affective state characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Exploring the Factors influencing employee engagement and the strategies adopted by modern organizations for employee engagement.

Employee engagement is crucial in the current age of technological advancement and increasing organizational diversity. Kahn (1990) introduced the



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concept of employee engagement at the workplace and defined it as the process of "harnessing of organization members' selves to their roles" (pp. 694). It is considered the "Holy Grail" for organizational effectiveness (Church, 2013; Hart, 2016). Organizations are now more focused on human capital and engaging employees to the best possible extent, as engaged employees tend to work better, resulting in enhanced organizational effectiveness (Chughtai & Lateef, 2015; Rani & Punitha, 2015). On the other hand, disengaged employees tend to be less productive, they are more likely to leave the organization, and may even spread negativity to their co-workers.

Various individual behaviours, such as talent management, career development, employee empowerment, performance management, emotional factors, turnover intention, productivity, and satisfaction, are linked with the concept of engagement among employees in the workplace (Brunetto et al., 2012; Chat-Uthai, 2013; Harter et al., 2002; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Moreland, 2013; Yalabik et al., 2013).

In the 21st century, organizations are focusing on their human talent for the best outcome in organizational settings through effective employee engagement (Andrew & Sofian, 2012). Although the engagement of employees is linked with various individual behaviours, it synchronizes both employers and employees towards organizational goals (Fleck & Inceoglu, 2010; González-Romá et al., 2006; Newman et al., 2010).

Research has shown that employee engagement is influenced by a variety of factors, including work environment, leadership, communication, development opportunities, and recognition (Albrecht et al., 2015; Harter et al., 2002; Saks, 2006).

There are many factors that contribute to employee engagement, including opportunities for growth and development (Cho & Kim, 2015), effective communication (Kassing & Avtgis, 2016), recognition and rewards programs (Maylett &

Warner, 2016), and positive workplace culture (Trivellas et al., 2013). Companies that prioritize employee engagement often see an improvement in business outcomes, such as increased revenue and customer satisfaction (Gallup, 2017). Skilled and knowledgeable workers can provide an organization with a competitive edge and improved productivity, making opportunities for growth and development highly meaningful to employees. Through skill-building, professional development, and training programs, employees can feel motivated and a sense of purpose, while simultaneously benefiting the organization. According to Cho & Kim (2015), offering these opportunities to employees is one of the key factors in employee engagement.

Initiating open lines of communication and creating a comfortable environment where workers feel heard and valued has been linked to higher employee engagement. In light of this knowledge, multiple organizations have begun encouraging feedback and cultivating a workplace culture that prioritizes communication. This proactive approach not only establishes a positive atmosphere in the office but also helps identify and troubleshoot any engagement-related issues (Kassing & Avtgis, 2016).

Mackay, Allen & Landis (2017), Nazir & Islam (2017), Hansen, Byrne & Kiersch (2014), and Agarwal (2014) all contributed to the research on the matter and concluded that the company as a whole benefits from engaged employees who are invested in the business.

Having a deep emotional connection with their organization, being highly committed to their work, and possessing immense passion for their employer's triumph are characteristics of engaged employees, as defined by Markos and Sridevi (2010).

Organizations should implement employee engagement tactics such as recognition and rewards, employee empowerment, and creating a link between workers and leaders. According to Sundaray (2011),

focusing on engagement techniques would boost organizational performance, which will result in improved earnings, productivity, customer happiness, quality, staff retention, and increased adaptability.

It was found that employee engagement is linked to various employees' attitudinal and behavioral factors like talent management, career development, employee empowerment, performance management, emotional factors and with turnover intention, productivity, and satisfaction (Brunetto et al., 2012; Chat-Uthai, 2013; Harter et al., 2002; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Moreland, 2013; Yalabik et al., 2013).

Research has demonstrated that employee engagement can be improved through various interventions, such as providing regular feedback, offering development opportunities, and implementing employee recognition programs (Albrecht et al., 2015; Harter et al., 2002; Saks, 2006). Different engagement drivers are important to different employees as one factor that motivates one employee may not motivate another, hence highlighting the need and importance of tailoring engagement strategies to the needs and preferences of individual employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Harter et al., 2002). Similarly, recognition and rewards in the form of bonuses, employee of the month awards, or paid time off, work appreciation and recognition enhances the engagement level of the employees which is usually reflected in their productivity through hard work. (Maylett & Warner, 2016).

We also learned that a positive work culture is essential for employee engagement.

This includes creating a supportive and inclusive environment that fosters a sense of belonging and promotes work-life balance. A positive work culture can help reduce stress and increase job satisfaction, which in turn increases engagement (Trivellas et al., 2013).

Studies have shown that engaged employees are less likely to leave their employers and more likely to stay with them longer (Albrecht et al., 2015; Rich et al., 2010).

From the above literature, it is clear that employee engagement is directly related to various organizational outcomes and that engagement levels are dynamic and can be improved by various organizational interventions.

This research provides insight into the importance of employee engagement and the factors that influence it. By understanding these insights, organizations can improve employee engagement and take action to create better outcomes for the organization and its employees.

Based on these findings, this study explores employee engagement in the manufacturing sector in Bhopal so that companies can formulate decisions and strategies to increase employee engagement and improve productivity in the industry., which aims to reveal the main factors that influence employee engagement.

Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive approach to measure employee engagement levels and understand the factors influencing engagement. The target population is the employees of various manufacturing companies located in Mandideep. A 102 self-administered survey questionnaires were collected. The research utilizes a questionnaire as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: the first part gathers demographic information, while the second part contains engagement-related questions. Likert's scale, with anchors ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, was used. The Gallup Q12 questionnaire, a validated instrument for measuring employee engagement, was employed, along with a

researcher-constructed instrument based on literature review to measure other enablers.

Objectives

1. Determine the employee engagement level among employees working in the manufacturing industry.
2. Analyse the various factors influencing employee engagement in the manufacturing industry.

Null Hypothesis (Ho): Employees working in the manufacturing industry do not have employee engagement.

Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): Employees in the manufacturing industry exhibit employee engagement.

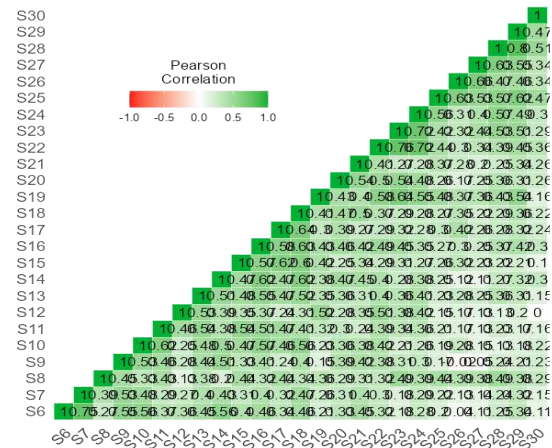
Reliability Analysis

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω
Scale	3.03	.421	.933	.935

A reliability analysis was performed to assess the consistency and stability of the questionnaires used. The results show a mean of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 0.421. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.933, indicating a high degree of internal consistency among the questions in the questionnaire, which is considered adequate (Kline, 1998). The Omega coefficient of McDonald's is 0.935, indicating that the reliability of the questionnaire is high. Overall, the results suggest that the questionnaire is reliable and can be safely used to collect meaningful data.

Fig 1. Correlation Heat map



Each square shows the correlation between the variables on each axis. Correlation ranges from -1 to +1. Values closer to zero means there is no linear trend between the two variables. The close to 1 the correlation is the more positively correlated they are; that is as one increases so does the other and the closer to 1 the stronger this relationship is. A correlation closer to -1 is similar, but instead of both increasing one variable will decrease as the other increases. The diagonals are all 1/dark green because those squares are correlating each variable to itself. Hence, it's a perfect correlation.

As shown in Table no. 1, the number of test items, item inter-relatedness and dimensionality affect the value of alpha. There are different reports about the acceptable values of alpha, ranging from 0.70 to 0.95. A low value of alpha could be due to a low number of questions, poor inter-relatedness between items, or heterogeneous constructs. If alpha is too high it may suggest that some items are redundant as they are testing the same question but in a different guise. A maximum alpha value of 0.90 has been recommended.

Convergent validity is generally considered adequate if >75 % of hypotheses are correct, or if a correlation with an instrument measuring the same construct is >0.50.

Convergent Validity can be confirmed by examining the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values of the research dimensions separately. As recommended by Hair et al. (2009), the acceptable threshold of AVE is 0.5. Hence, it's a valid questionnaire.

Interpretation

The demographic profile of the respondents with regard to their age, gender, qualification and managerial levels are presented in Figure 2, 3 and 4 respectively. From Figure 2 it can be inferred that the majority of the respondents were males and belongs to the age group of 31- 40 years. It was further observed that 54% belong to the junior management cadre and 46% of them were graduates and 32% of them were post-graduates.

Fig 2. Age and Gender of the respondents

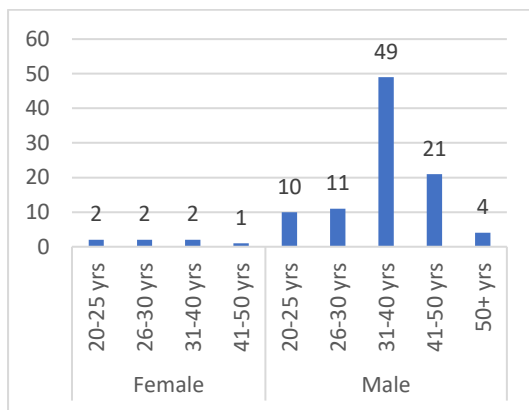


Fig 3. Qualification of the Respondents

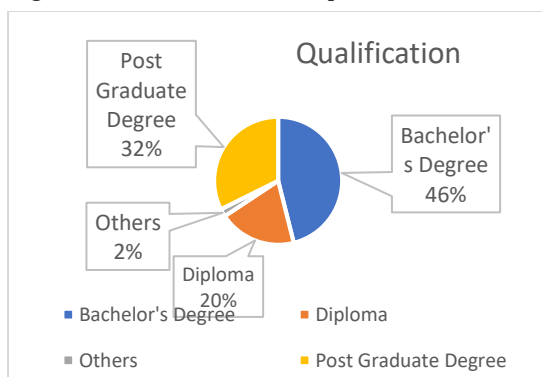
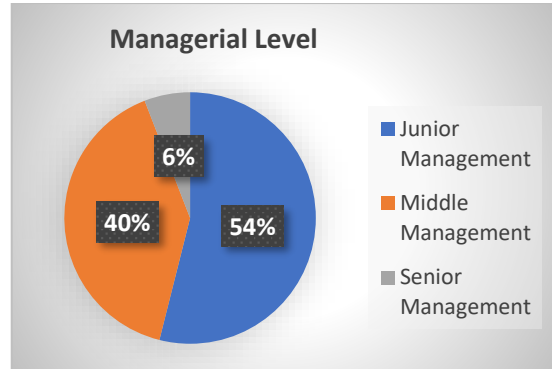
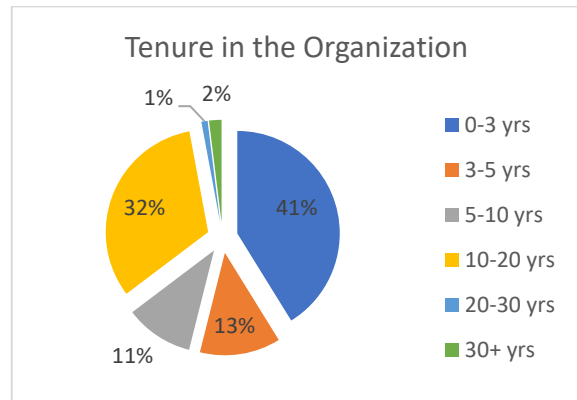


Fig 4. Managerial level of the Respondents



From Figure 5 it can be inferred that 41% of the respondents were new to the organization with 0-3 years of association were as 32% were having 10-20 years of association with the organization.

Fig 5. No. of years of association of the respondents with the present organization



Employee Engagement

The paper examined the engagement level of the employees working in the manufacturing industry using one sample t test.

Table 2. One Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Employee Engagement	102	3.0315	.40348	.03995

The table displays the results of a one-sample test for a sample of 102 data points (N). The mean of the



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sample is 3.0315, with a standard deviation of 0.40348 and a standard error mean of 0.03995. which

is higher than the test value which is 1 (low employee engagement level).

Table 3. One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 1					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Employee Engagement	50.849	101	.000	2.03145	1.9522	2.1107

In a one-sample t-test, the calculated mean is compared to the first hypothetical value. The results of this test show that the average employee engagement score for the sample (50.849) is significantly different from the test value (1) at the .000 level (that is, $p < .001$).

The mean difference between the sample mean (50.849) and the test value (1) is 2.0314, and the 95% confidence interval for the difference is (1.952, 2.1107). This shows that we can be 95% confident that the actual difference between the population mean and the test value is between 1.952 and 2.1107. Given these results, we can conclude that employee engagement scores are significantly higher than test scores and we reject the null hypothesis that employees working in Bhopal and surrounding manufacturing industries are not engaged with the organization.

The average score of 3.0315 also shows that the employees working in various manufacturing industries in Bhopal are engaged and committed to their respective organizations, however, there are some grey areas where they need developmental support such as a maximum employee engagement score is 4. Therefore, further analysis was performed to find out the factors that can boost employee engagement further hence enhancing the overall productivity of the organization.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Table 4. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.861
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1358.553
	Df	231
	Sig.	.000

The results in Table No. 4 show the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO metric (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of adequacy of sampling) is used to assess the suitability of data for factor analysis. A value of 0.842 indicates that the data are suitable for factor analysis.

The Bartlett test of sphericity tests the assumption that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, that is, no correlation exists between the variables. An approximate chi-square value of 1558.919 and a significance level of 0.000 indicate that the correlation matrix is not identity and that there is a significant relationship between the variables. This means that the data are suitable for factor analysis.



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Table 5. Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Useful and constructive feedback	1.000	.772
Strong teamwork and cooperation	1.000	.743
Praise & Recognition	1.000	.770
Organizational policies for promotion and advancement	1.000	.749
Teamwork encouragement	1.000	.617
Provided proper training before the change	1.000	.727
Employee engagement activities to motivate	1.000	.554
Safe working environment	1.000	.568
Recommend employees	1.000	.668
Determined to give the best	1.000	.672
Help other employees	1.000	.711
Satisfaction with EE	1.000	.718
Peer support	1.000	.751
Respect by team	1.000	.556
Zero tolerance to discrimination	1.000	.728
Managers share decision-making power	1.000	.768
Satisfaction with performance review	1.000	.762
Feel respected by the team	1.000	.628
Managers interested in the progress of employee	1.000	.748
Work-life balance	1.000	.669
Rewards and recognition	1.000	.768
Treats employees well	1.000	.793
Extraction method: principal component analysis.		

Table 6. Component Transformation Matrix

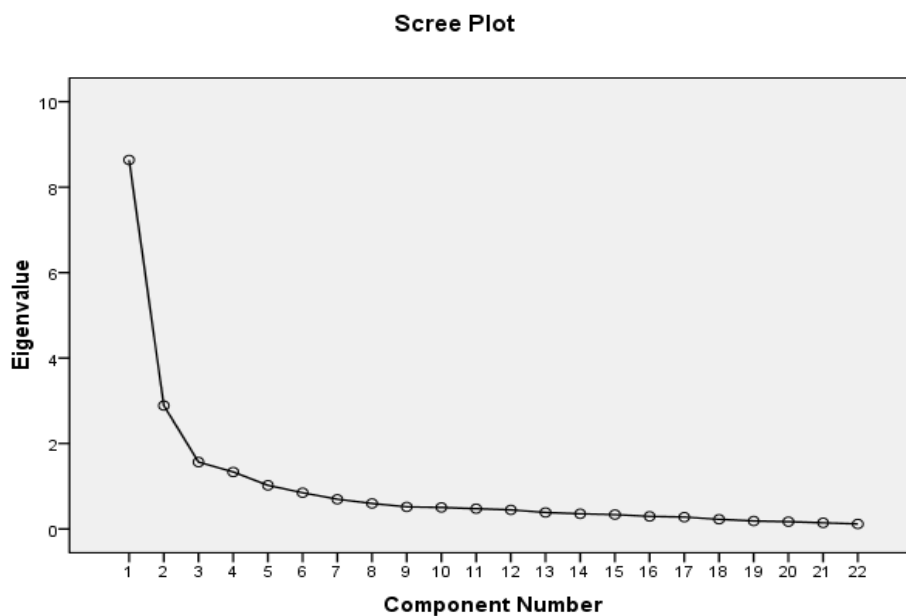
Component	1	2	3	4	5
1	.484	.548	.497	.401	.240
2	.794	-.438	.090	-.389	-.138
3	.240	.601	-.649	-.380	.124
4	.278	-.248	-.565	.734	-.048
5	-.024	-.293	-.056	-.071	.952

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 5 and 6 represents the results of a principal component analysis with varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization. The matrix shows the factor loadings of each component (1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) on the various skills and abilities, job responsibilities, and other workplace actors that were analyzed.

Fig. 6 Screen Plot



From the screen plot, it can be found that majorly five factors influence the engagement level of the employees working in the manufacturing sector.



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Table 7. The Rotated Component Matrix^a

Components					
	Work Culture	Collaborative Support and Employee Well-being.	Empowering and Inclusive Work Environment	Supporting growth & Collaboration	Training and Performance Acknowledgment
Useful and constructive feedback				.816	
Strong teamwork and cooperation				.797	
Praise & recognition					.709
Organizational policies for promotion and advancement				.654	
Teamwork encouragement		.538			
Provided proper training before the change					.567
Employee engagement activities to motivate			.655		
Safe working environment		.516			
Recommend employees		.545			
Determined to give the best		.746			
Help other employees		.672			
Satisfaction with EE		.797			
Peer support		.762			
Respect by team			.621		
Zero tolerance to discrimination			.770		
Manager share decision-making power			.620		
Satisfaction with the performance review			.712		
Feel respected by the team	.748				
Manager interested in the progress of employee	.726				
Work-life balance	.788				
Rewards and recognition	.797				
Treats employees well	.753				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

It's important to note that the values in the matrix represent the correlations between the variables and the components. Higher absolute values indicate a

stronger association between a variable and a particular component

Table 7 presents a rotated component matrix resulting from a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization. The Component Matrix in Table 7 provides the factor loadings for each variable. The factor loadings represent the correlations between each variable and the underlying factors in the data. A high factor loading (close to 1) indicates that the variable is strongly associated with a particular factor, while a low factor loading (close to 0) indicates that the variable is weakly associated with the factor.

This analysis aims to identify underlying factors or components that explain the patterns of correlation among the variables in the dataset. Each component represents a group of variables that tend to co-occur or relate to each other.

After factor analysis 5 factors were identified based on the nature of the association.

The Five factors identified that were influencing the engagement level of the employees working with manufacturing companies are as follows:

Factor 1: Work Culture

This component is considered as the major factor as has been characterized by variables related to creating a positive work culture and employee well-being. It includes variables such as feeling respected by the team (.748), manager interested in the progress of the employee (.726), work-life balance (.788), rewards and recognition (.797), and treats employees well (.753). These variables indicate that empowering employees, recognizing their contributions, and maintaining a work-life balance are important aspects of creating an empowered and inclusive work environment.

Factor 2: Collaborative Support and Employee Well-being

This component emphasizes variables related to fostering a collaborative support system and ensuring employee well-being. It includes variables such as teamwork encouragement (.538), safe working environment (.516), recommend employees (.545), determined to give the best (.746), help other employees (.672), satisfaction with employee engagement activities (.797), peer support (.762). These variables suggest that creating a supportive work environment where employees feel valued, respected, and supported is crucial for collaborative support and employee well-being.

Factor 3: Empowering and Inclusive Work Environment

This component represents variables associated with empowering employees and fostering an inclusive work environment. Items such as how managers encourage employees to take part in employee engagement activities to motivate them (.655), respect for the employee (.621), and zero tolerance to discrimination (.770), participation in decision making (.620), satisfaction with performance Review (.712), was found play significant role in creating an inclusive environment for ensuring employee empowerment

Factor 4: Supporting Growth & Collaboration

This component is characterized by variables related to supporting growth and collaboration among employees. It was found that useful and constructive feedback (.816), strong teamwork and cooperation (.797), and well-defined organizational policies related to promotion and career advancement (.654) enable to creation a strong growth and collaboration culture. These variables suggest that fostering a culture of continuous learning, personal growth, and collaboration is essential for supporting overall growth and development within the organization.

Factor 5: Training and Performance Acknowledgment



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Praise and Recognition (.709) and proper training that is provided to the employees before initiation of any organizational change (.567) were also found to influence the creation of Training and Performance Acknowledgment culture in the organization.

Overall, the EFA results indicate that creating a positive work culture, fostering collaborative support and well-being, promoting an empowered and inclusive work environment, and supporting growth and collaboration Training and Performance Acknowledgment are important factors to consider for organizational success.

Overall, these findings align with prior research on employee engagement, which emphasizes the significance of factors such as positive work culture, collaborative support, empowerment, growth and collaboration, and training and performance acknowledgment. Creating an environment that prioritizes these factors is essential for promoting employee engagement, personal growth, and organizational success.

The study's results provide valuable insights for organizations in the manufacturing industries of Bhopal and surrounding areas, suggesting areas for improvement and development to further enhance employee engagement. By focusing on these factors, organizations can foster a positive work environment, strengthen collaboration, empower employees, support growth, and ensure effective training and performance acknowledgment, thereby driving overall organizational success.

Discussion

Numerous studies have emphasized the significance of a positive work culture in promoting employee engagement. According to Saks (2006), a positive work culture characterized by respectful and supportive relationships, fairness, and a sense of belonging contributes to higher levels of engagement. This aligns with the findings of the present study, which identified variables such as feeling respected by the team, manager interest in

employee progress, and fair treatment as important components of employee engagement.

Collaboration and teamwork have also been consistently linked to employee engagement. A study by Salanova, Agut, and Peiró (2005) found that encouraging teamwork and providing a safe and supportive work environment was crucial for fostering engagement among employees. The present study identified variables such as teamwork encouragement, a safe working environment, and peer support as essential for collaborative support and employee well-being play a significant role in enhancing the engagement level of the employees.

Empowerment and inclusivity have emerged as important factors in promoting employee engagement through this study with was supported by studies by Bakker and Demerouti (2008) and Rich, Lepine, and Crawford (2010), who suggested that empowering employees through participation in decision-making, providing autonomy, and offering opportunities for personal growth and development contribute to higher levels of engagement. The current study aligns with these findings, identifying variables such as managerial encouragement of employee engagement activities, employee respect, and zero tolerance for discrimination as key elements of an empowered and inclusive work environment.

A study by Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) found that employees who received regular feedback, worked in collaborative teams, and had clear career advancement opportunities were more engaged. This corresponds to the current study's findings, which identified variables such as useful and constructive feedback, strong teamwork and cooperation, and well-defined organizational policies related to promotion and career advancement as factors contributing to growth and collaboration which resulted in the creation of a construct related to supporting growth and collaboration for employee engagement.



Recognition and training have consistently been associated with higher levels of employee engagement. Studies by Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007) and Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004) emphasize the importance of recognizing employee contributions and providing opportunities for training and development. The current study aligns with these findings and found that identifying praise, recognition, and proper training as factors influencing training and performance acknowledgment.

So it can be observed that the findings of this study are in alignment with prior research on employee engagement within the manufacturing industries. The literature consistently highlights the importance of creating a positive work culture, fostering collaboration, empowering employees, supporting growth and learning, and recognizing employee performance as a crucial factor in enhancing employee engagement. These findings provide valuable insights for organizations seeking to improve employee engagement and overall organizational success within the manufacturing sector.

It can be inferred that Staff and line managers working in the Manufacturing sector need to invest more by providing a positive work culture that is inclusive and growth-focused and rather than creating close tight silos, can create a collaborative work culture that invests in employee engagement programs. The change in the vision of the leader towards such positive engagement approaches will reflect in the form of improved business outcomes, such as increased productivity, job satisfaction, and customer satisfaction.

Scope of further research

The identified factors can be used for pursuing CFA analysis among employees in the manufacturing industry to encourage new interventions in the creation of human capital and human assets

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Analysing Internal Marketing Practices: A Case Study of Proficient Minds

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Abstract

This study investigates the internal marketing practices implemented within Proficient Minds, aiming to uncover key dimensions and their influence on internal outcomes. Through exploratory factor analysis, five distinct dimensions were identified: Formal Written Communication, Information Dissemination, Response, Formal Face-to-Face Communication, and Informal Communication. These findings highlight the organization's diverse approach to engaging with internal stakeholders, with an emphasis on structured communication channels and transparent information sharing. The structural model analysis further reveals significant positive relationships between communication practices and internal responses, emphasizing the importance of effective internal marketing strategies in shaping organizational dynamics and fostering employee engagement. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of internal marketing practices and offers insights that can inform organizational leaders in optimizing their internal communication strategies to enhance organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Internal Marketing Practices, Internal Marketing, Organizational Communication, Employee Engagement, Organizational Effectiveness

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of modern business, organizations are increasingly recognizing the pivotal role of internal marketing practices in nurturing a motivated workforce, fostering employee engagement, and ultimately enhancing organizational performance. Among these organizations, Proficient Minds stands out as a beacon of innovation and excellence in leveraging internal marketing strategies to cultivate a thriving workplace environment.

This study embarks on an exploration of the internal marketing practices adopted by Proficient Minds, delving into the multifaceted realm of Human Resource Management (HRM). As the cornerstone of organizational success, HRM plays a pivotal role in orchestrating internal marketing initiatives that resonate with employees, align with organizational objectives, and contribute to sustainable growth. Within this context, the significance of internal marketing cannot be overstated. It encompasses a spectrum of activities aimed at effectively

communicating organizational goals, values, and expectations to employees while fostering a culture of collaboration, empowerment, and continuous learning. By cultivating a sense of belonging and ownership among employees, internal marketing endeavors to transform them into passionate advocates for the organization, both internally and externally.

In essence, this study serves as a testament to the transformative power of internal marketing in shaping organizational culture, driving employee motivation, and fostering sustainable growth. By shedding light on the intricate interplay between HRM and internal marketing, it aspires to contribute to the broader discourse on effective management practices in the contemporary business landscape.

2. Review of Literature

Internal marketing is a strategic approach that focuses on treating employees as internal customers and emphasizes the importance of engaging and satisfying them to achieve organizational goals. It involves applying marketing principles within the



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organization to align employee attitudes and behaviors with the company's objectives. This literature review explores the concept of internal marketing, its significance in today's business landscape, key components, and its impact on employee engagement and organizational success.

Internal marketing emerged as a response to the growing recognition of the critical role employees play in delivering quality services and creating value for customers. It acknowledges that satisfied and engaged employees are more likely to deliver exceptional customer experiences, leading to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately, organizational success.

In today's competitive business environment, where differentiation based solely on products or services is becoming increasingly challenging, organizations are turning their focus inward to gain a competitive edge. Internal marketing serves as a strategic tool for creating a positive work environment, fostering employee satisfaction, and enhancing organizational performance. By investing in the well-being and development of employees, companies can cultivate a culture of excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement.

Effective communication is essential for disseminating information, sharing organizational goals, and fostering a sense of belonging among employees. Clear, transparent communication channels facilitate the exchange of ideas, feedback, and expectations, enabling employees to understand their roles and responsibilities within the broader context of the organization's mission and vision.

Empowering employees involves granting them autonomy, authority, and decision-making power to perform their jobs effectively. Empowered employees feel valued, trusted, and motivated to contribute their best efforts towards achieving organizational objectives. This sense of ownership fosters a culture of accountability, innovation, and continuous improvement.

Investing in employee training and development is crucial for enhancing skills, knowledge, and competencies. By providing relevant training programs, workshops, and educational opportunities, organizations empower employees to excel in their roles, adapt to changing market dynamics, and contribute to organizational growth. Continuous learning also promotes employee engagement, job satisfaction, and career advancement. Recognizing and rewarding employee contributions is essential for reinforcing positive behaviors, motivating performance, and fostering a culture of appreciation and gratitude. Whether through monetary incentives, awards, or public acknowledgment, acknowledging employee achievements strengthens morale, boosts motivation, and encourages continued excellence. Strong leadership and management support are critical for driving internal marketing initiatives and cultivating a culture of trust, respect, and collaboration. Leaders play a pivotal role in setting the tone, defining organizational values, and inspiring employees to strive for excellence. By demonstrating commitment to employee well-being and development, leaders can inspire loyalty, commitment, and high-performance. Research has consistently shown a positive correlation between internal marketing practices, employee engagement, and organizational performance. Engaged employees are more committed, motivated, and passionate about their work, leading to higher levels of productivity, creativity, and customer satisfaction. Organizations that prioritize internal marketing initiatives experience lower turnover rates, higher employee retention, and increased profitability.

Furthermore, internal marketing contributes to the development of a strong employer brand, attracting top talent and enhancing the organization's reputation as an employer of choice. Engaged employees serve as brand ambassadors, promoting the company's values, culture, and mission both

internally and externally, thereby strengthening customer relationships and brand loyalty.

3. Research Methods

The objective of this research paper is to identify the "Internal Marketing Practices" followed by Proficient Minds. The research design employed is explanatory research, also known as causal research, aiming to investigate potential cause-and-effect relationships between different events. The universe for this study comprises 130 employees, and convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was utilized to select a sample size of 73 employees. Data analysis techniques include both univariate and multivariate methods, with exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling being employed. Statistical tools utilized for analysis include IBM SPSS 23 and AMOS 23. Through this comprehensive approach, the study seeks to shed light on the internal marketing practices within Proficient Minds and their potential impact on organizational performance. The objective of this study is to identify the "Internal Marketing Practices" within Proficient Minds, with the independent variables including Informal Information Generation, Formal Face-to-Face (F2F) Information Generation, and Formal Written Information Generation. The dependent variables to be examined are Dissemination and Response. The tools of data collection employed for this research are questionnaires. Through this investigation, the study aims to gain insights into how different internal marketing practices contribute to the dissemination of information within the organization and the subsequent response from employees.

Table 1: KMO Test

KMO & BARLETT'S TEST			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			0.833
Barlett's Test of	Approx.	Chi-	485.04

Sphericity	Square	
	df	105
	Sig.	0.000

The preliminary assessments for factor analysis indicate favorable conditions for further analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy attains a value of 0.833, signifying good suitability for factor analysis. Additionally, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reveals an approximate chi-square value of 485.04, with a significance level approaching zero, indicating significant differences from an identity matrix. These findings affirm the appropriateness of conducting factor analysis on the dataset, suggesting that the data is sufficiently structured for meaningful analysis.

The rotated component matrix resulting from the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) illuminates the relationships between observed variables and identified factors, providing insights into distinct dimensions of internal marketing practices at Proficient Minds. Higher factor loadings indicate stronger associations, with factors labeled 1 through 5 representing variable groupings such as "Response," "Information Dissemination," and so forth. Interpretation involves scrutinizing the highest factor loadings for each variable to comprehend their associations, with Varimax rotation employed for stability. These findings facilitate understanding the nuanced aspects of internal marketing practices, guiding research implications aligned with specific objectives and variable contexts.

In the hypotheses section, we propose several assertions to examine how different factors influence internal marketing practices. These hypotheses investigate the impact of informal, formal face-to-face, and formal written information generation on dissemination and response within our organization. Specifically, hypotheses H1 to H7 suggest significant relationships between various types of information generation and

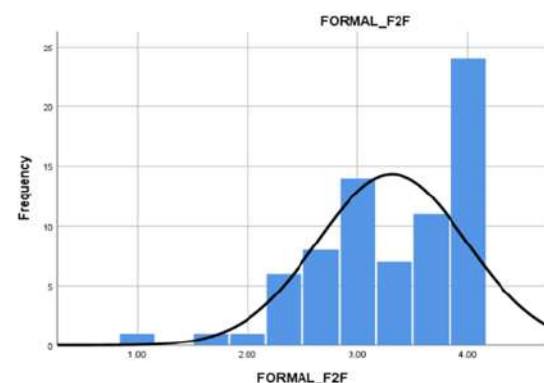
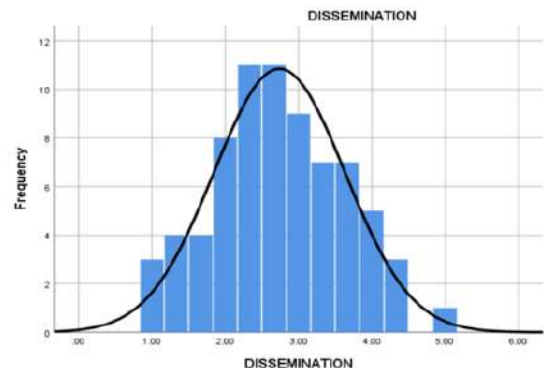
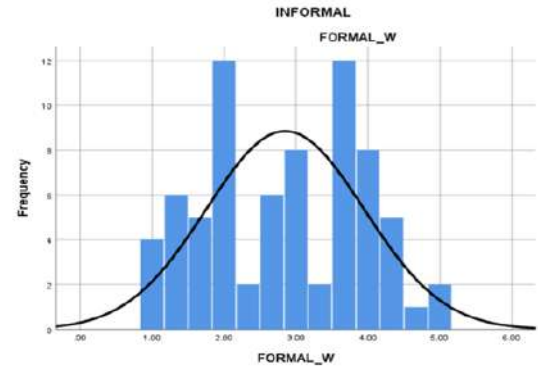
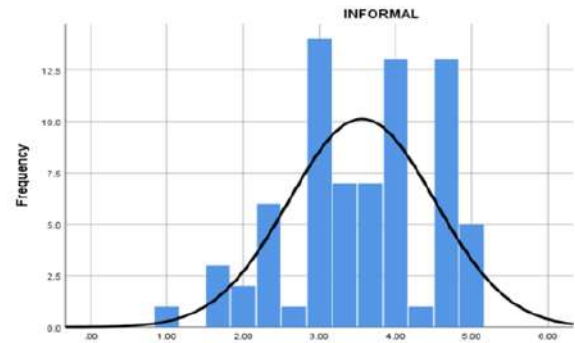


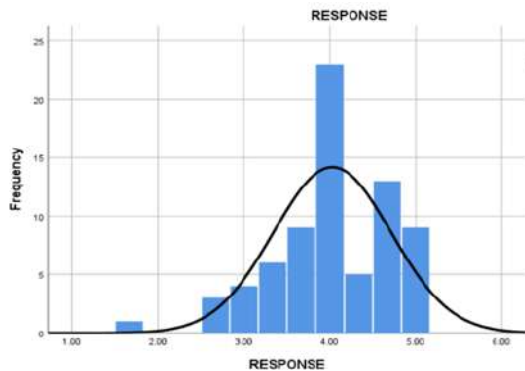
dissemination/response outcomes. To test these hypotheses empirically, we utilize Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which requires preliminary assessments of data normality and linearity. Upon examining the normality of residuals and variables, we find that the data approximately follows a bell-shaped curve, indicating a close-to-normal distribution. Additionally, analysis of linearity charts reveals consistent linear relationships between independent and dependent variables, which is crucial for SEM validity. Scatterplots consistently display straight-line trends, indicating proportional changes between variables and enhancing confidence in parameter estimates' accuracy and model reliability. Thus, SEM is deemed appropriate for further exploration of the complex relationships among the variables, helping us gain a comprehensive understanding of internal marketing practices at Proficient Minds.

Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis

Rotated Component Matrix					
	1	2	3	4	5
Response 1				0.778	
Response 2				0.795	
Response 3				0.749	
Information Dissemination 1			0.76		
Information Dissemination 2			0.824		
Information Dissemination 3			0.783		
Formal Written 1	0.789				
Formal Written 2	0.823				
Formal Written 3	0.843				
Formal Face2Face 1					0.733
Formal Face2Face 2					0.879
Formal Face2Face 3					0.749
Informal 1		0.877			
Informal 2		0.901			
Informal 3		0.78			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis					
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization ^a					
a. Rotation Converged in 6 iterations.					

3.1. Normality

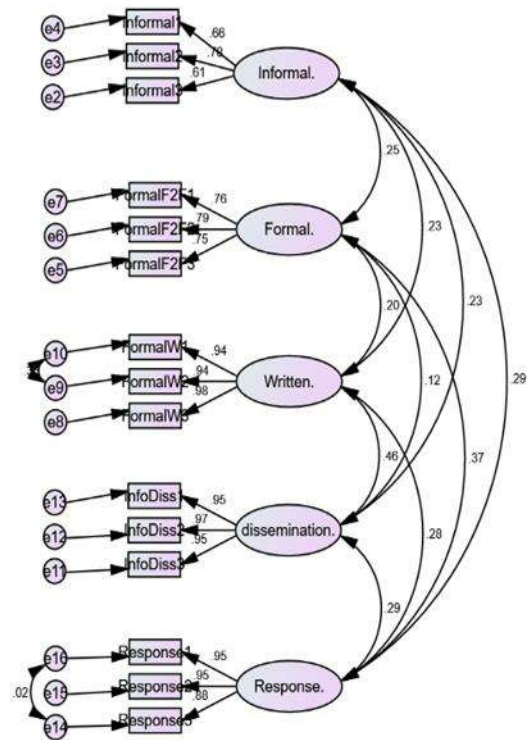




When we ascertain that the residuals or variables exhibit a normal distribution, we are describing a pattern where their values form a bell-shaped curve, with most observations concentrated around the mean and fewer observations in the tails. Consequently, we can infer that the data is approximately normally distributed. The analysis of linearity charts provides evidence of a consistent and distinct linear relationship between independent and dependent variables, which is crucial for ensuring the validity of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Scatterplots consistently display straight-line trends, suggesting proportional changes between variables. This adherence to linearity enhances our confidence in the accuracy of parameter estimates and the reliability of the model. Hence, SEM is considered suitable for further exploration of the complex relationships among the variables. Additionally, our study utilized histograms to confirm the normal distribution, with corresponding visual representations provided.

In Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), convergent validity is pivotal for ensuring the reliability and consistency of the measurement model. This validity assessment scrutinizes the agreement among indicators measuring the same underlying latent construct. It aims to verify whether different measures intended to capture the same concept yield similar results.

Figure 1: Measurement Model



To quantify convergent validity, two key metrics are commonly used: composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). Composite reliability measures the internal consistency of indicators for a latent construct, with values exceeding 0.7 considered acceptable, indicating strong agreement among the indicators. Average variance extracted (AVE) assesses the convergence of indicators by examining the proportion of variance in the observed variables captured by the underlying latent construct. Values above 0.5 are typically desired, indicating that more than half of the variance in the indicators is attributed to the latent construct they measure. A high AVE value suggests that observed variables are closely related to the underlying construct and contribute meaningfully to its measurement. In the context provided, both composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) values surpass their respective threshold values (0.7 for CR and 0.5

for AVE), indicating strong internal consistency among the indicators and robust convergent validity. These results affirm the reliability and validity of the measurement model, instilling confidence in the accuracy of the latent constructs being measured. The table provided presents the Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for five latent constructs: Formal, Written, Dissemination, Response, and Informal. CR measures the internal consistency of indicators within each construct, while AVE assesses the convergence of indicators. For the "Formal" construct, the CR value is 0.809 and the AVE value is 0.586, indicating moderate internal consistency and convergent validity. The "Written" and "Dissemination" constructs exhibit exceptionally high CR and AVE values (0.969 for CR and 0.912 for AVE for Written; 0.969 for CR and 0.913 for AVE for Dissemination), suggesting strong internal consistency and convergent validity. Similarly, the "Response" construct demonstrates strong internal consistency and convergent validity with a CR value of 0.950 and an AVE value of 0.863. The "Informal" construct shows moderate internal consistency and convergent validity with a CR value of 0.823 and an AVE value of 0.567. Overall, these results highlight the varying levels of internal consistency and convergent validity across the latent constructs, underscoring the importance of assessing these properties for ensuring the reliability of the measurement model.

Table 3: Convergent Validity

	CR	AVE
Formal	0.809	0.586
Written	0.969	0.912
Dissemination	0.969	0.913
Response	0.950	0.863
Informal	0.823	0.567

The table 4 illustrates the correlation coefficients between the latent constructs: Formal, Written, Dissemination, Response, and Informal. These coefficients are indicative of discriminant validity, which assesses the degree to which distinct constructs are indeed measuring different underlying concepts. In this context, discriminant validity is evaluated by ensuring that the correlations between constructs are lower than 1, suggesting that they are measuring different constructs and are not perfectly correlated. Each cell in the table represents the correlation between two latent constructs. For instance, the correlation coefficient between Formal and Written is 0.199, while the correlation between Dissemination and Response is 0.294. These coefficients are all less than 1, indicating that the constructs are measuring distinct concepts and supporting the discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Table 4: Discriminant validity

	Formal	Written	Dissemination	Response	Informal
Formal	0.766				
Written	0.199	0.955			
Dissemination	0.125	0.462	0.956		
Response	0.369	0.282	0.294	0.929	
Informal	0.249	0.229	0.229	0.286	0.684

Table 5 presents the results of the path analysis, indicating the coefficients, p-values, and remarks for each hypothesis tested. The hypotheses examined relationships between different variables. For instance, the coefficient of 0.142 with a p-value of 0.001 suggests a significant positive relationship between Informal and Dissemination, supporting hypothesis H1. Similarly, coefficients and p-values for other paths indicate significant relationships, supporting respective hypotheses. For example, the coefficient of 0.171 and p-value of 0.000 for the path between Formal F2F Dissemination and Dissemination (H2) suggests a supported relationship. Overall, the results indicate support for

all hypotheses tested, signifying the presence of significant relationships between the variables under consideration.

Table 5: Path Analysis

Path	Hypothesis	Co-efficient	P value	Remarks
Informal Dissemination	H1	0.142	0.001	Supported
Formal F2F Dissemination	H2	0.171	0.000	Supported
Formal W Dissemination	H3	0.386	0.000	Supported
Dissemination Response	H4	0.165	0.000	Supported
Informal Response	H5	0.177	0.003	Supported
Formal F2F Response	H6	0.338	0.000	Supported
Formal W Response	H7	0.112	0.000	Supported

Table 6 presents the fit indices, providing an evaluation of the structural equation model's adequacy in explaining the observed data. The fit indices include the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). The GFI value of 0.943 exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.9, indicating a favorable fit between the hypothesized model and the observed data. Similarly, the CFI value of 0.975 surpasses the threshold of 0.9, indicating strong agreement between the model and observed data. Additionally, the RMSEA value of 0.066 falls below the recommended threshold of 0.08, suggesting a relatively small discrepancy between observed and predicted data. In summary, these fit indices collectively indicate that the structural equation model provides a satisfactory fit to the observed data, with minimal error.

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the exploratory factor analysis reveal five distinct dimensions associated with internal marketing practices at Proficient Minds: Formal Written Communication, Information Dissemination, Response, Formal Face-to-Face Communication, and Informal Communication.

This suggests that the organization employs a diverse range of strategies to engage with its internal stakeholders. Notably, Formal Written Communication emerges as a prominent component, underscored by the strong factor loadings of associated variables. This highlights the organization's emphasis on structured and clear communication channels. Additionally, Information Dissemination plays a significant role, with variables related to dissemination demonstrating strong loadings on a single factor. This indicates a focus on transparent and effective sharing of information within the organization. The structural model further supports these findings, revealing statistically significant positive relationships between communication practices and internal responses. These results emphasize the importance of internal marketing strategies in shaping organizational dynamics and fostering engagement among employees at Proficient Minds.

5. Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the internal marketing practices employed by Proficient Minds. Through exploratory factor analysis, we identified five key dimensions: Formal Written Communication, Information Dissemination, Response, Formal Face-to-Face Communication, and Informal Communication. These findings underscore the organization's multifaceted approach to engaging with its internal stakeholders. Notably, Formal Written Communication emerged as a prominent component, reflecting the organization's emphasis on clear and structured communication channels. Additionally, Information Dissemination played a significant role, highlighting the importance of transparent sharing of information within the organization.

Moreover, the structural model analysis revealed statistically significant positive relationships between communication practices and internal responses. These results emphasize the impact of



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effective internal marketing strategies on organizational dynamics and employee engagement. By prioritizing clear communication channels and promoting information dissemination, Proficient Minds can enhance internal cohesion, productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness. Moving forward, it is crucial for the organization to continue investing in internal marketing efforts and implementing strategies that facilitate effective communication and information sharing. This study contributes to the broader understanding of internal marketing practices, offering insights that can inform organizational leaders in optimizing their internal communication strategies to create a positive and conducive work environment at Proficient Minds.

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Harmonizing Lifestyle and Environment in the Digital Era: A Framework for Sustainable Living (LiFE)

Sheena Thomas¹, Lila Simon²

Abstract

A “sustainable lifestyle” is a cluster of habits and patterns of behavior embedded in a society and facilitated by institutions, norms and infrastructures that frame individual choice, in order to minimize the use of natural resources and generation of wastes, while supporting fairness and prosperity for all. India is a young country with 50% of its population below the age of 25. The choices of the youth and their Lifestyle indeed shapes the economy of any country. At this juncture when India aims to be in the league of developed countries by 2047, it's important to understand the mindset of the youth towards protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development especially in the digital era. The vision of LiFE is to live a lifestyle that is in tune with our planet and does not harm it. The purpose of the study was to understand the behavior of the youth towards Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) particularly in domains of Energy consumption, water management, and buying sustainable products. A Self-reported questionnaire was prepared on LiFE and data was collected from 350 youths in central India. The data was analyzed using percentage. The results indicate that the youth values the environment and takes measures to reduce, reuse and recycle the consumptions.

Keywords: Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE), sustainable development, digital era

1. Introduction

In the contemporary age, the superseding of digital technology and sustainability has become a focal point in addressing environmental challenges.

The progress of society into the digital era and the impact of human lifestyles on the environment has become increasingly evident and this serves as a gateway into exploring the intricate relationship between Lifestyle choices and environmental sustainability encapsulated within the framework of lifestyle for Environment (LiFE).

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has ushered in a plethora of opportunities to transform various aspects of human life from communication and transportation to commerce, entertainment, digital innovations etc. thereby reshaping the social norms and behaviors. The steadfast digital transformation is also witnessing the escalated

footprint of human activities, posing unprecedented threads to the planet's delicate ecosystems. The concept of LiFE has emerged as a holistic approach to foster sustainability by integrating individual lifestyle choices with environmental consideration and LiFE recognizes that sustainable living transcends mere adherence to eco- friendly practices as it encompasses a profound shift in mindset values and behaviors towards harmonizing human needs with planetary boundaries.

Individuals can become catalysts for a positive change. The digital realm offers a myriad of tools and platforms so as to empower individuals and their journey towards sustainable living ranging from sustainable consumption apps to online communities advocating for environment stewardship. LiFE recognizes that individual actions collectively wield immense power in shaping the path of ecological sustainability by adopting sustainable lifestyles characterized by mindful



consumption, waste reduction, energy conservation and eco-conscious decision making.

In 17 SDGs a plan for achieving a better future for all, requires efforts of all stakeholders starting with governments, businesses, civil societies and citizens. In 2015, India had also acknowledged 2030 as a critical important horizon for 17 SDGs. India, while already through a regulatory body (SEBI), has a not too old background of the evolution of non-financial reporting (NFR) by introducing the clause 49 and 2000 that has still now progressed as the Business Responsibility Reporting (BRR).

2. Literature Review

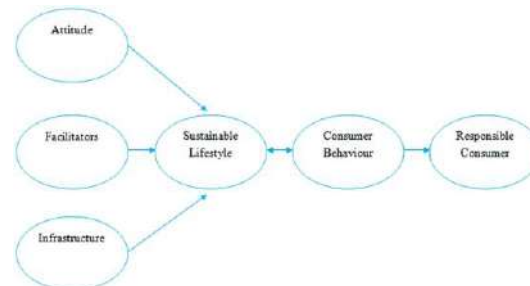
The study by (Dimitrova, et al, 2021) indicates the willingness of the youth to adapt to a sustainable lifestyle. The students generally recognized the need to address environmental issues, and 90.6% intended to change their lifestyle in this direction.

The study by (Kiss, 2024) on the transformation of sustainable lifestyle practices in eco clubs emphasized that the most important characteristics of the non-formal education are the community, autonomy of decision-making, knowledge sharing and experience-based format. From the students' point of view, these characteristics can contribute to their higher level of engagement with sustainability and additional changes in their lifestyle.

The study by (Del Río Castro et al., 2021) suggested that there should be first-approach exploration of research and policy implications. The findings also aimed at reviving further research amid the SDGs and digitalization.

(Lubowiecki-Vikuk et al., 2021) focused on the determinants of a sustainable Lifestyle by (Akenji, 2014; Akenji and Chen, 2016) and proposed a theoretical framework as shown below for sustainable lifestyle.

Figure 1. A theoretical framework for a sustainable lifestyle.



3. Need for the study

The reviews reveal that there exists insufficient research on Indian Youth in Harmonizing Lifestyle and Environment in Digital era thereby substantiating the need for such a research. It can be further articulated as:

Rapid Technological Advancements

The ubiquity of digital devices and services has altered how the youth live, work and interact with their environment.

Environmental Challenges

With environmental challenges like climate change, resource depletion and biodiversity loss, there is an urgent need to involve the youth who are a major part of the population to find innovative solutions.

Impact of Lifestyle Choices among youth

The individual and collective lifestyle choices of today's youth has undergone a drastic transformation and it is important to understand what their mindset in the areas of sustainability is.

Objectives of the study

1. To access sustainable practices of youth in household energy consumption
2. To evaluate sustainable water management practices in households by youth
3. To assess sustainable waste management practices at the household by youth.

4. Methodology

The research design encompassed both exploratory and descriptive elements, employing a mixed-method approach that integrated qualitative and quantitative methodologies. While the study primarily relied on quantitative methods to analyze and present its findings, qualitative techniques, such as interviews, were also utilized to gather insights from participants in workplace environments. The survey questionnaire employed a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions to gather comprehensive insights from respondents. Closed-ended questions provided structured response options, facilitating quantitative analysis and enabling researchers to quantify trends and preferences efficiently. Conversely, open-ended questions encouraged participants to freely articulate their thoughts, experiences, and opinions, allowing for richer qualitative data. This dual approach ensured a balanced exploration of the topic, capturing both quantitative metrics and nuanced qualitative perspectives for a more thorough understanding of the subject matter.

The data was collected from 350 youths in central India in varied age groups, decision making capacity and household compositions basically from Graduates, Post graduates, Research scholars and professionals.

Age: The data was collected from individuals aged between 18 to 35 years, encompassing the young adult and early adult age groups. This demographic range is chosen to capture the segment of the population typically associated with adopting new technologies and shaping sustainable lifestyle choices.

Household Composition: Respondents are primarily selected from households where they either reside independently or have a significant role in decision-making regarding energy consumption and sustainable living practices. This includes individuals who are managing their own households, as well as those who play an active role in contributing to family decisions related to environmental sustainability.

Education Level: The study aims to include respondents with varied educational backgrounds, ranging from high school graduates to postgraduate students and working professionals. This diverse

educational profile ensures a comprehensive understanding of sustainable living attitudes and behaviors across different levels of educational attainment.

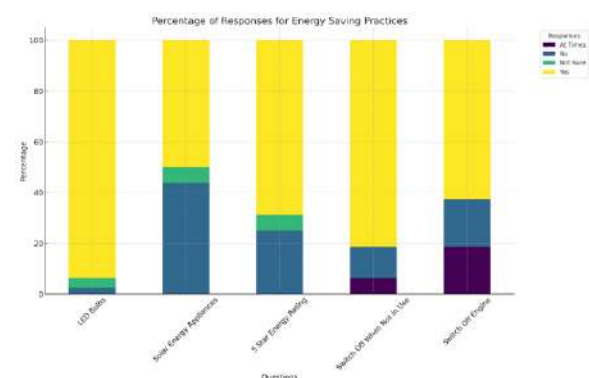
Occupational Status: Respondents encompass a spectrum of occupational statuses, including students, employed individuals, and those engaged in various forms of entrepreneurship or freelance work. This diversity reflects the different lifestyles, priorities, and decision-making capacities associated with various occupational roles.

5. Data Analysis

A questionnaire was administered among youths to understand their energy-saving practices. Some of the questions were on an interview method to understand the personal reasons as well depending on the respondent and the situation in which they are staying.

1. Sustainable practices of youth in household energy consumption

Figure 2. Sustainable practices of youth in household energy consumption



Analysis and Interpretation: The graph above provides a complete view on the response of the youth when enquired on the energy saving practices like using LED Bulbs, Solar energy Appliances, 5 star Energy Rating, Habit of switching off the power when not in use and switching off the Engine when not in use.



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LED Bulbs Usage

A high adoption (over more than 90%) use of LED Bulb was observed which is a clear indication that there exists a high awareness level among the youth the usage of these bulbs helps in energy saving and this can be considered as part of the respondents energy -saving behavior. This is also a clear indicator that there is a strong preference among the youths for energy saving and energy-efficient lighting solutions. This response in fact aligns with the current eco-friendly behavior aiming reduction of energy consumption and supporting the efforts of growing sustainable.

Solar Energy Appliances

A moderate adoption rate of about 40% was observed on evaluating the responses towards use of solar energy appliances. Though this percentage indicates that there is a considerable interest in harnessing renewable energy, but at the same time there is roughly an equal proportion of respondents who do not use solar appliances. There could be a reason for lack of awareness among the youth in this regard or the lack of interest to come forward to practice these sustainable methods. However a small number of respondents are unsure, again an indicator that they could be either not interested or not much aware and this can be considered as a potential barrier towards adoption of such renewables. An informal personal interview with a few also revealed that there is also a high investment in the initial installation of these appliances, which the respondents presume that it does not give the returns for the value of money invested. This is where the government policies on such matters should be promoted to create awareness among communities so that citizens come forward and take active participation in the initiatives of the government.

Star Energy Rating Appliances

Over half of the participants use 5- star energy rating electrical appliances and this is an indicator that there is a predominance preference among the youth for high-efficiency devices. This further presumes

the fact that there exists a consciousness among the youth to reduce the energy consumption and this relates their desire to reduce electricity bills and indirectly the environmental impacts.

Switching off the Power when Not in Use

As a response to this a majority of about 65% reported that they switch off the lights and other equipment when not in use demonstrating a strong energy conservation habit. Personal informal interviews also revealed that some of them practice this even in their workplace, however few never bothered as well, indicating an area which needs to be improved as part of public awareness and energy -saving behaviors.

Switching off the Vehicle Engine

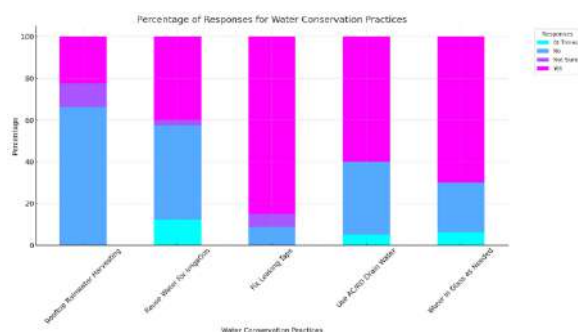
Half of the respondents switch off their vehicle engines at traffic lights and railway crossings and even while stopping to talk with friends and family. This indicates a mixed practice and paves way for improvement. When interviewed on a personal level, the response was to save the fuel for self. As a significant portion of the respondents are not regular in this practice, this also indicates a potential area which requires attention for increased awareness and adoption of this energy-saving behavior.

Overall, the graph illustrates a positive trend towards energy -saving practices among the respondents, with a high adoption to the use of LED bulbs and other energy-efficient appliances. At the same time there exists a noticeable room for improvement in the adoption of solar energy as resources and behavioral practices like switching off the engines when not in use. The survey brings to our notice that there is an intense need to enhance public awareness through education and public awareness programs to involve communities and encourage the adoption of renewables sources of energy. This would facilitate a wider adoption of these practices Overall, the figure reflects the consciousness of youth towards energy efficiency and sustainability, but it also

highlights areas where further efforts can be made to promote environmental control.

2. Sustainable water management practices in households by youth

Figure 3: Sustainable water management practices in households by youth



Analysis and interpretation: To understand the water conservation practices, the youth were questioned to respond on awareness and habits pertaining to roof top Rainwater Harvesting, reuse of water for irrigation, timely fixing up the problems of tap leakages, use of AC/RO drain water, water in glass as needed etc., and the graph thus generated with the obtained data illustrates the percentage in each of these mentioned areas.

Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting

The response predicts a very low adoption rate i.e. even less than 50%. Personal interviews also reveals the lack of interest or least botheration in this regard. Only about 18% of the respondents affirmed the use of Rainwater Harvesting. Though the Government of India offers subsidies for this, there is not much awareness of this among the youth. This is a clear indication of potential lack of awareness, infrastructure or even the incentives to be received on implementing rainwater harvesting. Special awareness drives need to be taken up to involve the communities so that they understand the importance and the benefits of harvesting rainwater. This can in a great manner reduce the dependence of municipal water supply system.

Reuse Water for Irrigation

Nearly 32% of the respondents reuse water for irrigating their kitchen garden and house plants indicating a moderate adoption with variability which is not a substantial part of the population. Proper and variety drainage systems need to be planned to collect the used water, so that it can be recycled and reused as per the possibility and the requirements.

Fixing Leaking Taps

This is a very common problem as far as every household is concerned and most of the time most of us are least bothered to solve these issues in the very beginning itself. The normal tendency understood was that when leakage reaches its maximum, a plumber is approached or the tap is replaced. However, the responses obtained here has a high compliance with a majority of about 68% reporting that they fix the leakage problems of taps and flushes very promptly. This high compliance highlights a general awareness on addressing water leaks to conserve and prevent wastage.

Use of AC/RO Drain Water

Nearly half of the respondents used water drained from AC or RO water filters for secondary purposes but the majority of the respondents do not utilize this drained water and it is wasted. This is a clear indication of lack of awareness in using this drain water which could be otherwise used for at least gardening or washing. Greater opportunities need to be created to promote awareness programs in these related areas.

Water Consumption Awareness

The response indicates that the majority of the respondents take water in a glass as per their requirement, reflecting a high level of consciousness regarding water consumption. But nevertheless, there are people who don't bother much on water consumption and thereby do not make any effort to avoid wastage of water.

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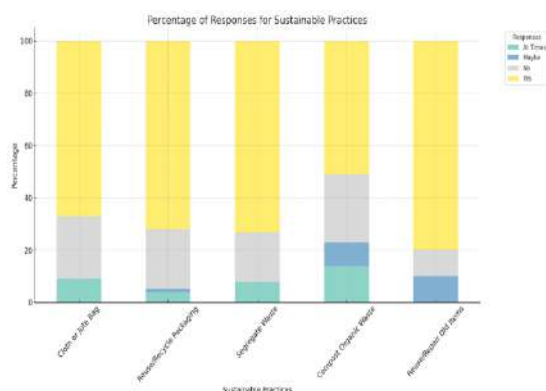


The overall graph depicts a mixed level of engagement with water consumption practices. It was encouraging to observe that the majority of the respondents were very alert to replace their leak taps and flushes indicating a high level of consciousness in water consumption. The adoption of rooftop rainwater harvesting needs the attention of the policy makers and government. There exists a huge gap in understanding the benefits of rainwater harvesting. Also the incentive policy framed by the government is not much availed. Though there is a mixed level of engagement, it is also encouraging to observe that youths are taking interest in sustaining their environment.

3. Sustainable waste management practices at the household by youth.

The respondents when responded to various sustainable practices like the habit of using cloth or Jute bag, Reuse/Recycle Packaging, Segregate waste, Compost Organic Waste, Reuse/Repair of Old items etc., showed a diverse response.

Figure 4: Sustainable waste management practices at the household by youth.



Cloth or Jute Bag Use

Approximately 67% of the respondents use cloth /jute bags to carry their purchases which was a majority adoption. This highly signifies that the tendency to use plastic bags has reduced which is a positive behavior towards sustainability. However a small percentage sometimes only uses this sustainable

alternatives which can be identified and the real cause can be dealt with.

Reuse /Recycle Packaging

This response showed the highest engagement among the practices with 70% the respondents were observed in reuse or recycling of polythene bags and other packaging materials and this is a clear indication that there exists a strong awareness in actions related to reduction in waste.

Waste Segregation

A large portion of the respondents, almost 73% segregate dry and wet waste which is an important aspect for any waste management system. The strong compliance in this case may be because there have been a lot of awareness programs and the efforts of the municipality that has created a habit among the citizens to adopt proper waste management systems. However the less adopted areas needs to be focused and addressed.

Composting Organic Waste

About half of the respondents compost their organic waste to make green manure , which is a moderate adoption .Since a notable percentage is not engaging in such ecofriendly activities reflects possible challenges of space constraints or perceived inconvenience. It could also be possible that there is not much awareness of creating compost in the right way.

Reuse /Repair of Old Items

This response was a highly practiced one, with 80% of them agreeing to the reuse/repair of old items.

The responses depict a commendable level of engagement as per sustainable practices among participants especially in the process of recycling, packaging and reusing, repairing old items. The practices of composting organic waste and using sustainable bags was majorly adopted which indicates further potential growth in adoption rates. The data reflects a very encouraging fact that makes us reflect that the community is mindful of the



environment impact and actively participates in actions that contribute to sustainability. Nonetheless, there is always a space to improve certain practices like increasing the awareness, infrastructure support and community initiative to further foster a sustainable lifestyle.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

The analysis of responses on energy conservation, water conservation and sustainable practices reveals that the community, especially the youth, is committed to sustaining the environment which is commendable. This showcases a significant adoption of energy-efficient appliances, recycling and water saving measures. The practice of using LED bulbs and promptly fixing up the leaks needs to be widely embraced. The use of solar energy and the adoption of rooftop water harvesting is a clear indicator of growth towards sustainability. Areas with solar energy appliance adoption, rooftop rainwater harvesting, and composting indicate room for improvement. The findings highlight both the progress made and the potential areas for enhancing community education policy support and infrastructure development to further encourage sustainable living. Overall the community's proactive engagement in various sustainability practices provides a hopeful outlook for environment growth suggesting that with continued effort and support greater strides in conservation and sustainability can be achieved

7. Future Directions

To further advance our understanding and implementation of sustainability practices, future studies should focus on identifying barriers to adopting certain sustainable behaviors evaluating the effectiveness of educational and policy effectiveness of educational and policy interventions in fostering behavioral change and exploring the impact of technology innovations in making sustainability practices more accessible. Comparative analysis across different demographics and settings can uncover valuable insights into customizing sustainability initiative to fit various contexts. Additionally economic analysis could quantify the benefits of Sustainable practices

strengthening the case for their wider adoption. This research efforts would provide a Holistic understanding of the multifaceted approaches to promoting sustainability, guiding more target and effective strategies to achieve environmental conservation and sustainability goals on a broader scale.

Realizing the vision of LiFE requires concerted efforts from various stakeholders including government, businesses, academia and civil society. Policy makers play a pivotal role in implementing regulations and incentives that incentivize sustainable practices while businesses must embrace corporate social responsibility and adopt sustainable business models likewise educational institutions have a responsibility to cultivate environmental literacy and empower future generations with the knowledge and skills to navigate the complexities of sustainability in the digital age.

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Analyzing financial distress in the automobile industry: a comparative study of Altman Z-Score, Springate S-Score, Zmijewski Z-Score, and Grover G-Score

Bhumika Bunker¹, Ishita Ajit², Rohit Robin Jacob³, Sahil Rajput⁴

Abstract

Purpose: The main purpose of the present study is to examine the predictive quality of four financial distress models, including the Altman, Springate, Zmijewski, and Grover models, and the disparity in the capability of the models in predicting financial distress for the Indian automobile sector. **Methodology:** Logistic regression was utilized in the study, and the dependent variable is demonstrated as a binary variable. While the independent variables include the Altman Z-Score, Springate S-Score, Zmijewski Z-Score, and Grover G-Score, A subset of 10 automotive firms was selected. The secondary data was taken from the websites Money Control, NSE, and BSE, and a 10-year time interval was taken from 2013-14 to 2022-23 for detailed evaluation over time. Result authentication and data configuration, along with their hypotheses, were determined by software like EViews 10 and Microsoft Excel 365. **Findings:** The results indicate that among the four independent variables, only the Zmijewski model shows a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable, financial distress, and can predict distress with 62% accuracy. **Practical Implications:** The study's insights are crucial, highlighting the significance of the Zmijewski model and guiding its prioritized use in distress analysis. The study also exposes the gaps among the distress models, enabling the ease of model selection for managers and investors. **Originality/Value:** This research will be extremely useful for financial distress model selection and financial risk management in the particular industry context.

Keywords: #Financial distress, #Altman's Z-Score, #Springate S-Score, #Zmijewski Z-Score, #Grover's G-Score, #Indian #Automobile Sector

Introduction

The Indian automotive industry remains the bedrock of the country's industrial landscape, known for its robust infrastructure and huge market potential with an ecosystem that includes passenger cars, commercial vehicles, and two-wheeler vehicles. The automobile sector makes a healthy contribution to the nation. The industry also creates various employment opportunities for the masses with its impressive marketing and distribution networks.

The Indian automobile sector seeks solutions for financial insecurity, as the causes of debt can be taken from internal and external factors. Another major obstacle is the susceptibility of the industry to volatile economic situations and dynamic market processes. In addition to that, the sector is dragged down by strong competition among the domestic and international players who choose to conquer the market, which is often accompanied by price reductions and profit decrements.

Even after the ample number of ongoing research and studies around the globe, the same research and understanding are scarce of the factors resulting in financial distress for automotive companies in India. Early diagnosis of further financial and managerial barriers in such automotive firms is approachable with the different analytical methods endorsed by the researchers. Altman's Z-Score model, Springate Score, Zmijewski Score, and Grover's Score are some of the most common models for predicting financial distress in automobile companies.

The Indian automobile sector has been proven to suffer a lot from either improper planning, market bursts, or global market crashes such as COVID-19. Similarly, automakers like Maruti Suzuki and Tata Motors cover a broad field and reported huge declines in sales volumes of their cars during lockdowns and later economic slowdowns. The debt picture worsened, as evidenced by the sharp decline in income sources. The sudden increase in debt load



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was due to the use of borrowing to keep the companies operational even in the face of revenue reduction. In addition to that, the corporations also had to deal with low profit margins, which were a result of immense operational costs and disruptions to the supply system. These events brought home a clear understanding of the sensitivity of the sector towards non-economic factors and pinpointed the health checks to address, among others, Indian auto companies in general.

The main aim of this research is to determine the forecasting power of four financial distress models currently used in financial distress evaluation, namely: Altman Z-Score, Springate S-Score, Zmijewski Z-Score, and Grover G-Score, while investigating ten automobile companies listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). The research also seeks to figure out how the models perform in terms of accuracy and which one shows promise in the prediction of financial distress.

Research Gap

The available literature on financial distress prediction models in the automobile sector is mostly based on developed markets, without much examination of the applicability of these models to emerging economies like India. This study seeks to fill that area of by undertaking a comparative study on four distress prediction models in the automobile industry in India.

Review of Literature

Smith and Johnson (2019) conducted an exhaustive comparative allocation of financial distress prediction models in the global auto business. They executed a comparative evaluation of multiple models' efficiency depending on the diversity of the infrastructures, stressing differences in their initial accuracy of the forecast and the possibility of improvement as a result of tuning the model. By examining research results from different regions, the paper gave an inter-regional comparative perspective that helped to define objectives,

principles, and methods of effective risk assessment in the automotive sector on an international basis.

Park and Kim (2020) identified the types of financial distress prediction models in the automobile industry within South Korea. From the studies, which provided insights into the working of different models in certain regional environments considering market dynamics and regulatory frameworks, one was able to envisage the whole picture that would make him a better manager. The study has answered the relevant question regarding the capacity of different techniques in predicting financial distress in the automotive companies of South Korea by offering remarkable insights that stakeholders would use to decrease the risk of financial malpractices and enhance the stability of the local industry.

The study of Jones and Brown (2019) is worth noting based on a cross-national comparative study of bankruptcy prediction models in the automotive industry, looking at the changes in model performance in different countries. Their work stressed considering the details of a given country and its peculiar legal frameworks in this context. A study can provide important perspectives by comparing the results of the different regions, and this contributes to enhancing the accuracy of information on financial distress within the global automotive industry.

Wang and Liu (2018) performed the modeling for automobile companies in China for financial distress prediction. Research on such models gave elaborated features that took into account the structure of the industry, the actions of the government, and the economic situation of China. Meanwhile, as the research explored the outcome when different methodologies were applied in determining the financial distress of Chinese automotive firms, the study demonstrated the importance of those methodologies in practice and policy-making as the local industry was very complicated.

In their book "Corporate Financial Distress and Bankruptcy: Causes, Models, and Strategies," Altman and Hotchkiss (2006) provided an in-depth



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examination of corporate financial distress and bankruptcy, which is made up of the factors that are responsible for financial problems, predicting crisis models, and handling financial difficulties. This authoritative text is of real importance both for professionals and experts, as well as for politicians, since it allows them to comprehend and resolve problems of corporate financial health and stability.

Cheluget, J., Gekara, M., Orwa, G., & Kero, V. (2014) devised the liquidity factor affecting insurance industry issues in Kenya and how wealth may enhance or destroy it. Investors can gain extensive knowledge regarding risk management techniques applied in insurance companies through insightful work on liquidity, which becomes the driving force influencing financial stability. The research is useful for insurers, regulators, and policymakers.

Diakomihalis (2012) uses Altman's bankruptcy models to determine how effective they are in the representation of the hotels. The reliability of these models in predicting the probability of bankruptcy of these hotels can also be verified, which will help directors in the hospitality markets make decisions about risk management and finance more informed than they were before.

Enyew et al. (2019) aimed to investigate the determinants of financial distress in the beverage and metal sectors in Ethiopia. The study therefore comes with specific factors that make the operation of sectors prone to financial instability. This is an eye-opener to the risks here and there for those in the business line in emerging countries like Ethiopia, and it is a way forward for risk mitigation by the stakeholders and policymakers.

Since service sector companies have a diversity of assets and various ways of earning income, Grover and Lavin (2001) built on Altman's Z-Score model and investigated the accuracy of financial ratios and discriminant analysis in predicting corporate bankruptcies. The research brings about the perspective of the service sector by applying the framework of Altman. It is a great opportunity to see how the model can be stretched to fit real life and

what ideas this might bring for financial experts and researchers.

Hendel (1996) investigated how competition operates in a financial crisis context, providing a framework for firms to manage competition during tough economic times. The study seeks to explain the mutual effect of financial difficulties and market competition. Through this, the study makes an important contribution to the general understanding of firm behavior and company strategy in the face of different environmental problems.

Kosikoh J. C. (2014) conducted a study that focused on the core elements that directly cause financial problems amongst insurance firms operating in the country. The study focuses on this sector in particular, therefore giving a first-hand look into the issues surrounding financial stability and risk management in the insurance sector, thus enabling insurers and regulators as well as policymakers to come up with solutions to address these concerns so that the insurance industry remains resilient and thereby able to withstand any risks.

The one that centers on the link between financial distress and employment, addressed by Ogawa (2003), was about the Japanese case during the 1990s. The study increases the understanding of employment responses under financial distress by comparing them with economic downturns to help control disruption of the labor market due to financial instability and provide information to researchers and policymakers on how to respond effectively in different contexts.

Pranowo et al. (2010) studied the key components of corporate financial distress in Indonesia between 2014 and 2008. Through examining stock market data in Indonesia, the researchers distinguish the factors that make financial stressors bigger in emerging economy situations and offer insights that can be helpful in risk management and in formulating interventions to achieve the desired financial stability.

Prasetianingsih and Kusumowati (2019) contrasted the forecasting precision of Altman's, Grover's, Zmiewski's, and Springate's strategies regarding the



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prediction of financial distress. This is done through their examination. They come up with the strengths and weaknesses of those models. This may also be a good enough example of what model of financial distress prediction methodology is best as well as why.

Springate, G. L. V. (1978), is more concerned with precise failure prediction based on Canadian firms' discriminant analysis. Consequently, the proposed model that applies the analysis of the data and predicts the failure probability contributes to the corporate bankruptcy prediction literature and brings to light tangible information for stakeholders to identify and alleviate financial risks.

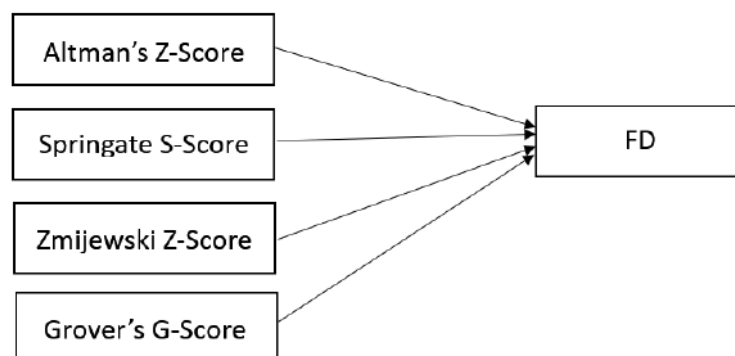
According to Wruck (1990), distress plus bankruptcy reorganization can either lead to or result from inefficiency in the firm. Through the economics-based empirical analysis, the author investigates the most efficient way of corporate restructuring through reorganization; this provides useful

information for those in mainstream corporate restructuring and turnaround practices, providing them with a solution that will see the best out of the situation with long-term benefits.

Zmijewski, in his book (1984), covered the very same areas, examining reasons for financial problems, prediction tools, and the effects of bankruptcy on stakeholders. Through studies of corporate bankruptcy, Zmijewski covered a wide area of the phenomenon, making progress in exploring the subject and proffering suggestions for financial distress resolution.

Conceptual Framework

The research study is built around the framework of four financial distress-predicting models, namely Altman's Z-Score, Springate S-Score, Zmijewski Z-Score, and Grover's S-Score, which serve as independent variables and financial distress, which serves as a dependent variable.



Objectives

- To examine the predictive quality of well-known financial distress models such as Altman's Z-Score, Springate S-Score, Zmijewski X-Score, and Grover's G-Score for the Indian automobile sector.
- To find the disparities in the prediction capability of the financial distress models while they are implemented for the Indian automobile industry.

Methods of data analysis

Logistic regression was utilized in the study, and the dependent variable is clearly demonstrated as a binary variable that shows the presence or absence of the event of interest. In this case, "financial distress," which is the dependent variable, is binary in numbers, in which 1 represents the presence of the event of interest or the probability of financial distress (e.g., when a firm is named to be having financial distress). 0, on the other hand, represents the absence of the event of interest or financial



distress (e.g., when a firm is not in financial distress). These terms are considered to analyze the probability of financial distress as a dependent variable of the logistic regression, which is based on independent variables.

The dependent variable, "financial distress," acts as an outcome of interest, that reflects whether a firm is experiencing financial distress or not, represented by binary values (1 for presence and 0 for absence). Whereas, the independent variables in this study are financial distress-predicting models (Altman, Springate, Zmijewski, and Grover), each employing a distinct set of financial ratios. These independent variables differ from each other in terms of the specific financial ratios they utilize, and the weighting assigned to them in the respective models. Every model features its own set of financial indicators, differentiating from each other to determine the individual characteristics of a firm's financial health.

logit $(FD_{it}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Altman Z Score}_{it}) + \beta_2(\text{Zmijewski Score}_{it}) + \beta_3(\text{Springate Score}_{it}) + \beta_4(\text{Grover Score}_{it}) + u_{it}$

Where:

logit (FD_{it}) represents the log odds of financial distress for company i at time t .

Log odds of financial distress is represented by logit (FD_{it}) for company i at time t .

Intercept term = β_0

Independent variables are related with their respective coefficients, $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ (Altman Z score, Springate score, Zmijewski score, and Grover score).

The independent variables for company i at time t are Altman Z Score $_{it}$, Springate Score $_{it}$, Zmijewski Score $_{it}$, and Grover Score $_{it}$.

u_{it} shows the error term by defining the divergence in financial distress for a company i at time t .

The subscript i represents the company, and the subscript t represents the interval of time in the year. The formula is used to understand the influence of

independent variables on the financial distress of a company over a time period.

EViews 10 software was used to implement the regression equation, in which panel data is selected precisely to estimate the panel data regression techniques.

Financial Distress Prediction Models

1. Altman Z-Score

To differentiate between bankrupt firms and non-bankrupt firms, Altman came up with five factors that can predict the financial future of a company. These ratios or factors are very accurate in making predictions.

X_1 = Working capital/Total assets

X_2 = Retained Earnings/Total assets

X_3 = Earnings before interest and taxes/Total assets

X_4 = Market value of equity/Book value of total liabilities

X_5 = Sales/Total assets

These five ratios were proposed in 1968 by Altman for the Z-score model for the firms that were traded publicly.

2. Springate model

Another model to predict financial distress is the Springate model, which is used to assess the probability of a company experiencing This model was given by Keith Springate in 1978; it works within the components of discriminant analysis and financial ratios. A mathematical expression is created using discriminant analysis, which is focused on financial ratios that can distinguish between distressed and non-distressed firms.

X_1 = Working Capital / Total Assets

X_2 = Net Profit Before Interest and Taxes / Total Asset



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X_3 = Net Profit Before Taxes / Current Liability

X_4 = Sales / Total Assets

3. Zmijewski model

Ron Zmijewski also developed a method to predict financial distress in 1983, later to be known as the Zmijewski Model. The model considers a direct statistical approach to logistic regression analysis to predict a firm facing financial distress or bankruptcy. The model uses only three ratios to provide insights into a company's financial health and the potential risks it faces, assisting stakeholders in making informed decisions to mitigate financial challenges.

X_1 = Earnings after tax / Total Assets

X_2 = Total Debt / Total Assets

X_3 = Current Asset / Current Liabilities

4. Grover model

Jeffrey S. Grover prepared a method to predict bankruptcy in firms, which is called the Grover Method. It was first used in 2001 when Grover aligned and reassessed the Altman Z-Score method. The ratios used are:

X_1 = Working Capital / Total Assets

X_2 = EBIT/Total Assets

X_3 = EAT/Total Assets

Table No. 1 shows the formula as well as the judgment criteria of the four distress-predicting models used.

Category	Variable Name	Formula	Judgement Criteria
Dependent Variable	Financial Distress (FD)		1= Financial Distress 0= Financially Sound
Independent Variables	Altman Z-Score	$Z = 1.2X_1 + 1.4X_2 + 3.3X_3 + 0.6X_4 + 1.0X_5$	Z-Score < 1.81: Bankruptcy is predicted in a few years $1.81 \leq Z\text{-Score} \leq 2.67$: Distress is predicted Z-Score > 2.67: No financial distress/ Bankruptcy is predicted
	Springate S-Score	$S = 1.03X_1 + 3.07X_2 + 0.66X_3 + 0.4X_4$	S-Score < 0.862: Bankruptcy is predicted
	Zmijewski Z-Score	$Z = -4.3 - 4.5X_1 + 5.7X_2 - 0.004X_3$	Z-Score ≥ 0 : Bankruptcy is predicted in a few years Z-Score < 0: No financial distress is predicted
	Grover G-Score	$G = 1.650 X_1 + 3.404 X_2 + 0.016 X_3$	$G \leq -0.02$: Potential Bankruptcy $G \geq 0.01$: Healthy Condition

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant difference in the accuracy levels among the Altman Z-Score, Springate, Zmijewski, and Grover's G-Score methods in predicting financial distress.

H_a: There is a significant difference in the accuracy levels among the Altman Z-Score, Springate,

Zmijewski, and Grover's G-Score methods in predicting financial distress.

Model Specification

A distinctive approach was used for the quantitative research in this paper. A subset of 10 automotive firms was selected from all the companies active in India. The time interval of 2013-14 to 2022-23 was taken for detailed evaluation over time. Website



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money control, NSE, and BSE played a crucial role in acquiring the financial statements of these automotive firms, and secondary data was collected. Result authentication and data configuration, along with the hypothesis, were determined by software like Eviews 10 and Microsoft Excel 365.

Financial distress acts as the dependent variable, while the independent variables include the Altman score, Springate score, Zmijewski score, and Grover score. To understand the influence of the four studied distress models on financial distress, logistic regression analysis was selected for the best accuracy.

Diagnostic Tests:

To check the validity of the regression outcomes, a set of pre- and post-estimation diagnostic tests were done.

Panel unit root:

The panel root test was conducted using a “Fisher-type unit root based on the augmented Dickey-Fuller” test with the null hypothesis stating that all panels had unit roots. The result indicates that the variables financial distress and Zmijewski Z-Score do not have a unit root (p-values < 0.05) at level. Whereas, Grover’s G-Score does not have a unit root at first difference with constant and trend, while the remaining variables, including Altman’s Z-score and

Springate’s S-score, do not have a unit root at first difference without constant and trend, i.e., significant at 5%.

Multicollinearity:

Coefficients testing multicollinearity indicated that correlation coefficients were below 0.80 for all variables, so that the independence of the explanatory variables was not violated. It was revealed that the obtained VIF values, which are below 5.00 for all independent variables, are in accordance with the previous research.

Autocorrelation:

In the Wooldridge test, “there is no first-order autocorrelation” is the null hypothesis. Autocorrelation by Wooldridge testing turned out to have p-values less than 0.05, indicating the existence of autocorrelation in the panel data.

Results

Among the independent variables, Zmijewski has a coefficient with a statistically significant z-statistic of 2.437 (p-value = 0.0148), indicating a significant relationship with the dependent variable FD at the 5% significance level. The other independent variables (Altman, Springate, and Grover) do not exhibit statistically significant coefficients at conventional levels of significance (p-values > 0.05).

Table No.2: Descriptive statistics

	FD	ALTMAN	SPRINGATE	ZMIJEWSKI	GROVER
Mean	0.140000	11.53198	1.293353	-4.294086	0.528409
Median	0.000000	8.951787	1.204242	-4.47999	0.499332
Maximum	1.000000	49.34287	2.808702	-1.582857	1.408385
Minimum	0.000000	1.127196	-0.320724	-5.893721	-0.65306
Std. Dev.	0.348735	9.171861	0.735097	0.896661	0.480582
Skewness	2.075006	1.449672	0.100486	0.926104	-0.24213
Kurtosis	5.305648	6.039882	2.7091	3.41679	2.584683

Source: Authors own calculations using EViews 10

Table No.3: Regression Equation Analysis



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Dependent Variable: FD				
Method: ML - Binary Probit				
Included observations: 100				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-Statistic	Prob.
ALTMAN	0.063482	0.038393	1.653494	0.0982
SPRINGATE	-0.062934	0.928427	-0.067786	0.946
ZMIJEWSKI	1.855759	0.761491	2.437008	0.0148
GROVER	-0.176942	1.338676	-0.132177	0.8948
McFadden R-squared	0.623036			
Mean dependent var	0.140000			
S.D. dependent var	0.348735			
S.E. of regression	0.163307			
LR statistic	50.46137			
Prob(LR statistic)	0.000000			

Source: Authors own calculations using EViews 10

Model Fit:

The McFadden R-squared value of 0.623 indicates that the model explains a substantial part of the variance in the dependent variable. The model appears to fit the data reasonably well, with a mean dependent variable of 0.14 and a standard deviation of 0.349. The AIC value is 0.405, which is close to the SC value of 0.536, which implies a relatively good fit with a moderate complexity model.

Model Performance:

The LR statistic assesses the overall significance of the model. The p-value associated with the LR statistic is extremely small ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the model as a whole is statistically significant. The results suggest that among the independent variables, only the Zmijewski model shows a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable, FD. The model as a whole demonstrates a good fit for the data and is statistically significant.

Managerial Implications

The study's findings hold significant importance for Indian auto industry management professionals. The study identified that the Zmijewski Z-score turned out to have the highest predictive power, with an accuracy rate of 62%. The managers can now focus on the use of this model in the financial analysis of

companies' health. Moreover, the study reveals the gaps among the distressed model categories; hence, strategic decisions need to be made concerning financial distress model selection and its peculiarities.

Limitations and Scope for Further Study

The study is limited to only four financial distress models, i.e., Altman, Springate, Zmijewski, and Grover, that are used to predict the distress within one of the various sectors, the automobile sector of India. Future studies can be conducted across diverse sectors using alternative combinations of financial distress-predicting models that may enhance the insights and reliability of the models.

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Impact of The Cash Conversion Cycle on Financial Performance: A Study of the Tyre Manufacturing Sector

Bhumika Bunker¹, Mayank Chandwani², Deepanshi Vishwakarma³, Sahil Rajput⁴

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of certain factors, including CCC, ATO, AT, NPM, LEV, FS, and TQ, on the financial performance (ROA) of the firms belonging to the sector: Indian Tyres and Allied. **Methodology:** The least squares regression method is used to study the impact of seven independent variables on ROA. A set of five tire firms was selected, and a 10-year time interval was taken from 2013-14 to 2022-23 for data evaluation. **Findings:** The results indicate that cash conversion cycle (CCC), asset turnover (ATO), and net profit margin (NPM) are statistically significant predictors of return on assets (ROA), having 84.15% of the impact on the financial performance (ROA) of the selected firms. **Practical Implications:** The study highlights the notable influence of CCC, ATO, and NPM on ROA, thus enabling us to focus on the pivotal variables that impact financial performance. **Originality/Value:** This research will be extremely useful to target and focus on the factors that influence the financial performance of the firm in the particular industry context.

Keywords: #Financial Performance, #Return on Assets, #Cash Conversion Cycle, #Asset Turnover Ratio, #Asset Tangibility, #Net Profit Ratio, #Financial Leverage, #Firm size, #Tobin's Q, #Indian Tyre, #allied sector.

Introduction

In the context of industrial economics, the efficient management of financial resources is the keystone that holds organizational success and longevity. At the center of this lies the prudent management of the cash conversion cycle (CCC), which is about the time it takes a company to convert its raw materials into cash flow from sales. The CCC is one of the major components of working capital management (WCM), which includes inventory management, accounts receivable collection, and accounts payable settlement. Getting familiar with the CCC's intricacies is crucial because it's not only about the company's operational efficiency but also has profound implications for the company's financial performance and sustainability in the future.

In India, the tire manufacturing sector proves to be a significant contributor to industrial growth, combining innovations with global competitiveness. India's tire industry comprises a range of manufacturers, both domestic players and multinational companies, engaged in the production of various tire categories, including passenger cars, commercial vehicles, and specialty tires. However, overcoming the multifaceted nature of challenges, like fluctuating raw material prices, ever-changing consumer preferences, and regulatory compliance, is

one of the key aspects of the tire and allied manufacturing sector in India today. In this regard, delving into the interaction of the CCC and financial performance becomes pivotal to understanding the operational dynamics and strategic development of companies in this industry.

This research intends to analyze the influence of the CCC on the financial performance of tire manufacturing companies operating in India. Additionally, the study aims to examine the primary factors in the tire industry that influence ROA dynamics, including the cash conversion cycle, asset turnover ratio, asset tangibility, net profit margin, financial leverage, size of the firm, and Tobin's Q.

Research Gap

The existing research in the Indian tire manufacturing sector lacks the analysis of combined influence of the Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC), Asset Turnover Ratio, Asset Tangibility, Net Profit Ratio, Financial Leverage, Firm size and Tobin's Q on financial performance (ROA). Identifying these interrelationships can provide valuable insights for strategic decision-making and key performance involved within the industry.

Review of Literature



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Anser and Malik (2013) examined the effects of working capital management on the profitability of textile firms in Pakistan. The paper dwells on the issues related to the efficiency of working capital management in textile companies; furthermore, it gives important information for industry practitioners.

Deloof (2003) analyzed the association between working capital management and profitability in the case of Belgian companies. This study contributes to a better understanding of how working capital management can influence the profitability of Belgian business companies.

Gill et al. (2010) studied the association between working capital and profitability in the United States. The research findings show how differences in working capital management practices may affect the financial performance of US companies and provide actual recommendations for financial management strategies.

Nobanee and Abdullatif (2011) investigated the link between working capital management and the firm's profitability through different economic cycles in Kuwait. Their study gives an insight into the methods of working capital and their effect on firm profitability in different situations.

Panigrahi (2013) focused on the correlations between working capital management and profitability in the Indian cement industry. The research contributes to the literature by concentrating on one particular area, thereby providing a window into the specific working capital dynamics and profitability influences that are peculiar to the Indian context.

Lancaster and Stevens (1999) analyzed the forecasting capability of inventory and cash conversion cycles in terms of profitability. They shed light on factors that influence the financial ability of firms, specifically the role of supply chain management and working capital effectiveness.

In the European insurance industry, Ebben and Johnson (2011) examined efficiency in entrepreneurship. Through the analysis of efficiency and financial picture factors, their work will be an addition to exploring the underlying factors of profitability in the insurance industry.

Peel et al. (2000) discussed the probable causes of corporate failure in the UK corporate industry. This study allows us to identify the determining points that create enterprise sustainability, which is determined by financial robustness, leading to suggestions for risk management and strategic planning.

Moss and Steins (1993) looked into the reason behind the influence of a firm's size on accounts receivable management. This research adds to the deepening of knowledge on organizational attributes like size that can shape working capital management strategies and overall financial performance.

Shilling (1996) gave an empirical opinion about the importance of liquidity for the profit of German companies. By exploring the linkages between means of liquidity management and financial performance, the given study presents notions of the forces that are responsible for the quality of the earnings of the German corporate environment.

Li and Wang (2021) performed a meta-analysis to explore the impact of the Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) on Financial Performance. The study presented a detailed review of relevant research findings, unveiling the ties between CCC and financial performance across industries.

Chen and Wu (2020) studied the correlation between Asset Turnover Ratio (ATO) and Return on Assets (ROA) in Global Manufacturing Sectors. The study offered insights into how ATO influences financial performance in diverse manufacturing industries globally providing insights concerning operational efficiency and profitability.

Rodriguez and Perez (2019) carried out a Cross-Country Analysis on Asset Tangibility and Firm Profitability. Their work, which is available in the Journal of Business Economics, examined how tangible assets in a company affect its profitability from one country to another. The results reveal a critical impact of tangible assets in enhancing financial performance globally.

Conceptual Framework

The study is built on a framework with dependent variables including CCC, ATO, AT, NPM, LEV,



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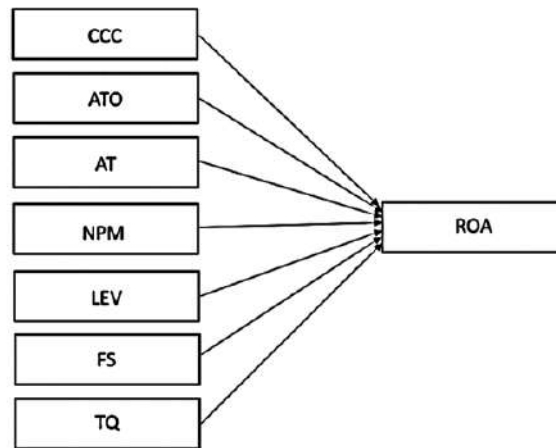
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FS, and TQ that are dependent on ROA, the dependent variable.



Objectives

- (1) To examine the influence of CCC on the financial performance of Tyre manufacturing firms in India.
- (2) To examine the influence of ATO, AT, NPM, LEV, FS, and TQ on the financial performance of Tyre manufacturing firms in India.

Data and Methods

To find out how the CCC, ATO, AT, NPM, LEV, FS, and TQ affect a company's profitability in India's Tyre and allied sector, secondary cross-sectional data is gathered from the publicly available audited annual reports on the website Money Control. Purposive sampling was used to collect the panel data from the Indian manufacturing firms listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). The sample for this research covers ten years of data from 2012-13 to 2022-23 from selected firms. This study therefore encompasses a total of 50 panel (balanced) observations of five distinct firms in the Tyres and Allied sectors: Apollo Tyres, MRF, JK Tyres, TVS Shrichakra, and CEAT Tyres.

Hypotheses:

Regression models have been used to evaluate the null hypotheses given below.

H1. The CCC has no significant effect on the firm's financial performance.

H2. The ATO has no significant effect on the firm's financial performance.

H3. The AT has no significant effect on the firm's financial performance.

H4. The NPM has no significant effect on the firm's financial performance.

H5. The LEV has no significant effect on the firm's financial performance.

H6. The FS has no significant effect on the firm's financial performance.

H7. The TQ has no significant effect on the firm's financial performance.

Model specification:

To explore the impact of the CCC, ATO, AT, NPM, LEV, FS, and TQ on financial performance, we have applied the least squares (LS and AR) regression model to the dynamic panel data. Return on assets (ROA) is employed as a financial performance indicator and dependent variable in the regression models. The firm's ATO and LEV have been used as the independent variables, while the CCC, AT,



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NPM, FS, and TQ have been used as the control variables, as these variables significantly affect the financial performance of the firm.

The variables are calculated as follows:

Category	Variable Name	Symbol	Formula
Dependent Variable	Return on Asset	ROA	Earnings before Interest and Taxes / Total Assets
Independent Variable	Cash Conversion Cycle	CCC	(Inventory / Cost of Goods Sold) * 365 + (Receivables / Sales) * 365 - (Account Payables / Cost of Goods Sold) * 365
	Asset Turnover Ratio	ATO	Net Sales / Average Total Assets
	Asset Tangibility	AT	Fixed Assets / Total Assets
	Net Profit Margin	NPM	(Net Profit / Total Revenue) * 100
	Leverage	LEV	Earnings before Interest and Taxes / Earnings before Taxes
	Firm Size	FS	Total Assets
	Tobins'Q	TQ	(Market Cap + Total Liabilities) / Total Assets

Regression Equation:

$$ROA_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CCC_{it} + \beta_2 ATO_{it} + \beta_3 AT_{it} + \beta_4 NPM_{it} + \beta_5 LEV_{it} + \beta_6 FS_{it} + \beta_7 TQ_{it} - \varepsilon_{it}$$

Where β_0 is the constant term/intercept,

β is the coefficient,

i is the number of firms,

t is the time period,

ε is the error term.

Diagnostic tests:

Basic pre- and post-estimation diagnostic tests are carried out to ensure the regression findings are accurate and impartial.

Panel unit root: The panel unit root was confirmed using the “Fisher-type unit root based on the augmented Dickey-Fuller” test, which was conducted with the null hypothesis that all panels

had unit roots. We discovered p-values of 0.000, which indicates that the variables are significant at the 5% level and that the variables ROA and AT do not have a unit root at that level. The other variables, including CCC, ATO, NPM, LEV, FS, and TQ, do not have a unit root at first difference.

Multicollinearity: All variables have correlation coefficients less than 0.80, meaning there is no multicollinearity among the independent variables (Cooper and Pamela, 2014; Gandhi, 2003; Wooldridge, 2015). The “value of variance inflation factor (VIF),” which is less than 5.00 for all independent variables, further demonstrates the lack of multicollinearity (Lind et al., 2012; Gujarati, 2003; Mwangi, 2016).

Autocorrelation: The presence of autocorrelation in panel data was examined using the Wooldridge test. In the Wooldridge test, “there is no first-order autocorrelation” is the null hypothesis. The autocorrelation is a concern since the Wooldridge



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test gives p-values of less than 0.05 (0.0000 and 0.0001, respectively) for the regression model.

Results

Table No. 1 provides descriptive data for each of the study's variable

Table No.1: Descriptive Statistics

	ROA	CCC	ATO	AT	NPM	LEV	FS	TQ
Mean	6.0866	57.0712	88.5822	0.4966	5.3536	1.4759	8994.253	0.9336
Median	5.235	54.74	90.715	0.47373	4.76	1.2497	7330.795	0.9881
Maximum	20.58	144.13	236.87	0.72362	13.76	4.8897	24023.75	1.3023
Minimum	0.6	-10.5	0.62	0.29785	0.58	0.8945	800.42	0.5184
Std. Dev.	4.1739	31.52	62.3984	0.0927	2.9753	0.8265	6551.016	0.186
Skewness	1.4894	0.1734	0.0008	0.598	0.8108	3.0635	0.7422	-0.5999
Kurtosis	5.5957	3.0581	2.4386	3.086	3.3841	12.3715	2.4901	2.5747

Source: Authors own calculations using EViews 10

The minimum, the maximum, and the standard deviation of the variables are shown in terms of within, between, and overall value in the table, respectively, while the mean is used to calculate the overall value of the variables. The average CCC of our sample firms is 57.07 days with a standard deviation of 31.52 days, while the average value of ROA is approximately 6.09% with a standard deviation of 4.17%, indicating moderate variability,

and the mean of AT is 0.50 with a standard deviation of 0.09. Our sample firm's average ATO is 88.58 times, with a standard deviation of 62.40, and their average LEV is 1.48 times, with a standard deviation of 0.83. The average NPM of our sample firms is 5.35% with a standard deviation of 2.98%, while the average value of FS is approximately 8994.25 with a large standard deviation of 6551.02, and the mean of TQ is 0.93 with a standard deviation of 0.19.

Table No.2: Regression Equation Analysis

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
CCC	-0.030031	0.013399	-2.241233	0.0304
ATO	0.019143	0.006725	2.846601	0.0068
AT	-7.86293	4.406866	-1.784245	0.0816
NPM	0.966728	0.123489	7.82847	0.0000
LEV	-0.082107	0.408043	-0.20122	0.8415
FS	-0.000111	6.82E-05	-1.630761	0.1104
TQ	-0.33308	2.324465	-0.143293	0.8867
R-squared	0.841488			
F-statistic	31.85206			
Durbin-Watson stat	1.762179			
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000000			

Source: Authors own calculations using EViews 10



Interpretation of Coefficients:

Based on the regression results of Table No.2 generated by Eviews:

CCC (Cash Conversion Cycle): The coefficient is -0.030031 with a t-statistic of -2.241233 and a p-value of 0.0304, suggesting that CCC is statistically significant in explaining the variation in ROA.

ATO (Asset Turnover Ratio): The coefficient is 0.019143 with a t-statistic of 2.846601 and a p-value of 0.0068, indicating that ATO is statistically significant in explaining the variation in ROA.

AT (Asset Tangibility): The coefficient is -7.862930 with a t-statistic of -1.784245 and a p-value of 0.0816, suggesting that AT is not statistically significant in explaining the variation in ROA.

NPM (Net Profit Margin): The coefficient is 0.966728 with a t-statistic of 7.828470 and a p-value of 0.0000, suggesting that NPM is statistically significant in explaining the variation in ROA.

LEV (Leverage): The coefficient is -0.082107 with a t-statistic of -0.201220 and a p-value of 0.8415, indicating that LEV is not statistically significant in explaining the variation in ROA.

FS (Firm size): The coefficient is -0.000111 with a t-statistic of -1.630761 and a p-value of 0.1104, indicating that FS is not statistically significant in explaining the variation in ROA.

TQ (Tobins'Q): The coefficient is -0.333080 with a t-statistic of -0.143293 and a p-value of 0.8867, indicating that TQ is not statistically significant in explaining the variation in ROA.

Model Fit:

R-squared: The R-squared value is 0.841488, indicating that approximately 84.15% of the variation in ROA is explained by the independent variables in the model.

F-statistic: The F-statistic is 31.85206 with a p-value of 0.0000, suggesting that the overall model is statistically significant.

Durbin-Watson Statistic: The Durbin-Watson statistic is 1.762179, which indicates positive autocorrelation.

Conclusion:

The regression model indicates that Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC), Asset Turnover (ATO), and Net Profit Margin (NPM) are statistically significant predictors of Return on Assets (ROA), while Asset Tangibility (AT), Leverage (LEV), Firm Size (FS), and Tobin's Q (TQ) are not statistically significant predictors.

Managerial Implications

The research uncovers significant implications for the Indian Tyre and Allied sector, emphasizing Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC), Asset Turnover (ATO), and Net Profit Margin (NPM) as the prime drivers for companies' financial performance, explaining 84.15% of the impact on the financial performance (ROA) of the firms. In addition, the impact of variables with less influence on ROA is identified, thus allowing managers to prioritize corrective actions effectively.

Limitations and Scope for Further Study

The study is limited to only six independent variables that are used to examine their impact on financial performance (ROA) within one sector, i.e., the Tyre manufacturing sector of India. Further studies can be conducted by taking different variables into account across distinct sectors to enhance the quality and reliability of the results.

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Exploring the Influence of Green Marketing on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to analyze the relationship of green marketing, customer trust, green image, customer satisfaction on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – The research aims to use primary and secondary data gathering methods to perform an analysis to explore the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for Phuket Island's eco-friendly resorts. The information was gathered from 390 respondents who had visited Phuket Island's eco-friendly resorts. In order to develop the conceptual framework, this study referred to four existing theoretical frameworks. **Findings** – This study is intended to explore the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty. Followed by the findings of this research represented green marketing has a significant influence on customer satisfaction whereas customer trust has no significant influence on customer satisfaction. Green marketing, customer satisfaction and customer trust have a significant influence on green customer loyalty. However, green image has no significant influence on green customer loyalty. **Research Limitations/Implications** – The limitations of the research showed several elements to explore the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. The study's focus on Phuket visitors may not apply to other eco-tourism locations, and eco-friendly resorts were preferred over other accommodations. Quantitative methods may overlook factors influencing tourist decisions, while qualitative methods like focus groups or interviews provide more in-depth insights. The sample size of 390 respondents may not accurately represent green tourists. **Originality/value** – This study on the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Keywords – Green Marketing, Customer Trust, Green Image, Customer Satisfaction, Green Customer Loyalty.

JEL classification code – Z30, Z31, Z32, Z33

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

The growing tourism sector in Phuket, known for its beautiful scenery and clean beaches, has resulted in a significant trend of the rise of eco-friendly resorts (Green Pearls, 2024). This trend is in responses to the growing worldwide demand for environmentally friendly tourist practices. These eco-friendly resorts, located in one of the world's most popular tourist locations, are identified by their

commitment to reducing the impact on the environment (Aleenta Resorts, 2023). They use methods like energy saving, trash reduction, and environmentally friendly resources in their construction to keep up with the concepts of environmentally friendly tourism (Riverhouse Phuket, 2022).

Along with the rise of eco-friendly resorts, there has been a rise in focus on green marketing in the hospitality industry (Mercade Mele et al., 2019).

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Businesses in Phuket understand the necessity of connecting with environmental principles in order to attract a targeting consumer base (Aly, 2023). Green marketing in the present moment includes promoting sustainable practices, certifications, and eco-friendly services to differentiate these businesses from the traditional competitors (Martínez, 2015). As the hotel industry gradually adopts these methods, it is important to analyze the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty in the specific terms of eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Nowadays, the tourist is more environmentally concerned and purposefully chooses accommodation that serve their commitment to sustainable living (UNWTO, 2023). Phuket, as a popular worldwide tourist destination, attracts a wide range of environmentally concerned travelers that prefer eco-friendly resorts in their trip plans (Green Pearls, 2024). This shift in consumer behavior creates both a problem and an opportunity for Phuket Island's eco-friendly resorts to establish themselves as preferred destinations for choosing and environmentally committed tourists. On the one hand, they must successfully meet the constantly shifting wants of environmentally concerned travelers. On the other hand, this growth provides them with a rare opportunity to establish themselves as preferred locations for this growing important market segment (Pan et al., 2022). Customer loyalty is important for the profitability and long-term success of any business, including eco-friendly resorts. Understanding and maintaining green customer loyalty, defined as repeat visits and positive recommendations based on a commitment to sustainable practices, is especially important for these businesses (Mercade Mele et al., 2019). Despite the widely recognized importance of green marketing and sustainability in the hospitality industry, there is still a significant research gap in understanding the specific impact of green marketing on green customer loyalty in the framework of eco-friendly Phuket Island resorts.

This study intends to solve this gap by studying the links between green marketing, customer trust, customer satisfaction, green image, and the overall green customer loyalty, thereby providing important findings to the eco-tourism industry in Phuket Island.

1.2 Problem statements

According to the Bangkok Post (2023), Thailand's tourism industry is facing many challenges, and eco-tourism has emerged as a rapidly growing segment in Phuket. Understanding the impact of green marketing on green customer loyalty is crucial for the success of eco-friendly resorts in this competitive market. While the effectiveness of green marketing in building green customer loyalty is generally accepted, research specific to eco-friendly resorts in Phuket is limited. This knowledge gap highlights the need to investigate the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty.

The problem statement for this research is: To what extent does green marketing influence green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. This study will explore the effectiveness and authenticity of green marketing for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island, identifying the extent of their influence on green customer loyalty. It aims to explore the relationship between green marketing and green customer loyalty, while identifying factors that may impact customer loyalty and the success of eco-friendly resorts in this market. This research is essential for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket, as it will provide valuable insights into the impact of green marketing on customer loyalty, attract and retain environmentally conscious tourists through effective green marketing and contribute to the success and sustainability of eco-friendly tourism in the region. Furthermore, understanding the authenticity of green marketing in eco-friendly resorts can provide a competitive advantage and promote responsible tourism practices that preserve Phuket's natural environment and cultural heritage.

By conducting research on the influence of green marketing on customer loyalty for eco-friendly



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resorts in Phuket Island, this study can fill the gap, provide practical insights for eco-friendly resort owners and marketers, promote responsible tourism practices, and contribute to academic knowledge in the field of green marketing.

1.3 Objectives of study

1. To analyze the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

2. To examine the influence of green marketing on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

3. To determine the influence of customer trust on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

4. To assess the influence of green image on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

5. To determine the influence of customer satisfaction on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

6. To examine the influence of customer trust on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. Does green marketing have a significant influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island?

2. Does green marketing have a significant influence on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island?

3. Does customer trust have a significant influence on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island?

4. Does green image have a significant influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island?

5. Does customer satisfaction have a significant influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island?

6. Does customer trust have a significant influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island?

1.5 Significance of the study

The research titled "Exploring the Influence of Green Marketing on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly Resorts in Phuket Island" is significant in multiple aspects within the context of sustainable tourism. It addresses sustainability issues by looking at how eco-friendly resorts might use green marketing to attract environmentally concerned customers, encouraging responsible tourism in Phuket. By investigating how eco-friendly resorts might use green marketing to attract and keep environmentally concerned customers, as well as encourage responsible tourist behaviors, the aim is to reduce the environmental effect of tourism activities. The study enters into the basics of consumer loyalty, with a focus on how green marketing promotes revenue, market share, and a positive brand image for eco-friendly resorts. It helps companies grow by learning cost-saving choices and highlighting the competitive advantage gained from environmentally friendly activities. Furthermore, the study examines an opportunity for eco-friendly resorts to expand into new markets, in line with the worldwide trend of environmental concern.

The study also helps to raise knowledge about environmental concerns in tourism, which encourages responsible tourist behavior. By focusing the influence of green marketing on customer loyalty, the study teaches both businesses and consumers about their roles in sustainable tourism. Lastly, from the academic point of view, it adds to the existing literature by growing our understanding of the relationship between green marketing and customer loyalty in the unique context of Phuket's eco-friendly resorts, thereby ending the knowledge gap and providing knowledge for future research. Overall, the research has an important impact on



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sustainable tourism behaviors, business strategies, market research, awareness of the environment, and academic contributions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Theories related to each variable

2.1.1 Green Marketing

The dimensions of green marketing that contribute to the green customers loyalty in the hotel industry, with a specific focus on eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. Green marketing is the process of combining environmental concerns into marketing procedures, which is growing more common as society environmental consciousness grows (Wong et al., 2023; Munamba & Nuangjamnong, 2021). It is defined as a business activity to promote products or services with the least negative environmental effect (Moravcikova et al., 2017) and is important in the hotel sector due to growing awareness for environmental concerns (Jones et al., 2014). "Green" practices have been recognized as a value-added strategy for hospitality organizations that participate in environmentally friendly projects (Kim et al., 2017). Although previous perceptions suggested an agreement between environmentally friendly measures and service experience, today's travelers recognize the environmental impact of consumption-related behaviors and are willing to support eco-friendly hotels, even if it means giving up some luxury (Han et al., 2019; Moise et al., 2018; Olya et al., 2019). The rise of green marketing in the 1980s focused mainly on obeying regulations and cost savings, but in recent years, it has become an important element in influencing consumer behavior, with an increasing demand for "green hotels" (Cronin et al., 2011).

2.1.2 Customer Trust

Customer Trust is a key driver of customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. The term "trust" in terms of consumer behavior defines customers' willingness to consider an organization's products or

services and specifically, "Green Trust" refers to customers' willingness to support environmentally sustainable products or services that do not hurt others (Sun, et al., 2022). According to Choi et al. (2015), customers who trust a hotel's eco-friendly activities are more likely to stay there for a long time. Trust is often defined as a willingness to rely on an exchange partner based on trust, and it is recognized as important for the development and maintenance of buyer-seller relationships (Stathopoulou & Balabanis, 2016). As mentioned by Sukhu and Scharff (2018), trust is essential in the service sector, particularly in the hotel business, because customers make their decisions before receiving the service and especially trust in green hospitality businesses becomes more important when customers become more aware that green marketing are sometimes based on investments or brand recognition rather than actual environmental care. Gaining customer trust is considered important for business success since customers may turn into promoters or opponents (Jalilvand et al., 2017).

2.1.3 Green Image

Particularly in the eco-friendly resorts, green image has a substantial impact on green customers loyalty. Both academics and professionals have indicated a strong interest in a company's image, recognizing its influence on consumer behavior decisions as mentioned by Chen and Tsai (2007), Han et al. (2009). Lin et al. (2007) highlight the importance of a positive image in consumer decisions, such as choosing tourism locations. Tran et al. (2015) highlight the importance of a strong brand image in maintaining a competitive advantage, with the effect reaching to consumer behavioral decisions and product or service selection. The growth of a green image, associated with a company's environmental commitments and concerns, is especially important in today's world, as customers become more concerned about the environment (Wong, 2023; Chen, 2010). Green image, as represented by the company's operations and policies for environmental protection, is

recognized as an important element influencing customer purchases (Guan et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2017; Phau & Cheong, 2009).

2.1.4 Customer Satisfaction

The multidimensional and dynamic nature of customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry, with a specific emphasis on eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. Customer satisfaction is an important part in the tourist and hospitality sectors, since satisfied consumers play an essential role in positively marketing an organization (Sun et al., 2022). Martínez (2015) defines "green satisfaction" as an emotional variable that addresses customers' environmental wants, sustainable expectations, and green demands. Green satisfaction, which is considered an extension of standard service satisfaction, focuses on customers' evaluations of the environmentally friendly elements of a product or service (Kao et al., 2008). In the context of "green" hotels, it is defined as the pleasure received from consumption-related satisfaction in achieving clients' environmental desires (Martinez, 2015). In a travel situation, satisfaction is measured using pre-trip expectations and pleasant experiences during or after the travel consuming cycle (Del Bosque & San Martín, 2008).

2.1.5 Green Customer Loyalty

With the long-term connection and repeat visits, green customer loyalty has taken on a significant role in the hotel sector. Behavioral intentions are commonly used as a loyalty measure in marketing, especially in hospitality and tourism papers (El-Adly, 2019; Hallak et al., 2018; Teng et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2018). While various studies have investigated loyalty background in the hospitality environment, further research is needed to examine the determinants of hotel customer loyalty through the view of green marketing (Martinez, 2015). Recognizing customer loyalty as an important target, especially important in the service industry due to possible risks, experts for example Pena et al. (2013) indicate that loyal customers visit more frequently

and spend more money than their non-loyal competitors. Yoo and Bai (2013) found that loyal customers are less willing to explore in competition hotel brands mostly for financial reasons. Despite strong competition in the hotel business, there is a growing focus on developing customer loyalty, which is usually applied through behavioral intentions such as repurchase intentions, recommendations, and positive word-of-mouth (Liat et al., 2014; Lai et al., 2018).

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 Green Marketing and Green Customer Loyalty

The literature study shows the importance of green marketing for developing green customer loyalty in the hotel business. Trang et al. (2019), Yusof et al. (2017), Wu et al. (2018) highlights the importance of green measures in increasing customer loyalty, especially through repeat bookings and positive word-of-mouth intentions behaviors. Also, study focusing on luxurious hotels, such as Moise et al. (2018), indicate that the influence of green practices on behavioral intentions is challenging and depends on the type of program adopted. Some green behaviors, such as utilizing recyclable items and renewable energy sources, or buying local and organic products, are viewed as additional benefits that positively influence behavioral intentions (Berezan et al., 2013; Han et al., 2019; Munamba & Nuangjamnong, 2021). For example, Han et al. (2019) show that energy- and water-saving measures, as well as recycling programs in Vietnamese hotels, are having a positive impact on visitors' future visit intentions. Previous study has highlighted the long-term influence on customer loyalty when a hotel's brand reputation and competitive advantage are strengthened by green practices (Han et al., 2011). Recognizing the long-term benefits, hotels improve their brand reputation and competitive advantage by implementing sustainable "green" practices, though specific initiatives may have variable effects on revisit

intentions (Han et al., 2011; Berezan et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2017). Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *Green Marketing has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.*

2.2.2 Green Marketing and Customer Satisfaction

The literature study presents a variety of opinions on the relationship between green marketing and customer satisfaction. According to Luo and Bhattacharya (2006), green marketing can increase customer satisfaction, raise business value, and reduce risk. Chahal et al. (2014) discovered that all aspects of green marketing have a significant influence on consumer satisfaction. Moise et al. (2018), Yusof et al. (2017) found that renewable energy projects, water management, the use of local and organic goods, and environmentally friendly transportation all have an impact on customer satisfaction in hotels. However, Assaker (2020) believes that in the environment of premium hotels, numerous environmental measures might be seen by customers as basic or usual standards, thereby reducing their direct contribution to customer satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *Green Marketing has no significant influence on Customer Satisfaction for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.*

2.2.3 Customer Trust and Customer Satisfaction

The existing research in the tourism and hotel industries confirms a direct and positive relationship between trust and customer satisfaction (Kim et al. 2009). Previous research by Chiou and Pan (2009), Martinez and Del Bosque (2013) found that consumer trust affects satisfaction. These research provide many ways to increase consumer trust, with each strategy having a favorable impact on customer satisfaction (Martinez, 2015). The concept is that by improving customer satisfaction ratings, businesses may influence consumers' behavioral intentions toward them (Chiou & Pan, 2009). Martinez's (2015)

studies underline the fact that green trust has a positive impact on green satisfaction. Furthermore, research indicates that service quality can increase green trust among consumers, eventually contributing to customer satisfaction (Sun et al., 2022; Creignou & Nuangjamnong, 2022). Amoako et al. (2019) found a positive and significant connection between trust and customer satisfaction. Overall, these studies highlight the important connection between customer trust and satisfaction, highlighting the need for trust-building describes to achieve positive customer outcomes. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *Customer Trust has no significant influence on Customer Satisfaction for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.*

2.2.4 Green Image and Green Customer Loyalty

Researchers as well as professionals have indicated a strong interest in a company's overall image, highlighting its effect on consumer behavior (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Han et al., 2009; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Lin et al., 2007; Ryu et al., 2012). Martinez (2015) introduced a new variable, "green overall image," which is defined as impressions of environmental commitments and concerns. Previous study has shown the importance of overall image on consumer behavior, especially in the hospitality industry, where Han et al. (2009) found a link between overall image and green behavioral intentions. According to Martínez (2015), the green image influences consumer loyalty through cognitive beliefs, feelings, and subconscious outcomes. This is supported by the hierarchy of effects hypothesis. The company's green image components have a significant impact on favorable word-of-mouth and repurchase intentions (Huang et al., 2014). Wu et al. (2021) found that a restaurant's green image increases customer loyalty in the food and beverage business. Hasan et al. (2020) also discover that destination image has a positive effect on customer loyalty to beach resorts in

Bangladesh. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *Green Image has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.*

2.2.5 Customer Satisfaction and Green Customer Loyalty

Satisfied consumers are more likely to repurchase and promote items and services, leading to increased loyalty (Martinez & Del Bosque, 2013). This connection extends to the green environment, as demonstrated by Martinez's (2015) research, which found that green satisfaction positively promotes green loyalty in Spanish hotels. In the tourist and hospitality sectors satisfied consumers improve an organization's reputation, focusing on the importance of customer satisfaction (Gelderman et al., 2021; Papista & Dimitriadis, 2019; Sun et al., 2022; Hlaing & Nuangjamnong, 2023). Specifically, green customer satisfaction has a strong impact on green customer loyalty among Dutch cleaning professionals (Gelderman et al., 2021). Several studies from the hotel industry show that customer satisfaction has a positive impact on revisit intentions, with satisfied tourists being more likely to return (Wang et al., 2018; Akbari et al., 2021; Han et al., 2020). Moise et al. (2021) showed the positive relationship between customer satisfaction and return intentions. Furthermore, while purchasing green products, positive experiences contribute to customer loyalty (Mohd Suki, 2017; Chang and Fong, 2010). Issock et al. (2020) contribute to this knowledge by finding that consumption factors have a partial effect on green customer satisfaction, which in turn affects green customer loyalty. However, dissatisfied consumers are more likely to move from products or services that do not match their expectations (Moon et al., 2017), focusing on the importance of customer satisfaction in establishing and maintaining green customer loyalty. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): *Customer Satisfaction has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.*

2.2.6 Customer Trust and Green Customer Loyalty

Studies suggest that trust is essential for building and maintaining long-term relationships with consumers, especially in the hospitality business where it improves hotel loyalty (Martinez & Del Bosque, 2013; So et al., 2013; Wilkins et al., 2009). In the context of the environment, green trust refers to customers' willingness to support eco-friendly products or services that do not damage other people, and studies, such as Martinez's (2015) investigation of Spanish hotels, confirm its positive impact on green loyalty. Choi et al. (2015), Marakanon and Panjakajornsak (2017) both highlight the importance of customer trust when choosing loyalty, with Sun et al.'s (2022) study focusing on the improvement of green customer loyalty through green trust. Consumers may be concerned about the environmental genuineness of green hotels, analyzing the growing incidence of environmental deception and failure to do so with regulations by some environmental companies (Gao & Mattila, 2016; Zaman et al., 2010; Chen & Chang, 2013). The consumers' trust in hotels' genuine efforts to be green becomes important, impacting loyalty and highlighting the need of clear business environmental practices in growing and maintaining loyal consumers (Sukhu & Scharff, 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed.

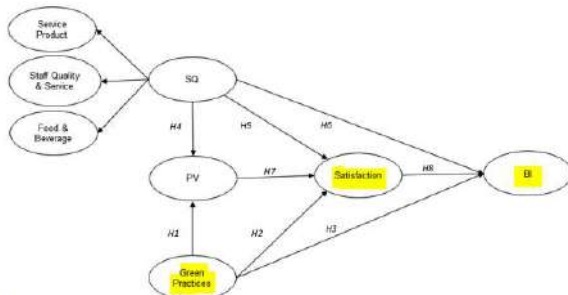
Hypothesis 6 (H6): *Customer Trust has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.*

2.3 Theoretical frameworks

2.3.1 Firstly, this theoretical framework is from the effects of hotel green business practices on consumers' loyalty intentions: an expanded multidimensional service model in the upscale segment, contains the connection provided from Figure 1 among green practices and customer

satisfaction and finally impact of both on behavioral intentions or customers' loyalty (Assaker, 2020).

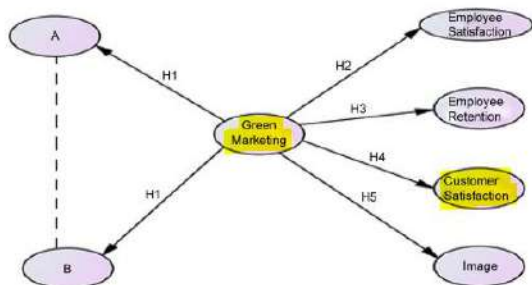
Figure 1. The effects of hotel green business practices on consumers' loyalty intentions: an expanded multidimensional service model in the upscale segment.



Source: Assaker, G. (2020). The effects of hotel green business practices on consumers' loyalty intentions: an expanded multidimensional service model in the upscale segment. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(12), 3787-3807. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-05-2020-0461>

2.3.2 This second theoretical framework demonstrates how green marketing has an independent variable effect on employee satisfaction, employee retention, consumer satisfaction, and image. Based on the research on Conceptualisation, development and validation of green marketing orientation (GMO) of SMEs in India: A case of electric sector (Figure 2). This includes the relationship between green marketing and customer satisfaction (Chahal et al., 2014).

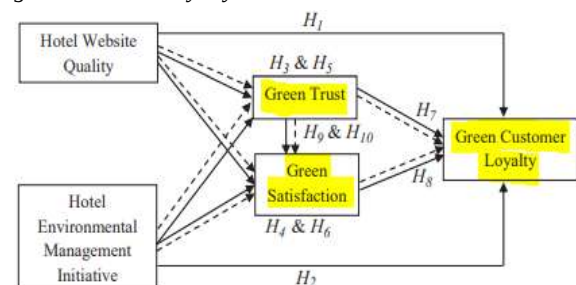
Figure 2. Conceptualisation, development and validation of green marketing orientation (GMO) of SMEs in India: A case of electric sector.



Source: Chahal, H., Dangwal, R. & Raina, S. (2014). Conceptualisation, development and validation of green marketing orientation (GMO) of SMEs in India: A case of electric sector. *Journal of Global Responsibility*, 5(2), 312-337. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JGR-02-2014-0005>

2.3.3 According to the study of clean and green: the relevance of hotels' website quality and environmental management initiatives for green customer loyalty by (Sun et al., 2022) is the third theoretical framework in Figure 3. The research shows connection among green trust and green satisfaction and finally impact of both on green customer loyalty.

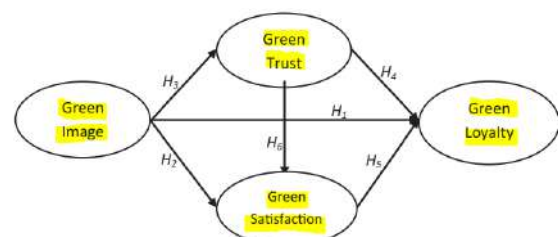
Figure 3. Clean and green: the relevance of hotels' website quality and environmental management initiatives for green customer loyalty.



Source: Sun, H., Samad, S., Rehman, S.U. & Usman, M. (2022). Clean and green: the relevance of hotels' website quality and environmental management initiatives for green customer loyalty. *British Food Journal*, 124(12), 4266-4285. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-09-2021-1002>

2.3.4 The final theoretical framework is from customer loyalty: exploring its antecedents from a green marketing perspective (Martinez, 2015). This shows association between green image, green trust, green satisfaction and green loyalty is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Customer loyalty: exploring its antecedents from a green marketing perspective.



Source: Martinez, P. (2015). Customer loyalty: exploring its antecedents from a green marketing perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 27(5) , 896- 917. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-03-2014-0115>

2.4 Hypotheses development

The researcher developed six hypotheses based on the provided conceptual framework to explore the influence of Green Marketing on Green Customer Loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. The following are the proposed hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Green Marketing has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Green Marketing has no significant influence on Customer Satisfaction for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Customer Trust has no significant influence on Customer Satisfaction for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Green Image has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Customer Satisfaction has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

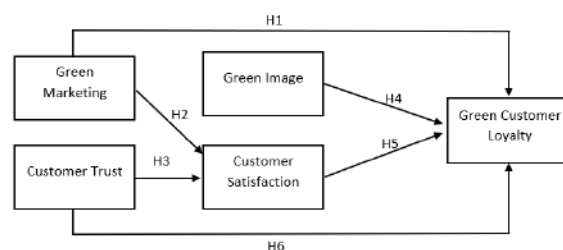
Hypothesis 6 (H6): Customer Trust has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

2.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework was developed based on previous studies, theories, and testing literatures showing the influence of independent variables such as Green Marketing, Green Image and Customer Trust on Green Customer Loyalty. Moreover, Customer Satisfaction as a mediating factor on Green Customer Loyalty. The first theoretical framework shows the effect of Green Marketing on Customer Satisfaction and Green Customer Loyalty. The second theoretical framework shows the effect of Green Marketing on Customer Satisfaction. The third theoretical framework shows the effect of Customer Trust effect on Customer Satisfaction and Green Customer Loyalty, also the effect of Customer Satisfaction on Green Customer Loyalty.

The last theoretical framework shows the effect of Green Image, Customer Trust and Customer Satisfaction on Green Customer Loyalty, also the effect of Customer Trust on Customer Satisfaction. The conceptual framework identifies the influence of Green Marketing on Green Customer Loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island as shown in the Figure 5.

Figure 5. Exploring the Influence of Green Marketing on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.



Source: Constructed by researcher.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island influenced by green marketing, customer trust, green image and customer satisfaction. As a result, this study demonstrates quantitative research by using Cronbach's Alpha, Multiple Linear Regression, and Descriptive Statistics to analyze each variable type.

The questionnaire is divided into three parts, with 34 questions. All of the questions are about five variables from a study conceptual framework, two screening questions, seven demographic profile questions, and 25 measurement variables. Then, the researcher design to check and evaluate validity and reliability to ensure all the items are applicable for research objectives and questions.

First of all, using Cronbach's Alpha, we may assess the reliability of the questionnaire and analyze any misunderstanding or unclear measuring questions. Presenting a small set of 30 samples for a



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pilot test to assess the measuring variable's reliability and understandability. In terms of statistics treatment of data, both descriptive and inferential statistics will be applied such as frequency, percentage and the multiple linear regression (MLR) method will also be used to determine the influence of green marketing and customer trust on customer satisfaction. Also, green marketing, customer trust, green image and customer satisfaction on green customer loyalty.

This study uses both primary and secondary data to see the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. Primary data was collected through online questionnaire distributed to the people visited eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. Similarly, secondary data was used in this exploration. The majority of the information was gathered from credible sources such as articles, journals, books, and previous studies, where these information helps in interpreting the data found from primary data. Thus, combination of both primary and secondary data can give this study an improved and detailed understanding of the relationships between these variables.

3.2 Sampling Plan

3.2.1 Target Population

This study includes both Thai and non-Thai visitors who have visited Phuket. According to The Phuket News (2024), the report by the Tourism and Sports Minister of Thailand, Phuket received 11.3 million tourists from January to December in 2023. Foreign tourists were 8.4 million, with the rest being Thai. This helped the Island in generating more than 388 billion Baht in revenue for the local economy. However, specific data on these visitors' preference for eco-friendly accommodation is unknown.

3.2.2 Sample Size

Since there are population size limitations, this study uses sample size estimation instead. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table was used in this study. This study's sample size includes 390 individual travelers from various nations visiting Phuket, and 11.3 million tourists have already visited in 2023. According to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table reflected the sample size table, which has an appropriate sample size for 1 million tourists is 384 people. However, the number of visitors in Thailand fluctuates on a daily basis, which may result in a little variation in the sample size number and can be estimated to increase by 1.5%. As a result, the researchers considered 390 respondents after the estimated increase.

3.2.3 Sampling Procedure

The analyst opted to use a non-probability sample approach called convenience sampling, and all received responses were pre-screened to ensure that they matched the research's objectives. Researchers desire to utilize a non-probability sampling strategy due to the limited time available for data collecting. As a result, this strategy is the best choice to employ in this study based on an appropriate data collecting period and procedure convenience.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

3.3.1 Content validity (IOC)

The researcher evaluated the content validity of the questionnaire items using the IOC index as shown in Table 1. After consulting three experts, 24 of the 25 questions received IOC scores that were higher than 0.5, indicating that they were valid. As a result, an organized set of 24 questions was chosen, each carefully focused on to the variables being investigated. This attentive method ensured that the questionnaire was precise and relevant, leading to the collection of reliable data for the study.

Table 1. The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index with three experts.

Variables	Items before checking by experts	Items after checking by experts	Rang of IOC Weight Scores

Green Marketing (GM)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Customer Trust (CT)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Green Image (GI)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Green Customer Loyalty (GCL)	5	4	0.67 – 1.00

3.3.2 Reliability Test (Pilot Test)

The researcher chooses 30 respondents to conduct a pilot test in order to examine the questionnaire's variables for any gaps or mistakes. Cronbach's alpha is one of the approaches for determining consistency.

Cronbach's Alpha (CA) is used to assess the reliability of pilot test studies (Cronbach, 1951). According to Schweizer (2011), Cronbach's Alpha is a popular approach that is frequently used by researchers who want to measure reliability when compared to the other three methods, which are test-retest, split-half methods, and parallel-test. *Cronbach's Alpha and Internal Consistency's Rules:* $\alpha > 0.9$ Excellent, $0.8 < \alpha < 0.9$ Good, $0.7 < \alpha < 0.8$ Acceptable, $0.6 < \alpha < 0.7$ Questionable, $0.5 < \alpha < 0.6$ Poor, and $\alpha < 0.5$ Unacceptable.

Table 2. The Value of Reliability Analysis of Each Item and Variable in this Study ($n=30$).

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Green Marketing	0.733	Acceptable
Customer Trust	0.838	Good
Green Image	0.788	Acceptable
Customer Satisfaction	0.875	Good
Green Customer Loyalty	0.713	Acceptable

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

According to the questionnaire, which the researcher circulated between February and April 2023 to target respondents who had selected eco-friendly resorts as an accommodation during their previous visit. 390 people completed questionnaires. As a result, the sample size of 390 eligible respondents will be employed for data analysis. Gender, age, monthly income, occupation, travelling with, purpose, and consideration of the global environment are among the demographic profile

According to a pilot test conducted with 30 respondents, Cronbach's Alpha was used to analyze the five variables of green marketing, customer trust, green image, customer satisfaction, and green customer loyalty. Cronbach's Alpha findings shown in Table 3.5, shows that green marketing of five items are 0.733, customer trust of five items are 0.838, green image of five items are 0.788, customer satisfaction of five items are 0.875, and green customer loyalty of five items are 0.713. Therefore, the overall result of the construct's internal consistency indicated that the research questionnaire has reliability to be allowed for continued use in terms of the value must be at least 0.60 or higher from thumb's rule.

questions provided by the researchers. This study used demographic information in the descriptive analysis to classify the character of the target respondents.

Table 3 show the frequency distribution and percentage of demographic factors from sample size 390 respondents as follow:

Gender: According to the data gathered from 390 respondents, with 178 male respondents or 45.6% of all respondents and 199 female respondents or 51.0% of all respondents. Lastly 13 respondents prefer not to answer or 3.3% of all respondents.

Age: The highest age range of target respondents is 18-24 years and 25-35 years with 119 respondents or 30.5% of all respondents respectively for both. The second age range is 36-40 years from 85 respondents or 21.8% of all respondents. The third age range is 41-50 years from 34 respondents or 8.7% of all respondents. Lastly, over 50 years from 33 respondents or 8.5% of all respondents.

Income: The majority of 390 target respondents separate to respondents who have income between 25,000- 35,000 Baht calculated to 60.0% or 234 respondents, followed by 64 respondents who have income between 35,001-45,000 Baht calculated to 16.4% of all target respondents, 47 respondents who have income over 55,000 Baht calculated to 12.1% of all target respondents and 45 respondents who have income between 45001-55,000 Baht calculated to 11.5% of all target respondents as the sequence.

Occupation: Based on the survey, the majority of respondents with 210 respondents or 53.8% of all target respondents are employees, the second of respondents with 118 respondents or 30.3% are students, the third of respondents with 42 respondents or 10.8% are owners, the forth respondents with 20 respondents or 5.1% are housewives.

Travel with: There are 202 target respondents travelling with their families, which represents 51.8%

of all respondents. Travelling with friends represents 95 responses, or 24.4% of all respondents. Travelling with their spouse/partner represents 57 responses, or 14.6% of all respondents. Finally, 36 respondents, or 9.2% of all respondents, are travelling alone.

Purpose: The result of survey indicated that 46.7% of target respondents had travelled for family vacation with 182 respondents. Secondly, 120 respondents had travelled for adventure and exploration with 30.8% of target respondents. Thirdly, 43 respondents had travelled for relaxation and leisure with 11.0% of target respondents. Fourthly, 26 respondents had travelled for business purpose with 6.7% of target respondents. Lastly, 4.9% of respondents have travelled for both family vacation and business purpose with 19 respondents.

Consideration of the global environment: From 390 target respondents, 153 respondents calculated to 39.2% of all target respondents have occasionally consider saving the global environment. Followed by 151 respondents calculated to 38.7% have frequently consider saving the global environment. 52 respondents or 13.3% of all target respondents have rarely consider saving the global environment. Lastly, 34 respondents or 8.7% of all target respondents have never consider saving the global environment.

Table 3. Demographic profile analysis by using frequency distribution percentage (n=390).

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	178	45.6%
Female	199	51.0%
Prefer not to answer	13	3.3%
Total	390	100%
Age		
18-24 years	119	30.5%
25-35 years	119	30.5%
36-40 years	85	21.8%
41-50 years	34	8.7%
Over 50 years	33	8.5%
Total	390	100%



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Income		
25,000-35,000 Baht	234	60.0%
35,001-45,000 Baht	64	16.4%
45,001-55,000 Baht	45	11.5%
Over 55,000 Baht	47	12.1%
Total	390	100%
Occupation		
Student	118	30.3%
Employee	210	53.8%
Owner	42	10.8%
Housewife	20	5.1%
Total	390	100%
Travel with		
Solo	36	9.2%
Spouse/Partner	57	14.6%
Family	202	51.8%
Friends	95	24.4%
Total	390	100%
Purpose		
Family Vacation	182	46.7%
Adventure and Exploration	120	30.8%
Relaxation and Leisure	43	11.0%
Business	26	6.7%
Both Vacation and Business	19	4.9%
Total	390	100%
Consideration of the global environment		
Frequently	151	38.7%
Occasionally	153	39.2%
Rarely	52	13.3%
Never	34	8.7%
Total	390	100%

4.2 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation

This section provides a brief summary of the Mean and Standard Deviation values for each group variable, consisting of green marketing, customer trust, green image, customer satisfaction and green customer loyalty. Imsa-ard et al. (2021) provided the evaluation criteria, which is followed in the study to make it easier to evaluate the mean scores is shown below:

The criteria of the interpretation of mean scores

Mean score	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly agree
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
2.61 – 3.20	Neutral
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree

1.00 – 1.80 Strongly Disagree

According to the data shown in Table 4 among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondent, the highest mean of green marketing was “As a quest, I think the resort effectively provides its commitment to environmental sustainability through the websites and the reception counters,” which equals 4.39. However, the lowest mean was 3.98 for “As a quest, I think the resort showcases its eco- friendly certifications and awards in websites and reception counter to build credibility with customers. ” According to the standard deviation, the highest was 1.02 for “As a quest, I think the resort showcases its eco-friendly certifications and awards in websites and reception counter to build credibility with customers.” On the other hand, the lowest was “As a

quest, I think the resort promotes its environmentally friendly activities such as kayaking, bicycles, trekking and etc. in its website," which equals 0.691.

Table 4 appeared the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondent, the highest mean of customer trust was "I consistently choose a resort that consistently offers reliable and trustworthy information about its sustainable practices on its websites," which equals 4.61. Meanwhile, the lowest mean was "The resort I opt for cultivates strong customer relations and goes extra mile to address environmental concerns raised by its patrons," which equals 4.25. For the standard deviation, the highest was "The resort I choose proudly displays credible environmental certifications and awards on its websites and reception counters," which equals 0.771. On the other side, the lowest was "I consistently choose a resort that consistently offers reliable and trustworthy information about its sustainable practices on its websites," which equals 0.650.

According to the data shown in Table 4 among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondent, the highest mean of green image was "I highly believe that the resort provides educational and awareness-raising activities related to environmental sustainability," which equals 4.29. However, the lowest mean was 4.02 for "The resort is recognized for its efforts in preserving and maintaining the local environment and ecosystems." According to the standard deviation, the highest was 1.10 for "The resort is recognized for its efforts in preserving and maintaining the local environment and ecosystems." On the other hand, the lowest was "The resort is seen as actively contributing to waste reduction and effective waste management practices," which equals 0.774.

Table 4. The result of Mean and Standard Deviation.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Green Marketing			

Table 4 appeared the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondent, the highest mean of customer satisfaction was "My overall experience at the resort was better than my expectations," which equals 3.94. Meanwhile, the lowest mean was "I am satisfied with the quality of service provided by the resort" and "I am satisfied with the resort's response to my environmental concerns and requests, such as providing me with a bicycle to explore the local area," which equals 3.83. For the standard deviation, the highest was "I am satisfied with the resort's response to my environmental concerns and requests, such as providing me with a bicycle to explore the local area" and "I am satisfied with the resort's commitment to save the environment," which equals 1.03. On the other side, the lowest was "My overall experience at the resort was better than my expectations," which equals 0.963.

According to the data shown in Table 4 among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondent, the highest mean of green customer loyalty was "I actively participate in the eco-friendly activities and programs offered by the resort," which equals 4.23. However, the lowest mean was 3.84 for "I prioritize staying at the eco-friendly resort in Phuket over other non-green options whenever possible because of my loyalty to their environmentally friendly efforts." According to the standard deviation, the highest was 1.25 for "I prioritize staying at the eco-friendly resort in Phuket over other non-green options whenever possible because of my loyalty to their environmentally friendly efforts." On the other hand, the lowest was "I actively participate in the eco-friendly activities and programs offered by the resort," which equals 0.946.



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GM 1: As a guest, I think the resort effectively provides its commitment to environmental sustainability through the websites and the reception counters.	4.39	0.763	Strongly agree
GM 2: As a guest, I think the resort promotes its environmentally friendly activities such as kayaking, bicycles, trekking and etc. in its website.	4.36	0.691	Strongly agree
GM 3: As a guest, I think the resort organizes events and workshops such as gardening, recycling crafts, natural skincare and etc. that focus on sustainability, giving me the chance to learn and participate in practices that are good for the environment.	4.23	0.787	Strongly agree
GM 4: As a guest, I think the resort highlights its efforts to reduce carbon footprint such as highlighting solar energy, EV buggy and etc. to promote climate change mitigation in its websites and reception counters.	4.21	0.789	Strongly agree
GM 5: As a guest, I think the resort showcases its eco-friendly certifications and awards in websites and reception counter to build credibility with customers.	3.98	1.02	Agree
Customer Trust			
CT 1: I consistently choose a resort that consistently offers reliable and trustworthy information about its sustainable practices on its websites.	4.61	0.650	Strongly agree
CT 2: I choose a resort that effectively communicates its environmental initiatives and actions with clarity.	4.52	0.694	Strongly agree
CT 3: The resort I choose proudly displays credible environmental certifications and awards on its websites and reception counters.	4.51	0.771	Strongly agree
CT 4: The resort of my choice actively welcomes and considers customer feedbacks on sustainability efforts.	4.47	0.675	Strongly agree
CT 5: The resort I opt for cultivates strong customer relations and goes extra mile to address environmental concerns raised by its patrons.	4.25	0.720	Strongly agree
Green Image			
GI 1: The resort is known for conserving natural resources and using renewable energy sources.	4.23	0.805	Strongly agree
GI 2: The resort is seen as actively contributing to waste reduction and effective waste management practices.	4.19	0.774	Agree
GI 3: The resort is recognized for its efforts in preserving and maintaining the local environment and ecosystems.	4.02	1.10	Agree
GI 4: The resort displays a green symbol or a green image clearly on its website.	4.07	0.985	Agree
GI 5: I highly believe that the resort provides educational and awareness-raising activities related to environmental sustainability.	4.29	0.853	Strongly agree
Customer Satisfaction			
CS 1: I am satisfied with the quality of service provided by the resort.	3.83	1.01	Agree
CS 2: I am satisfied with the comfort of the environmentally friendly services such as toiletries and etc. provided by the resort.	3.85	1.01	Agree
CS 3: I am satisfied with the resort's response to my environmental concerns and requests, such as providing me with a bicycle to explore the local area.	3.83	1.03	Agree
CS 4: I am satisfied with the resort's commitment to save the environment.	3.88	1.03	Agree



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CS 5: My overall experience at the resort was better than my expectations.	3.94	0.963	Agree
Green Customer Loyalty			
GCL 1: I choose to stay at the same eco-friendly resort in Phuket repeatedly because of its commitment to environmental sustainability.	3.99	1.07	Agree
GCL 2: I actively participate in the eco-friendly activities and programs offered by the resort.	4.23	0.946	Strongly agree
GCL 3: I prioritize staying at the eco-friendly resort in Phuket over other non-green options whenever possible because of my loyalty to their environmentally friendly efforts.	3.84	1.25	Agree
GCL 4: I actively recommend the eco-friendly resort in Phuket to friends and family because of its sustainable practices.	3.97	1.09	Agree

4.3 Hypothesis testing results

To analyze hypothesis testing results, the researchers use linear regression from statistical analytical methodology to examine the significant impact of variables such as the influence of green marketing and customer trust on customer satisfaction and also the influence of green marketing, green image, customer satisfaction and customer trust on green customer loyalty. In terms of linear regression analysis, the researcher used two multiple linear regressions. Firstly, to explore the influence of variables on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. Secondly, to explore the influence of variables on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. According to Shrestha (2020), R^2 is a measure of how effectively one or more independent variables can be explained for changes in the underlying concept.

4.3.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H2, H3

Ho: Green Marketing (H2) and customer trust (H3) have no influence on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Ha: Green Marketing (H2) and customer trust (H3) have an influence on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

According to Table 5, the analysis calculation result by multiple linear regression shows that green marketing has an influence on customer satisfaction, whereas customer trust has no influence on customer

satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. For hypothesis 2, the analysis of green marketing results indicates that the significant level, or p-value, from this study is 0.049, which is less than the standard limit of 0.05. As a result, the outcome indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. However, the results of hypothesis 3's customer trust analysis indicate that the significant level, or p-value, from this study is 0.565, exceeding the standard limit of 0.05. As a result, the finding indicates that the null hypothesis was not rejected. Overall, the results show that green marketing has an influence on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island, whereas customer trust have no influence on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Additionally, the results of the regression analysis showed that this model had a variance of 7.83% and was significant with a p-value of less than 0.05. This model has a 95% confidence level and an analytical R-square of 0.0783. According to the results, customer trust does not have an influence on customer satisfaction ($B=0.0497$, $p\text{-value}>0.05$), but green marketing does ($B = 0.1108$, $p\text{-value}<0.05$). Additionally, the results of the green marketing and customer trust values of variation inflation factors (VIF) are 1.07. Given that VIF is less than 5, it is assumed that multicollinearity is unaffected.

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 2 and 3.



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Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H2: Green Marketing	0.1108	0.0767	0.0757	6.445	0.049*	1.07	Rejected
H3: Customer Trust	0.0497	0.0862	0.0302	0.576	0.565	1.07	Fail to reject

Note: $R^2 = 0.0783$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.0027$, * $p < 0.05$, Dependent Variable = customer satisfaction

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

4.3.2 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H4, H5, H6

Ho: Green Marketing (H1), green image (H4), customer satisfaction (H5) and customer trust (H6) have no influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Ha: Green Marketing (H1), green image (H4), customer satisfaction (H5) and customer trust (H6) have an influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

According to Table 6, the analysis calculation result by multiple linear regression shows that green marketing, customer satisfaction and customer trust have an influence on green customer loyalty, whereas green image has no influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. For hypothesis 1, the analysis of green marketing results indicates that the significant level, or p-value, from this study is 0.048, which is less than the standard limit of 0.05. As a result, the outcome indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. As for hypothesis 5, the results of the customer satisfaction analysis indicate that the significant level, or p-value, from this study is less than 0.001, which is less than the standard limit of 0.05. As a result, the outcome indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. For hypothesis 6, the analysis of customer trust results indicates that the significant level, or p-value, from this study is less than 0.001, which is less than the

standard limit of 0.05. As a result, the outcome indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. However, the results of hypothesis 4's green image analysis indicate that the significant level, or p-value, from this study is 0.569, exceeding the standard limit of 0.05. As a result, the finding indicates that the null hypothesis was not rejected. Overall, the results show that green marketing, customer satisfaction and customer trust have an influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island, whereas green image has no influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

Additionally, the results of the regression analysis showed that this model had a variance of 44.7% and was significant with a p-value of less than 0.05. This model has a 95% confidence level and an analytical R-square of 0.447. According to the results, green image does not have an influence on green customer loyalty ($B = 0.0571$, $p\text{-value} > 0.05$), but green marketing does ($B = 0.6941$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$), customer satisfaction does ($B = 0.4458$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) and customer trust does ($B = 0.2783$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). Additionally, the results of the green marketing, green image, customer satisfaction and customer trust values of variation inflation factors (VIF) are 3.31, 3.16, 1.02 and 1.11 respectively for each. Given that VIF is less than 5, it is assumed that multicollinearity is unaffected.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 1, 4, 5, and 6.

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Green Marketing	0.6941	0.1153	0.0485	2.602	0.048*	3.31	Rejected
H4: Green Image	0.0571	0.1001	0.0449	0.571	0.569	3.16	Fail to reject
H5: Customer Satisfaction	0.4458	0.0438	0.4553	10.172	<0.001*	1.02	Rejected

H6: Customer Trust	0.2783	0.0751	0.1728	3.704	<.001*	1.11	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.447$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.239$, $p < 0.05$, Dependent Variable = green customer loyalty

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

According to the overall demographic data from respondents who completed the study questionnaire, the majority group from the total 390 respondents were female (199, 51.0%) between the ages of 18 and 35 (119, or 30.5%) and the monthly income ranged from 25,000 to 35,000 Baht (234, or 60.0%). The majority of them were employees (210, or 53.8%) had traveled with their families (202, or 51.8%) for family vacation (182, 46.7%) from which many people occasionally considered saving the environment (153, 39.2%).

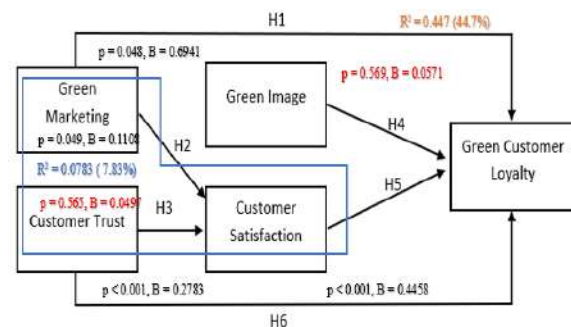
The survey instruments used to explore the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island are the mean and standard deviation of variables. In addition, the highest mean and standard deviation was green marketing ($\bar{x} = 4.23$, $SD = 0.575$), then followed was green image ($\bar{x} = 4.16$, $SD = 0.648$), following by green customer loyalty ($\bar{x} = 4.01$, $SD = 0.824$), customer trust ($\bar{x} = 4.47$, $SD = 0.512$), and the lowest was customer satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 3.87$, $SD = 0.842$).

Two multiple linear regression (MLR) were used in this study to analyze the significant influence on each hypothesis. The researcher used the first multiple linear regression (MLR) to explore the influence of green marketing and customer trust on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island, where green marketing testing was less than 0.05 but customer trust was over 0.05. Secondly, to explore the influence of green marketing, green image, customer satisfaction and customer trust on green customer loyalty for eco-

friendly resorts in Phuket Island, where green marketing, customer trust and customer satisfaction testing were less than 0.05 but green image was over 0.05. Therefore, the results which were less than 0.05, leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. However, the results which were over 0.05 were failed to reject the null hypothesis as shown in Table 7.

Finally, the researcher created to categorize the ranking of factors based on strength levels in order to explore the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island in Table 5.2 and 5.3. From the first MLR which showed the influence on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island is only Green Marketing ($\beta = 0.0757$). Following the second MLR, The first rank represented the strongest influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island is customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.4553$), followed by customer trust ($\beta = 0.1728$). The last rank showed influence on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island is green marketing ($\beta = 0.0485$) as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Summary of hypothesis testing results



Source: Constructed by author

Table 7. Summary of the hypothesis resting results.

Statement of Null Hypothesis	p-value	Decision Results
H10: Green Marketing has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.	0.048*	Rejected Ho
H20: Green Marketing has no significant influence on Customer Satisfaction for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.	0.049*	Rejected Ho
H30: Customer Trust has no significant influence on Customer Satisfaction for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.	0.565	Fail to reject Ho
H40: Green Image has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.	0.569	Fail to reject Ho
H50: Customer Satisfaction has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.	< 0.001*	Rejected Ho
H60: Customer Trust has no significant influence on Green Customer Loyalty for Eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.	< 0.001*	Rejected Ho

Note: *p-value < 0.05

5.2 Discussion based on Findings

The examination of the hypothesis provides helpful information about the variables influencing green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island.

5.2.1 Green Marketing and Customer Trust on Customer Satisfaction

According to the findings of hypothesis 2, it was found that green marketing has a significant influence on customer satisfaction as the p-value is 0.049 which is lower than the standard criteria of 0.05. The standardized beta coefficient for this relationship is 0.0757, indicating a strong influence of green marketing on customer satisfaction for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. Moise et al. (2018), Yusof et al. (2017) found that initiatives such as renewable energy adoption, efficient water management, the use of local and organic products, and the implementation of environmentally friendly transportation have a positive influence on guest satisfaction in the hospitality industry as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Summary strengths of influencing factors of Customer Satisfaction variable.

Rank	Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficient
1 st	Green Marketing (GM)	0.0757

In contrast to the predictions of hypothesis 3, the study found that customer trust had no significant influence on customer satisfaction as the p-value is 0.565 which is greater than the standard criteria of 0.05. However, despite the absence of statistical significance, growing consumer trust remains a crucial element in encouraging customer satisfaction, which contrasts with the studies by Martinez (2015), Amoako et al. (2019).

The R-square of this multiple linear regression model is 7.83% based on the proportion of variance. It signifies that the independent variable explains weak relationship of the variation in the dependent variable.

5.2.2 Green marketing, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Trust on Green Customer Loyalty

The study's findings highlight the important role of green marketing, customer satisfaction and customer trust in influencing green customer loyalty. The p-value of green marketing is 0.048 which is lower than the standard criteria of 0.05. The standardized beta coefficient for this relationship is 0.0485, indicating a strong influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island (see Table 5.3). This is

similar to prior studies by Trang et al. (2019), Yusof et al. (2017), Wu et al. (2018), which highlight the relevance of green initiatives in increasing customer loyalty, especially through repeat bookings and good word-of-mouth behaviors.

The p-value of customer satisfaction is less than 0.001 which is lower than the standard criteria of 0.05. The standardized beta coefficient for this relationship is 0.4553, indicating a strong influence of customer satisfaction on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island (see Table 5.3). This finding is similar with Moise et al.'s (2021) study, which found a positive link between customer satisfaction and intentions to return, highlighting the importance of customer satisfaction in building green consumer loyalty.

The p-value of customer trust is less than 0.001 which is lower than the standard criteria of 0.05. The standardized beta coefficient for this relationship is 0.1728, indicating a strong influence of customer trust on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island (see in Table 9). The results support the theory that customers' trust in hotels' genuine green initiatives is significant, since it directly influences loyalty. This underlines the need of firms having open and clear environmental policies in order to attract and retain loyal customers, as mentioned by Sukhu and Scharff (2018).

Table 9. Summary strengths of influencing factors of Green Customer Loyalty variable.

Rank	Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficient
1 st	Customer Satisfaction (CS)	0.4553
2 nd	Customer Trust (CT)	0.1728
3 rd	Green Marketing (GM)	0.0485

The R-square of this multiple linear regression model is 44.7% based on the proportion of variance. It signifies that the independent variable explains medium relationship of the variation in the dependent variable.

5.2.3 Green Image on Green Customer Loyalty

In contrast to the predictions of hypothesis 4, the study found that green image had no significant influence on green customer loyalty as the p-value is 0.569 which is greater than the standard criteria of 0.05. However, despite the absence of statistical significance, Huang et al. (2014) indicate that the many variables leading to the company's green image have a significant influence on positive word-of-mouth and repurchase intentions.

5.3 Recommendations based on Findings

5.3.1 Adapting Green Marketing Strategies to Women Visitors (18-35 Years Old)

Creating marketing strategies that target the preferences and emotions of female tourists between the ages of 18 and 35. Highlighting eco-friendly facilities like sustainable food options, energy-efficient accommodation, and eco-tours that highlight the natural beauty and environmental activities of the area. For example, making promotion videos or social media blog posts that display off young, female tourists taking part in environmentally responsible travel experiences like snorkeling in coral reefs, cleaning up beaches, or finding local efforts to save animals. This recommendation is based on finding green marketing within the customer satisfaction aspect.

5.3.2 Improve Information about Sustainability on Online Platforms.

Making sure that the resort's online presence, including its website and other digital channels, appropriately communicates its dedication to environmental sustainability by providing full information on its green initiatives, certifications, and ongoing sustainability projects. One way to demonstrate the resort's dedication to protect the environment is by designing a special "Sustainability" area on the website, which would include articles, infographics, videos, pictures, and guests review applauding the resort's green activities. This recommendation is based on finding

green marketing within the green customer loyalty aspect.

5.3.3 Encourage Active Engagement in Eco-Friendly Projects

Encouraging visitors to actively participate in eco-friendly activities when they are here with their families. By planning organized nature treks, protected marine area snorkeling trips, or tree-planting events in coordination with local environmental organizations. For example, organizing "Green Days" when travelers can take part in beach clean-ups and educational talks on marine conservation. Later, rewarding them by certain discounts who actively support environment. This recommendation is based on finding customer satisfaction within the green customer loyalty aspect.

5.3.4 Maintain Transparent Communication to Build Trust

Provide reliable and accurate information regarding sustainable practices on a regular basis on all digital platforms. Displaying certifications, environmentally friendly behaviors, and customer positive reviews to build credibility and trust. As an example, the resort publishes an annual sustainability report that is available for download on its website. The report highlights important figures like water and energy savings, waste diversion rates, and community engagement in environmental projects. This recommendation is based on finding customer trust within the green customer loyalty aspect.

5.4 Implications based on findings and theories

The implications drawn from the findings and theories underscore the critical role of green marketing in shaping green consumer loyalty within the context of eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island. The research highlights that effective green marketing strategies significantly influence customer satisfaction, which in turn positively influences green customer loyalty. Resorts should

thus give green marketing strategies that highlight their commitment to sustainability and environmentally friendly activities top priority and contribute to it.

Furthermore, even though it might not have a direct impact on customer satisfaction, customer trust does have an influence on green customer loyalty, indicating the need of developing honest and reliable relationships with visitors. Thus, there is a clear imperative for resorts to cultivate transparent and authentic relationships with visitors to engender trust.

Additionally, the research underscores the importance of a resort's green image in driving green customer loyalty. The findings indicate that a subpar green image may hinder loyalty-building efforts. Consequently, businesses must focus on implementing tangible actions and offering experiences that demonstrate their commitment to environmental responsibility.

To enhance customer satisfaction, trust, and ultimately green customer loyalty among environmentally conscious tourists visiting Phuket Island's eco-friendly resorts, a holistic approach is necessary. This involves integrating sustainability across all operational facets, continual monitoring, and improvement of eco-friendly practices. By prioritizing sustainability and fostering transparent relationships with guests, resorts can position themselves as trusted allies in the pursuit of environmental conservation, thereby nurturing lasting loyalty among green consumers.

5.5 Limitations of the study

The study on the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts in Phuket Island has some limitations that should be considered. Firstly, its limited focus on Phuket Island limits the scope of its results to other eco-tourism destinations.

Secondly, while the quantitative methodology employed in the study facilitates the analysis of numerical data, it may overlook the nuanced array of

factors and emotions that shape tourists' decision-making processes. This limitation suggests the potential value of incorporating qualitative methods, such as focus groups or in-depth interviews, to glean richer insights into the experiences and perceptions of customers.

Moreover, the intrinsic preference towards eco-friendly resorts among respondents who selected such accommodations for their stay poses a limitation. This preference can mislead the findings, possibly ignore the opinions of tourists who choose other types of accommodations. Using strategies to mitigate this bias, such as including a diverse range of accommodation preferences in the study sample, could enhance the study's accuracy.

Furthermore, the relatively modest sample size of 390 respondents may not fully capture the diverse spectrum of green tourists visiting Phuket Island. Therefore, extra care should be used when applying the results to the larger group of eco-tourists. To increase the reliability and validity of the results, larger and more representative sample sizes should be the goal of future research projects. Although the study provides insightful information on how green marketing and green customer loyalty connect in the context of Phuket Island's eco-friendly resorts, these limitations must be recognized and addressed. By recognizing these limitations and adopting appropriate methodologies, researchers can improve and expand upon the study's findings, ultimately advancing our understanding of sustainable tourism practices and consumer behavior.

5.6 Further Studies

Further research into the influence of green marketing on green customer loyalty for eco-friendly resorts on Phuket Island should focus on areas where no significant influence was discovered in the current study. This includes researching the particular variables of consumer trust and green image that are most significant in the eco-friendly resort business to improve customer satisfaction and green customer loyalty. Using qualitative research

approaches, like interviews or focus groups, can help to understand customer trust beliefs and preferences for environmentally friendly activities. By engaging directly with consumers, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence trust formation and perception, thus informing the development of more effective green marketing strategies. Additionally, long-term studies that follow consumer behavior over time and explore achievable moderating or mediating variables can also help to better understand the complicated relationships of green marketing, customer satisfaction, trust, and customer loyalty in this type of environment. Moreover, expanding the scope of study to include other eco-friendly accommodations beyond Phuket Island can enrich the research findings by capturing a wide range of consumer responses and experiences. By considering a diverse range of eco-tourism destinations, researchers can discover valuable insights into the applicability of green marketing strategies and their impact on customer loyalty within the overall content of sustainable tourism.

Future studies should use an integrated strategy, including qualitative and quantitative approaches, in order to investigate the complexity of how green marketing influences green consumer loyalty in eco-friendly resorts. Researchers can contribute to the development of more effective marketing strategies for the goals of environmental protection and customer satisfaction by focusing on areas of unexplored significance and including insights from a variety of eco-tourism destinations. This will advance our understanding of sustainable tourism practices.

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Uncovering the Dynamics of Leadership, Learning, Innovation and Culture in Saudi Embassies

Rawan Hussain M. Baggashi¹, Chompu Nuangjamnong²

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this research is to uncover the Dynamics of Leadership, Learning, Innovation and Culture in Saudi Embassies, and to analyze their impact on each other. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – This research employs primary and secondary research methods to understand the relationship between Leadership, Learning, Innovation and Culture at Saudi Embassies. Using quantitative data collection and analysis from 136 respondents from a cross-section of embassy employees. **Findings** – This research's intention is to demonstrate the relationship and influence of Leadership Styles on Organizational Culture, Innovative Culture and Organizational Performance, respectively. The findings demonstrated the strong effect that the diverse Leadership Styles have on the described above while at the same time, exhibiting how Innovative Culture and Organizational Culture were also interchangeably significant with one another. Leadership Style had the lowest impact on Innovative Culture and Organizational Learning and requires further research to support the findings. **Research Limitations/Implications** – The limitation of the research displayed several element limits as it relates to the extent of leadership styles impacting organizational culture, innovative culture and organizational performance without considering external personality factors and different countries' culture in which the embassies are located. Narrowly examining the factors and variables presented in this study, it overlooks the potential influence of many other variables not included that could affect the relationship and interconnectedness between them. **Originality/Value** – This research highlights the significance of relationships between Leadership, Learning, Innovation and Culture at Saudi Embassies.

Keywords – Leadership Styles, Organizational Learning, Innovative Culture, Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance.

JEL classification code: Z10, Z13, Z18

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

This study examines the relevant factors distinguishing transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership and their impact on organizational learning, innovative culture, and organizational performance at Saudi Arabian embassies.

In an era characterized by rapid globalization and dynamic geopolitical shifts, understanding the intricacies of leadership, learning, innovation, and culture within the context of Saudi embassies is imperative. Saudi Arabia, with its rich historical and cultural heritage, plays a significant role on the global stage, with its embassies serving as vital conduits for diplomatic engagement, economic cooperation, and

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cultural exchange. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Saudi Arabia handles all foreign affairs matters on behalf of the Saudi government. The main headquarters are in Riyadh, and there are multiple branches across Saudi Arabia, along with 125 embassies and consulates across the globe. The ministry has a total of 4,500 employees and contractors worldwide. (Talukder, 2022).

Both regional customs and global trends have an impact on the leadership within Saudi embassies, which encompasses a wide range of styles and approaches. Effective leadership is essential for navigating complex diplomatic landscapes, fostering collaboration, and advancing national interests. Looking into how leadership works in Saudi embassies can teach us a lot about the strategies and methods that work in international diplomacy. It can also teach us about the problems that are unique to the public sector, like red tape, bureaucracy, centralized power, and strict rules about how things can be done (Higgs, 2021).

For decades, Saudi Arabia's diplomacy was defined as "soft," as they navigated diplomatic conversations through peace, negotiation, and fostering relationships. They built relationships by leveraging their oil resources, becoming one of the world's most powerful countries. However, since the Arab Spring in 2011 and with fewer regional allies, the country has now transitioned into more aggressive "hard" politics. One wealthy Saud family controls the country, contributing to a shift in a new, more aggressive leadership style (Kukic, 2020). This research will explore the cause of these leadership styles, which are conventionally associated with hard power tactics as a more transactional approach and soft as transformational or laissez-faire (Go, 2020).

Learning and innovation are integral components of organizational growth and adaptation. Understanding the acquisition, sharing, and application of knowledge within Saudi embassies can illuminate the mechanisms driving innovation and excellence in diplomatic endeavors. By uncovering the processes and practices

that facilitate learning and innovation, this study aims to identify opportunities for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of Saudi diplomatic missions (Alerasoul, 2022).

Culture also plays a central role in shaping individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and interactions within organizations. Within Saudi embassies, cultural dynamics—both within the host country and the embassy itself—can influence communication patterns, decision-making processes, and the overall organizational climate. Exploring the interplay between culture and organizational dynamics can provide valuable insights into how to foster inclusivity, collaboration, and mutual understanding within diplomatic missions. (Alhammedi, 2023). Therefore, it is also important to denote the significance of the Islamic faith in Saudi Arabia. "Mas' uliyyah" is an Arabic word that means responsibility. Employee responsibility and accountability apply to your seniors and God in the workplace (Talukder, 2022). As such, I will take into consideration the factor of religion in organizational culture and the impact this has on leadership styles.

This study seeks to illuminate the multifaceted dynamics of leadership, learning, innovation, and culture within Saudi embassies, offering a nuanced understanding of the factors that contribute to success in diplomatic endeavors. By uncovering best practices, identifying challenges, and exploring potential solutions, this research aims to inform strategies for enhancing effective leadership on Saudi diplomatic missions in an increasingly interconnected world.

1.2 Problem statements

To date, there is limited research surrounding leadership styles within the Saudi Arabian embassies. However, leadership styles play a crucial role in the effectiveness and efficiency of achieving organizational goals, gaining competitive advantage, enhancing customer satisfaction, and encouraging progression and innovation. A leadership approach can contribute to



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employee motivation and job satisfaction, while low morale can lead to poor services, product quality, and inefficiencies surrounding resource allocation. As such, it is important to analyze the impact of leadership styles and to note that different problems and groups require different leadership approaches and strategies. Therefore, without this research, the embassy will not have the necessary information to develop an effective strategy and an awareness of factors that drive employees to perform well, both individually and collectively (Saad Al, 2020).

Drawing generalizations about leadership styles is also difficult because of the variability resulting from things like cultural differences, organizational goals, and uneven data distribution. As my research will invite responses from different embassies, unequal representation in questionnaire responses from different countries or embassies can introduce bias into the analysis. If certain regions or groups are overrepresented or underrepresented, the findings may not accurately reflect the diversity of leadership styles across the entire population. As such, I will need to calibrate my findings accordingly. (Baldwin, 2022).

The changing socio-economic landscape has a great impact on an embassy and, therefore, the leadership styles required. Mitigating risk and conflict disasters often requires flexibility and responsiveness, which may deviate from the original plan. Obtaining research about the impact of leadership styles on culture, innovation, and performance in such circumstances will therefore be invaluable if incorporated into a flexible strategy to be implemented during unpredictable situations. This will enable leaders to get the best out of employees, even in high-pressure environments (Ajemba, 2022).

This research will enable embassy leaders to understand the impact of leadership styles deeply, specifically focusing on their impact on organizational learning, innovation, and culture.

1.3 Objectives of study:

1. To establish the cause of leadership styles (transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire) effect on organizational learning.
2. To establish the cause of leadership styles (transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire) effect on innovative culture.
3. To assess the cause of organizational learning and innovative culture on organizational performance.
4. To examine the cause of organizational culture effect on innovation culture
5. To investigate the cause of organizational culture effect on organizational performance.

1.4 Research questions:

1. Do leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings have a significant effect on organizational learning?
2. Do leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings have a significant effect on innovative culture?
3. Do organizational learning and innovative culture have a significant effect on organizational performance?
4. Does organizational culture have a significant effect on innovation culture?
5. Does organizational culture have a significant effect on organizational performance?

1.5 Significance of the study:

In today's rapidly changing world dynamics, understanding the intricate relationship between leadership styles and their impact on learning, innovation, and culture is crucial for organizational success. This study delves into the significance of comprehending these dynamics and their collective impact on Saudi embassies and their employees. Examining the influence that leadership styles have on learning, innovation, and culture can provide important insights into leading a successful and effective government agency.

Effective leadership mandates an organizational culture that promotes a welcoming environment



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conducive to innovation. Ambassadors, leaders, and managers play a monumental role in shaping organizational values, promoting continuous learning, and inspiring innovation among their employees. Strong leadership and fostering a culture of collaboration create teams that naturally embrace change and progress.

In the world of diplomacy and international presence, learning is critical for adaptability and resilience. Embassies that prioritize learning initiatives allow their employees to acquire new skills, adapt to their new countries, and adapt to evolving challenges. A culture of learning also sparks curiosity and experimentation, the main pillars for increasing innovation and relationship-building in today's complicated political arena.

An embassy culture that values experimentation and cooperation is more likely to lead to increased innovation and officer growth. Effective leadership is essential in creating a workplace where members feel empowered to explore new ideas to build diplomatic relationships around the world. Understanding cultural dynamics allows leaders to use their cultural strengths to address potential barriers to innovation and learning.

This study holds significance in uncovering the dynamics of leadership, learning, innovation, and culture in today's dynamic and changing world landscape. This study sheds light by examining how leadership styles impact organizational learning, innovative culture, and overall performance within Saudi embassies. Lastly, it seeks to provide valuable insights into embassies' ability to adapt, innovate, and perform in alignment with global challenges.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Theories related to each variable

2.1.1 Leadership Styles

The term "leadership" has been documented in the English lexicon since the 1800s, though its definition

has undergone numerous revisions over time, reflecting the dynamic nature of organizational paradigms. Nevertheless, there is a consensus that effective leadership is pivotal to steering an organization toward success. Scholars such as Khaliq et al. (2021) assert that leadership constitutes a social phenomenon wherein leaders foster an environment that motivates employees to contribute towards collective objectives.

The literature underscores the multifaceted nature of leadership, acknowledging its various styles and approaches, all of which share the common thread of influencing followers, as highlighted by Khan et al. (2015) and Kongkaew and Nuangjamnong (2023). Leadership encompasses the capacity to exert influence, establish goals, and inspire others to pursue them, transcending hierarchical structures to fulfill a broader organizational mission. Effective leadership, as posited by Wolor et al. (2021), involves equipping the organization to navigate inevitable changes.

A central aspect of leadership pertains to the leader's style, delineating their manner of motivating and interacting with their team, as articulated by Bwalya (2023). Additionally, leadership has been attributed to fostering organizational innovation and enhancing team performance, with leaders' openness serving as a catalyst for knowledge dissemination, as noted by Costa et al. (2023).

In the context of this study, leadership styles encompass a spectrum of approaches and behaviors exhibited by leaders within an organization, influencing the organizational climate, decision-making processes, and overall trajectory of the company. These styles may include transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, each carrying distinct implications for workplace dynamics and team cohesion.

2.1.2 Organizational performance

Organizational performance denotes the degree to which an organization strategically situates itself within the business landscape, leveraging its informational,



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financial, and human capital resources (Contu, 2020; Lin et al., 2022). Consequently, organizational performance is contingent upon individual performance, which encompasses meeting targets, operational efficiency, reputation, and financial profitability within a commercial context (Aguilera et al., 2024). At times, performance evaluation may extend to comparative analysis with competitors and considerations for industry sustainability.

Employee commitment and organizational culture exert significant influence on organizational performance. Organizational culture, specifically, embodies a set of behavioral norms aligned with the foundational principles established by the organization's founders, imbuing the institution with core values that cultivate a cohesive work ethos in alignment with normative guidelines and organizational regulations (Nurlina, 2022). The integrity and coherence of organizational culture serve as linchpins for bolstering employee morale, enhancing productivity, and ultimately driving overall organizational performance.

In the context of this study, organizational performance encompasses the comprehensive assessment of an organization's efficacy and efficiency in attaining its predetermined goals and objectives. This evaluation encompasses diverse metrics, including financial indicators, productivity levels, customer satisfaction indices, and levels of employee engagement. High organizational performance signifies optimal organizational functionality, indicative of the organization's ability to generate value for its stakeholders.

2.1.3 Organizational learning

Organizational learning serves as a catalyst for progress, safeguarding against the repetition of outdated practices within organizations. Learning manifests in various forms, including problem-solving, innovation, and the reevaluation of approaches or strategies. Leaders play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of organizational learning, enhancing the skillsets of team

members, and nurturing a dynamic team environment. This endeavor encompasses the implementation of training and development initiatives, the promotion of knowledge exchange, and the establishment of frameworks wherein leaders serve as exemplars at individual, team, or organizational levels (Alerasoul et al., 2022).

Learning stands as the cornerstone of competitive advantage, embodying a catalyst for change. Consequently, within every organizational setting, adaptability emerges as a requisite for advancement, with positive evolution culminating in ingrained practices (Saadata, 2016). The effective resolution of organizational challenges mandates the cultivation of learning and creativity to augment the reservoirs of resources, skills, and knowledge within organizations (Ricciardi et al., 2021).

Organizational learning engenders enhancements in public and team learning within an organization, thereby augmenting organizational activities and individual and group behaviors, ultimately enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity (Sharma, 2003). Within the framework of this study, organizational learning denotes the iterative process through which an organization acquires, generates, disseminates, and retains knowledge to enhance its performance. It encompasses the cultivation of fresh insights, behaviors, and capabilities at the organizational level, enabling the organization to adapt to dynamic environments, resolve challenges, and foster innovation.

2.1.4 Innovation Culture

Innovation stands as a cornerstone for the enduring success of any organization (Bendak, 2020). Cultivating an innovation culture entails integrating various facets of organizational operations. This encompasses the introduction of novel management techniques and practices, such as the adoption of performance-based incentive systems or the embrace of innovative leadership styles (Alateeg et al., 2023; Suwannasri & Nuangjamnong, 2022). Moreover, it extends to the reconfiguration of work processes and methodologies to



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bolster productivity and efficiency, as exemplified by the implementation of new workflows or quality control systems.

The genesis of an innovation culture can either emanate internally within organizations or be sourced externally, and it can manifest in either radical or incremental forms. The execution of radical innovation poses greater challenges and inherent risks due to heightened uncertainty, yet it holds promise for fostering sustained growth. Conversely, incremental innovation offers a more manageable pathway conducive to gradual enhancements over time (Bendak, 2020). Managing and leading an innovation culture necessitates flexibility, eschewing rigid frameworks in light of the unpredictable terrain of innovation. Hence, leaders are tasked with nurturing an environment conducive to innovation rather than imposing inflexible guidelines (Alateeg et al., 2023; Suwannasri & Nuangjamnong, 2022).

An innovative culture that champions risk-taking and experimentation serves as a catalyst for instilling a progressive and creative mindset among employees, thereby potentially enhancing individual, team, and organizational performance. By fostering a supportive milieu for novel ideas and approaches, organizations entrenched in a robust innovation-oriented culture can maintain competitiveness and adaptability amidst evolving market dynamics (Alateeg et al., 2023). Within the purview of this study, innovation culture encompasses the ethos, mindset, and behavioral paradigms within an organization that nurture and stimulate the conception, evolution, and implementation of novel ideas, processes, products, and services. It embodies a commitment to experimentation, collaboration, and continuous refinement, aimed at driving substantive and transformative change.

2.1.5 Organizational Culture

Culture is widely acknowledged as a composite of values, attitudes, or behaviors shared among individuals (Bendak, 2020). Organizational culture emerges through a process of social learning, rooted in the accumulation

of experiences transmitted during individuals' socialization within the organizational context. This cultural fabric engenders continuity within the organization, mitigates employee uncertainty, influences job satisfaction, and contributes to emotional well-being. Furthermore, it serves as a motivational catalyst and may confer a competitive advantage (Mikušová et al., 2023).

Organizational culture permeates throughout an entire company or institution, and in recent decades, leaders have increasingly recognized its pivotal role in enhancing an organization's prospects. However, given the scale and complexity of such entities, it is not uncommon to observe the presence of multiple subcultures within them. Consequently, cultural variations may manifest across different departments and, notably, across various international embassies (Bendak, 2020). Traditionally, leaders align an organization's vision with the dynamic external milieu, thereby exerting influence in fostering a culture of innovation by providing guidance and allocating resources (Alhammadi, 2023).

Within the framework of this study, organizational culture denotes the underlying values, beliefs, and behaviors that shape the distinctive social and psychological milieu of an organization. It encompasses shared attitudes, customs, and practices that delineate the organization's identity, dictating how employees interact, make decisions, and approach their professional responsibilities.

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 Leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings and organizational learning

Numerous factors influence the dynamic interplay between leadership styles and organizational learning. The concept of "psychological safety" emerges as a pivotal facilitator of learning within organizational settings, fostering an environment wherein individuals and groups feel empowered to engage in reflection and innovative ideation. Individual learning behavior



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encompasses the active pursuit of new knowledge, critical questioning of assumptions, and dedicated efforts toward enhancing work processes, a phenomenon documented since the nascent stages of human resource management research (Zaman et al., 2020). Additionally, empirical investigations reveal instances wherein leaders within well-established organizations have reported minimal engagement with peers from analogous entities, perceiving a lack of knowledge-sharing and instead resorting to reinventing organizational structures and processes (Butler et al., 2022). Hence, I propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *There is no significant influence of leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings on organizational learning in Saudi embassies.*

2. 2. 2 Leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings and innovative culture

Managing innovation presents inherent complexities due to the multifaceted nature of its functional activities (Bendak et al., 2020). Consequently, investing in research and development initiatives may not yield a comprehensive understanding of the correlation between leadership styles and an innovative culture. Moreover, embassies typically operate within highly regulated and risk-averse environments, potentially impeding innovation as leaders may prioritize stability and adherence to established protocols over experimentation and risk-taking, irrespective of their leadership styles (Mafunzwaini, 2018). Additionally, the generation of innovative ideas hinges upon individual attributes, including creativity and a willingness to transcend conventional reference points. Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *There is no significant influence of leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings on innovative culture In Saudi*

embassies.

2. 2. 3 Organizational learning and organizational performance

Examining the relationship between organizational learning and performance within embassy contexts presents unique challenges, often stemming from the establishment of entities by nations within their foreign embassies and consulates to oversee networks within host countries. Many of these networks operate under constraints such as reduced budgets, limited staff, and stringent deadlines, factors that may potentially bias overall findings (Butler et al., 2022). Drawing upon the educational model as an illustrative example, school management endeavors to foster innovation by harnessing knowledge from external stakeholders such as parents, government entities, communities, and other educational institutions. This is achieved by facilitating teachers' engagement in diverse learning opportunities, including training sessions, workshops, and collaborative meetings, thereby bolstering teachers' capacity for innovation with support from external sources (Putra et al., 2020). Hence, it becomes apparent that organizational learning alone may not solely dictate performance outcomes but must also consider the influence of external contributors.

Moreover, the ineffective implementation of learning initiatives, discrepancies between learning objectives and organizational goals, and challenges in accurately assessing the impact of learning on performance are significant considerations (Aguilera et al., 2023). Furthermore, organizational culture and leadership efficacy may also factor into the mediation of organizational learning's impact on overall performance (Bendak, 2020). Consequently, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *There is no significant influence of organizational learning on Organization Performance In Saudi embassies.*

2. 2. 4 Innovative Culture and Organization Performance



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External market conditions, including social and geopolitical instability, wield significant influence over organizational performance, rendering it challenging to discern the direct impact of innovation on performance. Instances of social unrest or political turbulence may prompt embassies to divert focus away from innovation as they grapple with urgent priority issues (Lu et al., 2020; Lin et al., 2022). Conversely, the exigencies imposed by external instability may serve as catalysts for organizational innovation, compelling entities to adapt to shifting market dynamics, mitigate risks, or capitalize on emerging opportunities (Aksoy, 2023; Suwannasri & Nuangjamnong, 2022). Given the intricate interplay of factors shaping organizational performance amidst external instability, accurately assessing the direct influence of innovation on performance becomes increasingly arduous. Organizations may necessitate the deployment of sophisticated analytics, scenario planning, or qualitative assessments to gauge the efficacy of their innovation endeavors amidst turbulent market conditions (Jutidharabongse, 2024).

Meanwhile, social and geopolitical instability may indeed complicate the evaluation of the direct impact of innovation on organizational performance, it remains imperative for embassies to maintain agility, adaptability, and innovation in navigating uncertain terrains. Innovation can serve as both a response to external challenges and a conduit for competitive advantage, even amid adversity (Asay, 2021). Thus, organizations must continually scrutinize the dynamic relationship between innovation and performance within the broader context of external market conditions. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *There is no significant influence of innovative culture on Organization Performance in Saudi embassies.*

2.2.5 Organizational culture and Innovative culture

In the context of Saudi embassies, both organizational culture and innovative culture exert significant influence over the operations, efficacy, and

public perception of these diplomatic missions. Organizational culture encompasses elements such as hierarchical structures, reflective of entrenched values and practices, as well as formality and protocol, emphasizing respect for hierarchy and adherence to embassy policies (Alotaibi, 2022). Conversely, innovative culture pertains to the adoption of technology, cultivation of an entrepreneurial mindset, and promotion of collaboration and networking (Chaban, 2023).

In essence, while Saudi embassies may exhibit a predominantly traditional organizational culture, there is a burgeoning acknowledgment of the imperative to nurture innovation within diplomatic realms. Striking a balance between traditional values and protocols and a forward-thinking, innovative mindset holds the potential to augment the effectiveness and relevance of Saudi embassies in an increasingly intricate and interconnected global landscape (Alqahtani, 2023). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 5 (H5): *There is no significant influence of organizational culture on innovative culture In Saudi embassies.*

2.2.6 Organizational culture and Organizational performance

Businesses that prioritize a culture of continuous learning and enhancement typically cultivate an environment conducive to innovation and experimentation. Such a culture fosters knowledge exchange, promotes risk-taking, and fosters receptivity to novel ideas, empowering employees to contribute their unique perspectives and engage in collaborative problem-solving (Alateeg, 2024). Factors such as employee engagement or external influences mediate the relationship between organizational culture and innovation. Expanding research beyond the scope of Saudi Arabian enterprises and integrating longitudinal studies and qualitative methodologies can further enrich the understanding and application of organizational culture, strategic leadership, and innovation within diverse contexts (Lam et al., 2021). Therefore, the



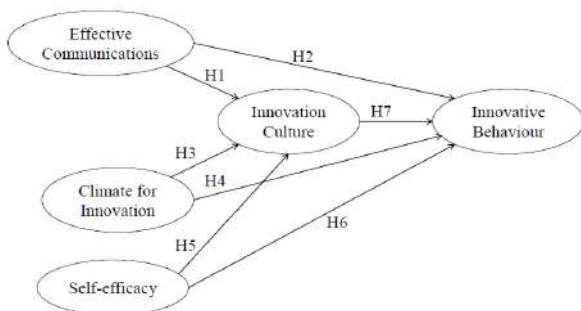
following hypothesis is posited:

Hypothesis 6 (H6): There is no significant influence of organizational culture on organizational performance in Saudi embassies.

2.3 Theoretical frameworks:

2.3.1 Firstly, this theoretical framework has identified five components or dimensions that form the basis of the proposed model of innovation culture. They are (1) effective communications, (2) climate for innovation, (3) self-efficacy, (4) innovation culture, and (5) innovative behavior is illustrated in Figure 1.

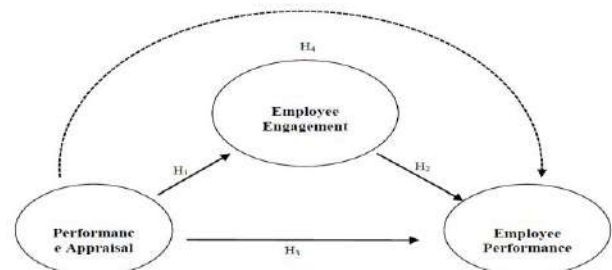
Figure 1. Determinants of innovation culture amongst higher education students



Source: Roffeei, S. H. M., Yusop, F. D., & Kamarulzaman, Y. (2018). Determinants of innovation culture amongst higher education students. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, 17(1), 37-50.

2.3.2 The second theoretical framework indicates the relationship between employee engagement, employee performance and performance appraisal. The research shows performance appraisals in particular, has a direct impact on the two other aforementioned factors are illustrated in Figure 2.

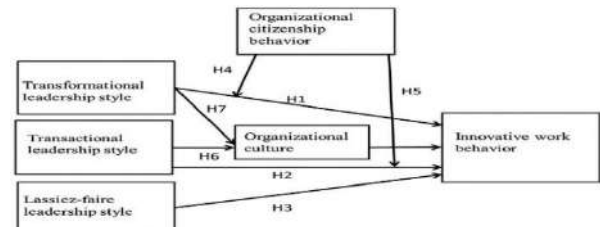
Figure 2. Regulatory effect of performance appraisal reactions on legal employee performance mediated by employee engagement



Source: Mahdiyana, S., Muhtar, E.A., Irawati, I., & Candradewini. (2022). Regulatory effect of performance appraisal reactions on legal employee performance mediated by employee engagement. *Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues*, 25(4), 1-14.

2.3.3 The third framework, explores the interplay of Leadership Styles, Innovative Work Behavior, Organizational Culture, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The Interplay of Leadership Styles, Innovative Work Behavior, Organizational Culture, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior



Source: Khan, M. A., Ismail, F. B., Hussain, A., & Alghazali, B. (2020). The Interplay of Leadership Styles, Innovative Work Behavior, Organizational Culture, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *SAGE Open*, 10 (1).

2.3.4 The fourth hypothesis explores the relationship between Leadership style, Organizational Culture and Performance in China's manufacturing industry is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Leadership Style, Organizational Culture and Performance: Evidence from China's Manufacturing Industry



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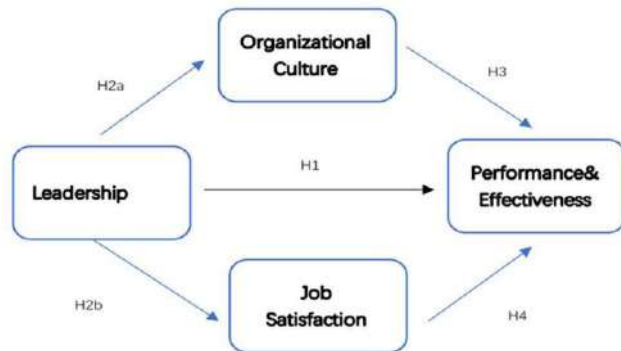
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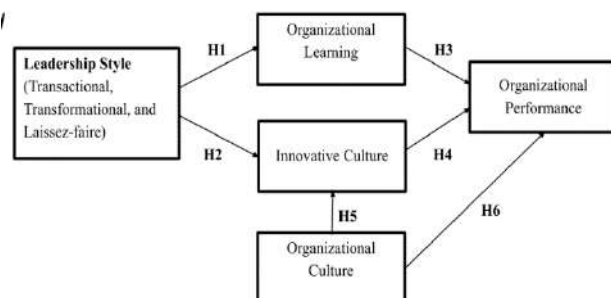


Source: Li, Shiqi. (2021). Leadership Style, Organizational Culture and Performance: Evidence from China's Manufacturing Industry. 10.2991/assehr.k.211209.044.

2.4 Conceptual framework:

This approach examines leadership styles, organizational culture, learning, innovation, and performance. It examines how leadership styles affect corporate culture, learning, and performance and how they promote innovation. This framework (Figure 5) helps executives understand how their leadership style affects an organization's culture, learning, adaptability, and performance. These dynamics can assist leaders make educated team and organization leadership decisions. This approach examines how leadership styles affect these critical characteristics and improve innovative company culture. Knowing how leadership, culture, learning, and performance relate.

Figure 5. Factors uncovering the Dynamics of Leadership, Learning, Innovation and Culture in Saudi Embassies



Source: Constructed by researcher

2.5 Hypotheses development

The researcher developed six hypotheses based on conceptual frameworks to examine leadership styles, organizational learning, innovative culture, and organizational performance in Saudi embassies.

This study hypothesizes that leadership styles, organizational learning, innovative culture, organizational culture, and performance in a Saudi embassy context are related. Transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles are examined to determine if they impact organizational learning and creativity in embassies.

It also examines how organizational learning and innovation affect performance. This study explores the broader effects of creative culture and organizational performance. The researcher aims to understand how these elements influence the success and adaptation of Saudi embassies and their workers using data analysis. Proposed hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is no significant influence of leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings on organizational learning in Saudi embassies.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is no significant influence of leadership styles in transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire settings on innovative culture In Saudi embassies.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is no significant influence of organizational learning on organizational performance in Saudi embassies.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): There is no significant influence of innovative culture on organizational performance In Saudi embassies.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): There is no significant influence of organizational culture on innovative culture In Saudi embassies.

Hypothesis 6 (H6): There is no significant influence of organizational culture on organizational performance in Saudi embassies.



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3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The objective of this research is to delve into the nuanced distinctions between transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles within the unique context of Saudi Arabian embassies, while examining their respective impacts on organizational learning, innovative culture, and overall organizational performance. To accomplish this, a combination of various analytical techniques were employed, such as Cronbach's Alpha, Singular and Multiple Linear Regression,

The research employed a questionnaire divided in three sections, organized as follows: 3 screening questions, 7 demographic questions, and 24 questions to measure involved variables.

The consistency of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha to ensure the questionnaire's effectiveness and identify any potential ambiguity or uncertainty of the items. A pilot test was conducted involving a sample of 99 respondents. This pilot testing procedure allowed for the refinement and validation of the questionnaire prior to its full-scale implementation.

To analyze respondents' inclination and level of agreement in relation to each variable, a Likert scale was utilized. This psychometric instrument is structured with "1" indicating "Strong agree" and "5" as "Strongly disagree". The Likert scale provided a standardized and reliable method for measuring the intensity and direction of respondents' opinion on the variables included in the study.

In addition to primary data collection through the questionnaire, secondary research from reliable sources and articles is incorporated to provide broader context and insights into the topic under investigation. By employing a rigorous quantitative research approach supplemented by qualitative insights, this study endeavors to uncover the underlying mechanisms driving success within Saudi embassies, offering valuable implications for organizational leadership and management practices within diplomatic settings.

3.2 Sampling Plan

3.2.1 Target Population

The target population for this study comprises employees of the embassy of Saudi Arabia, a selection that offers a unique opportunity to delve into the intricacies of leadership styles, organizational learning, innovative culture, organizational culture, and organizational performance within this specific context. By focusing on individuals directly associated with the embassy, the research aims to capture firsthand insights and experiences that are pertinent to understanding the dynamics at play within the organization.

This includes individuals who have held positions with leadership responsibilities or have worked closely with leaders within Saudi embassies, as they possess invaluable firsthand knowledge and perspectives on the prevailing leadership styles and organizational culture within the embassy setting. This targeted approach ensures that the research is grounded in the lived experiences and observations of those most intimately familiar with the organizational dynamics, thereby enriching the depth and relevance of the findings.

3.2.2 Sample Size

According to the limitation of population size this research utilizes sample size estimating instead. Caluation.net website (n.d.) was applied in this research. From various nationalities across global Saudi embassies who have been working for different number of years and departments, based upon an estimated of 4,500 world employees with confident level 95%, margin of error at 9%, and population proportion of 50%. Therefore, the suitable sample size for such a number of Saudi Embassies employees (116) however due to the difficulty in collecting responses from staff members around the world, the researcher was only able to collect and consider 140 respondents.

3.2.3 Sampling Procedure

The utilization of a random sampling procedure in my research was driven by a commitment to ensuring



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the representativeness and generalizability of the findings to the broader population. By employing random sampling, every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the study, thereby minimizing the risk of bias and enhancing the external validity of the results. This approach was particularly crucial in contexts where the target population was well-defined and homogenous, as it allowed for the creation of a sample that accurately reflected the population's characteristics.

Additionally, random sampling helped to mitigate the influence of confounding variables and unknown factors that could skew the results, leading to more robust and reliable conclusions. Furthermore, the transparent and systematic nature of random sampling instilled confidence in the integrity of the research process, demonstrating a commitment to methodological rigor and scientific validity. Overall, the decision to employ a random sampling procedure was grounded in a desire to maximize the accuracy, reliability, and generalizability of the research findings, ultimately contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the field.

3.3 Research Instrument and Questionnaire Design

The researcher used questionnaires to evaluate the main factors and associations associated with the research variables. These questionnaires were conducted through an online survey of eligible participants and were divided into three sections. The first section contained screening questions (3 questions) to identify respondents who could provide insight into leadership styles, organizational learning, innovative culture, organizational culture, and organizational performance at a Saudi embassy. The second section (7 questions) of demographics profiles included aged, gender, position role, working year, education, department, leadership experience. Third section contains 25 scale items covering both dependent and independent variables. The last section focused on collecting demographic information from respondents.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

3.4.1 Content validity with the index of item-objective congruence

The researcher evaluated the survey questionnaire question validity using the IOC index. Three experts were consulted and provided feedback on the survey before the research questionnaire was distributed. Feedback received a score higher than 0.5 thus passing the validity test. Due to the mentioned results, the survey was slightly modified to reflect the provided feedback, this ensured the questions focused on the investigated variables and were precise and relevant, resulting in trustworthy and reliable data for this research as the results shown in Table 1.



Table 1. The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index with three experts.

Variables	Items before checking by experts	Items after checking by experts	IOC Weight Scores
Leadership Styles (LS)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Organizational Learning (OL)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Innovative Culture (IC)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Organizational culture (OC)	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Organizational performance (OP)	5	4	0.67 – 1.00

3.4.2 Reliability Test (Pilot Test)

The researcher chose 99 respondents to conduct a pilot test in an attempt to examine the survey's variables and their respective questions. Cronbach's alpha (CA) was utilized to determine the reliability of the questionnaire and assess its consistency during the pilot test stage. According to Schweizer (2011), Cronbach's Alpha is a popular approach that is frequently used by researchers who want to measure reliability when compared to the other three methods, which are test-retest, split-half methods, and parallel-test. *Cronbach's Alpha and Internal Consistency's Rules* - $\alpha > 0.9$ Excellent, $0.8 < \alpha < 0.9$ Good, $0.7 < \alpha < 0.8$ Acceptable, $0.6 < \alpha < 0.7$ Questionable, $0.5 < \alpha < 0.6$ Poor, and $\alpha < 0.5$ Unacceptable.

Cronbach's Alpha to perform a questionnaire reliability analysis. The evaluation presents the results from all five variables influencing Leadership Styles and their impact on learning, innovation and culture at Saudi embassies. The reliability resulted from items in the Innovative Culture variables at 0.938, followed by Organizational Culture at 0.925, Organizational Learning at 0.903, Organizational Performance at 0.898 and 0.806 from Leadership Styles. Having all variable results with a value greater than 0.7 is a testament of the validity and reliability of the considered factors in the study.

Table 2. The Cronbach's Alpha value of Reliability Analysis of each variable ($n=99$)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Leadership Styles	0.806	Good
Organizational Learning	0.903	Excellent
Innovative Culture	0.938	Excellent
Organizational culture	0.925	Excellent
Organizational performance	0.898	Good

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Description Analysis of Demographic Data

The researcher distributed the questionnaire and removed the respondents who were deemed unfit to take part in the research, leaving a total of 136 respondents. The researcher has included demographic information such as: age, gender, position and role, years of experience in a Saudi embassy role, highest level of education, department affiliation and supervisory or leadership experience. This information has enabled the researcher to understand the characteristics of respondents and to draw comparisons. A detailed breakdown of the demographic information is shown in table 3 and summarized here:

Age: The biggest range of responses were from age 35-54(80.1% of all respondents). The second was 55-64



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(with 10.3% of all respondents). The third was age 25-34 (7.4% of all respondents). Ages 18-24 was 0%, the category 'prefer not to say' comprised 1.5% of respondents and lastly 65+ was 0.7 % of the total respondents.

Gender: The majority of answers were from males (91.9% of the total participants), and the second from women (6.6%). 'I prefer not to say' Very small percentage 1.5%

Position and role: The category with the highest number of participants was department head (65.4% of participants), followed by another category (12.5% of participants). The deputy head of the diplomatic mission came in the same percentage (12.5% of the sample), the deputy head of the department came in fourth place (5.1% of the sample), and the head of the diplomatic mission came in fifth place (4.4% of the sample).

Years of Experience in Saudi embassy role: The majority of respondents had 11-15 years' experience in a Saudi embassy role (34.6% of respondents), followed closely by 5-10 years' experience (31.6% of respondents), third was 16-20 years (16.2% of respondents), fourth was less than 5 years (10.3% of respondents) and more than 20 years was fifth (7.4% of respondents).

Highest Level of Education: The majority of respondents had a Bachelor Degree (52. 2% of respondents, the second largest category with Master's Degree (38.2% of respondents), third was Diploma level (5.9% of respondents), fourth was Secondary Education (2.2%). No respondents answered Doctorate/Ph.D. or Other. (1.5% of respondents)

Department Affiliation: The majority of respondents answered Other (22.8%), the second was Consular Services Department (21.3 %), third was Administrative Affairs Department (13.5%), fourth was Head of Mission Department (12.5%), fifth was the Department of Political Affairs (10.3%), sixth was both the Financial Affairs Department and the Citizens Affairs Department (both with 7.4%), seventh was Media Affairs Department (2.9%) and eighth was Cultural Affairs Department (2.2%).

Supervisory or Leadership Experience: The largest group of respondents were currently in a leadership role (54.4%), the second were previously in a leadership role (29.4%), the third 'prefer not to say' (11.0%) and the fewest respondents had no leadership experience (5.1%).

Table 3. Demographic information analysis by using frequency distribution and percentage (n = 136)

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percent
Age		
18-24	0	0%
25-34	10	7.4%
35-54	109	80.1%
55-64	14	10.3%
65+	1	0.7%
Prefer not to say	2	1.5%
Total	136	100%
Gender		



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Male	125	91.9%
Female	9	6.6%
Not Specified	2	1.5%
Total	136	100%
Position and Role		
Head of Diplomatic Mission	6	4.4%
Deputy Head of Diplomatic Mission	17	12.5%
Head of the Department	89	65.4%
Deputy Head of the Department	7	5.1%
Other	17	12.5%
Total	136	100%
Years of experience in Saudi Embassy role		
Less than 5 years	10	10.3%
5-10 years	32	31.6%
11-15 years	37	34.6%
16-20 years	15	16.2%
More than 20 years	5	7.4%
Total	136	100%
Highest Level of Education		
Secondary Education	3	2.2%
Diploma	8	5.9%
Bachelor's Degree	71	52.2%
Master's Degree	52	38.2%
Doctorate/Ph.D.	2	1.2%
Other	0	0%
Total	136	100%
Department Affiliation		
Consular Services Department	29	21.3%
Media Affairs Department	4	2.9%
Cultural Affairs Department	3	2.2%
Financial Affairs Department	10	7.4%
Department of Political Affairs	14	10.3%
Administrative Affairs Department	18	13.2%
Citizens Affairs Department	10	7.4%
Head of Mission Department	17	12.5%
Other	31	



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		22.8%
Total	136	100%
Supervisory or Leadership Experience		
Yes, currently in a leadership role	74	54.4%
Yes, previously in a leadership role	40	29.4%
No leadership experiences	7	5.1%
Prefer not to say	15	11.0%
Total	136	100%

4. 2 Descriptive Analysis with Mean and Standard Deviation

This section showcases the Mean and Standard Deviation for each group: Leadership Style, Organizational Learning, Innovative Culture, Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance. In order to evaluate the mean scores, I used a criterion of the interpretation of the mean scores from Imsa-ard et al, (2021):

Range	Interpretation
4.21 -5.00	Strongly Agree
3.41 -4.20	Agree
2.61 -3.40	Neutral
1.81 -2.60	Disagree
1.00 -1.80	Strongly Disagree

Leadership Style

Table 4 represents the results among 136 respondents and 0 missing respondents, showing the highest mean of leadership style was LS2 “The leadership style at the embassy encourages open communication and participation in decision-making” with 4.31. The lowest mean was LS5 with “At the embassy, leaders often adopt a hands-off approach and allow team members to make decisions without much intervention.” with 3.81. The highest standard deviation was LS3: “The leaders at the embassy inspire and

motivate team members to achieve the company's vision and goals” with 1.26. The lowest standard deviation was LS2: “The leadership style at the embassy encourages open communication and participation in decision-making processes.” with 0.89.

Organizational Learning

From 136 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the below table shows the highest mean of organizational learning was OL1 “I think the embassy provides effective training programs that contribute to my professional development” with 3.26. The lowest mean was OL4: “In my opinion, the embassy values continuous learning and skill development among its employees” with 2.77. The highest standard deviation was OL1: “I think the embassy provides effective training programs that contribute to my professional development” with 1.34. The lowest standard deviation was OL5: “I perceive the embassy as an organization that prioritizes employee feedback and uses it for continuous improvement and learning” with 1.12.

Innovative Culture

From 136 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the below table shows the highest mean of Innovative Culture was IC4: “I perceive the embassy as an organization that rewards and recognizes innovative contributions from its employees”. with 3.10. The lowest



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mean was IC2: "In my opinion, the embassy values creativity and encourages employees to explore new and unconventional ideas" with 2.82. The highest standard deviation for Innovative Culture was IC2: "In my opinion, the embassy values creativity and encourages employees to explore new and unconventional ideas." with 1.22. The lowest standard deviation was for IC1: "I believe that the embassy actively promotes and supports innovative thinking and practices within the organization." with 1.16.

Organizational Culture

From 136 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the below table shows the highest mean of Organizational Culture was OC3: "Leadership demonstrates a commitment to transparency and open communication" with 2.82. The lowest mean were both OC1: "Employees feel empowered to make decisions and take ownership of their work." with 2.67 and OC2: "There is a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration among employees." with 2.67 as well. The highest standard deviation was OC5: "Leadership demonstrates a commitment to transparency and open

communication" with 1.20. The lowest standard deviation was 1.13 for both: OC1: "Employees feel empowered to make decisions and take ownership of their work" and OC2: "There is a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration among employees".

Organizational Performance

From 136 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the below table shows the highest mean of Organizational Performance was OP1: "My team leader is integral to my performance (achieving goals and objectives)" with 2.27. The lowest mean was OP4: "Having freedom in the workplace enhances my productivity and performance" with 1.81. The highest standard deviations were both OP1: My team leader is integral to my performance (achieving goals and objectives) with 1.15 and OP2: "Positive feedback from members of leadership enhances my performance at work" at 1.15 as well. The lowest standard deviation was OP4: "Having freedom in the workplace enhances my productivity and performance." with 1.01.

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Leadership Style			
LS1: I feel that leaders at the embassy make their decisions without considering the input of team members.	4.06	1.060	Agree
LS2: The leadership style at the embassy encourages open communication and participation in decision-making processes.	4.31	0.890	Strongly Agree
LS3: The leaders at the embassy inspire and motivate team members to achieve the company's vision and goals.	3.89	1.260	Agree
LS4: I perceive that the leadership in the embassy prioritizes serving the needs of the team members and empowering them to succeed.	3.98	1.120	Agree
LS5: At the embassy, leaders often adopt a hands-off approach and allow team members to make decisions without much intervention.	3.81	1.160	Agree
Organizational Learning			
OL1: I think the embassy provides effective training programs that contribute to my professional development.	3.26	1.340	Neutral



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OL2: I believe the embassy has a strong culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration that enhances learning.	2.82	1.270	Neutral
OL3: I feel that the embassy fosters an environment that encourages innovation and the exploration of new ideas.	2.93	1.200	Neutral
OL4: In my opinion, the embassy values continuous learning and skill development among its employees.	2.77	1.260	Neutral
OL5: I perceive the embassy as an organization that prioritizes employee feedback and uses it for continuous improvement and learning.	2.86	1.120	Neutral
Innovative Culture			
IC1: I believe that the embassy actively promotes and supports innovative thinking and practices within the organization.	2.94	1.160	Neutral
IC2: In my opinion, the embassy values creativity and encourages employees to explore new and unconventional ideas.	2.84	1.220	Neutral
IC3: I think the embassy provides ample resources and opportunities to pursue innovative projects and initiatives.	3.08	1.170	Neutral
IC4: I perceive the embassy as an organization that rewards and recognizes innovative contributions from its employees.	3.10	1.210	Neutral
IC5: I feel that the embassy's leadership champions a culture of continuous improvement and innovation throughout the organization.	2.91	1.180	Neutral
Organizational Culture			
OC1: Employees feel empowered to make decisions and take ownership of their work.	2.67	1.130	Neutral
OC2: There is a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration among employees.	2.67	1.130	Neutral
OC3: Leadership demonstrates a commitment to transparency and open communication.	2.82	1.300	Neutral
OC4: The organization values diversity and promotes inclusivity in the workplace.	2.77	1.190	Neutral
OC5: Employees have opportunities for professional development and growth within the company.	2.72	1.200	Neutral
Organizational Performance			
OP1: My team leader is integral to my performance (achieving goals and objectives).	2.27	1.150	Disagree
OP2: Positive feedback from members of leadership enhances my performance at work.	2.10	1.150	Disagree
OP4: Having freedom in the workplace enhances my productivity and performance.	1.81	1.010	Disagree
OP5: The culture of innovation encourages my performance in the workplace.	1.93	1.040	Disagree

4.3 Hypothesis Testing Result

To analyze the hypothesis testing results, the researcher applied linear regression testing using the elements listed above. This enabled the researcher to understand the relationship between each of the variables, such as the influence of Leadership Style on Organizational Performance, Organizational Learning, Organizational Culture and Innovative Culture. The researcher used simple linear regression analysis with R-square to examine the variance portion on the dependent variable which is described by the independent variables. This study also uses multiple linear regressions to examine the level of factors influencing Organizational Performance. Ringle et al. (2015) analyzed a significant impact between dependent and independent variables. Independent variables in regression analysis should be accepted if the value of variance inflation factor is less than 5 with R-square to indicate the portion of variance in the dependent variable which is determined on independent variables.

4.3.1 Result of Simple Linear Regression of H1 (Leadership Style – Organizational Learning)

Ho: There is no significant influence of leadership style (H1) on Organizational Learning in Saudi

embassies.

Ha: There is a significant influence of leadership style (H1) on Organizational Learning in Saudi embassies.

Table 5 indicates the analysis calculation result by Simple Linear Regression which does not show a significant influence of Leadership Style on Organizational Learning in Saudi embassies. Hypothesis 1 analysis results show that the significant level or P-value from this research is over 0.05. Accordingly, due to P-value more than 0.05, we can therefore infer a rejection failure of the null hypothesis. Which means there is no significant influence of Leadership Style on Organizational Learning in Saudi Embassies. Moreover, the regression analysis result indicated that this model has a variance of 13.7 % and this model was significant with P-value more than 0.05. The R-square from analysis is 0.00137 and the confidence level of this model is 95%. The result can conclude that Leadership Style has no significant influence on Organizational Learning (B = -0.0479, p-value more than 0.05). In addition, the result from the value of variance inflation factor (VIF) of Leadership Style is 1.000. VIF is less than 5, implying that no issue occurred in multicollinearity.

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 1

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Leadership Style	-0.0479	0.112	-0.0370	-0.429	0.669	1.00	Fail to Reject

Note: $R^2 = 0.00137$, Adjusted $R^2 = -0.00608$, * $p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable = Organizational Learning

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor



4.3.2 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H2, H5 (Leadership Style, Organizational Culture – Innovative Culture)

Ho: There is no significant influence of Leadership Style (H2) and Organizational Culture (H5) on Innovative Culture.

Ha: There is a significant influence of Leadership Style (H2) and Organizational Culture (H5) on Innovative Culture.

Table 6 indicates the analysis calculation result by Multiple Linear Regression which shows a significant influence of leadership styles on Innovative Culture but there is no significance influence of organizational Culture on Innovative Culture at Saudi embassies. Regarding Hypothesis 2, Leadership Style analysis results show that the significant level or P-value from this study is 0.767, being that P-value is more than 0.05, it can be implied that null hypothesis was not rejected. With this result, it can be summarized that there is not a significant influence of Leadership Style on Innovative Culture Saudi Embassies.

On the other hand, Hypothesis 5 analysis results show that the significant level or P-value from this research is <0.001. Accordingly, as P-value is less than 0.05. We can therefore infer a rejection of the null hypothesis. Which means there is a significant influence of Organizational Culture on Innovative Culture in Saudi Embassies. Moreover, the regression analysis result indicated that this model has a variance of 69.0 % and this model was significant with P-value less than 0.05. The R-square from analysis has 0.690 and the confidence level of this model is 95%. The result can conclude that Leadership Style has a significant influence on Innovative Culture (B = 0.0189, p-value 0.767) and Organizational Culture has not a significant influence on Innovative Culture (B = 0.8550, p-value <0.05). In addition, the result from the value of variance inflation factor (VIF) of both hypotheses is 1.03. VIF is less than 5, implying that no issue occurred in multicollinearity.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 2 and 5

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	V IF	Null Hypothesis
H 2 : Leadership Style	0.0189	0.0636	0.0145	0.297	0.767	1.03	Fail To Reject
H 5 : Organizational Culture	0.8550	0.0503	0.8327	17.003	< 0.001*	1.03	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.690$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.685$, * $p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable = Innovative Culture

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β = the standardized beta | t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

4.3.3 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H3, H4 and H6 (Organizational Learning, Innovative Culture and Organizational Culture – Organizational Performance)

Ho: There is no significant influence of Organizational Learning (H3), Innovative Culture (H4) and Organizational Culture (H6) on Organizational Performance

Ha: There is a significant influence of Organizational Learning (H3), Innovative Culture (H4) and Organizational Culture (H6) on Organizational Performance

Table 7 indicates the analysis calculation result by Multiple Linear Regression which shows no significant influence of Organizational Learning and Innovative Culture on Organizational Performance but there is a significance influence of Organizational Culture on Organizational Performance at Saudi embassies. Regarding Hypothesis 3, Organizational Learning analysis results show that the significant level or P-value from this study is 0.827, being that P-value is more than 0.05, it can be implied that null hypothesis was not rejected. With this result, it can be summarized that there is not a significant influence of Organizational Learning



on Organizational Performance Saudi Embassies.

On the other hand, Hypothesis 4 analysis results show that the significant level or P-value from this research is 0.641, being that P-value is less more than 0.05, once again we can therefore infer a rejection failure of the null hypothesis. Which means there is no significant influence of Innovative Culture on Organizational Performance Saudi Embassies.

As of Hypothesis 6 analysis results show that the significant level or P-value from this research is <0.001. Accordingly, as P-value is less than 0.05, we can therefore infer a rejection of the null hypothesis, which means there is a significant influence of Organizational Culture on Organizational Performance in Saudi Embassies.

Moreover, the regression analysis result indicated that this model has a variance of 27.4 % and this model was significant with P-value less than 0.05. The R-square from analysis has 0.274 and the confidence level of this model is 95% . The result can conclude that Organizational Learning has no significant influence on Organizational Performance (B = 0.0300, p-value 0.827), Innovative Culture has no significant influence on Organizational Performance (B = -0.0714, p-value 0.641) and lastly, Organizational Culture has a significant influence on Organizational Performance (B = 0.4899, p-value < 0.05). The results from the value of variance inflation factor (VIF) of all hypotheses but one was below 5 implying that no issues occurred in multicollinearity other than with Innovative Culture (VIF = 5.94).

Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 3, 4 and 6

Variable s	B	SE B	β	t	p	V IF	Null Hypothesis
H 3 : Organizational Learning	0.0300	0.137	0.0354	0.219	0.827	4.75	Fail to Reject
H 4 :	-	0.1	-	-	0.6	5.	Fail to

Innovative Culture	0.0714	53	0.0845	0.467	41	94	Reject
H 6 : Organizational Culture	0.4899	0.118	0.5643	4.169	< 0.001*	3.33	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.274$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.257$, * $p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable = Organizational Performance

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | B = the standardized beta (β) | t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

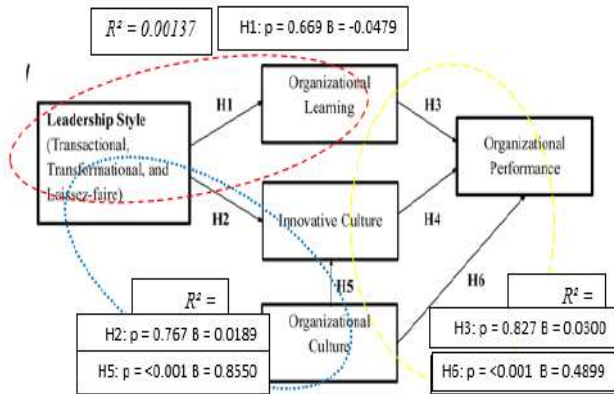
5. CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The research uses both Simple and Multiple Linear Regression techniques to test the hypotheses. Simple Linear Regression was used once to analyze the significant influence of Leadership Style on Organizational Learning (H1). The independent variable was more than 0.05, failing to reject the null hypothesis.

Multiple Linear Regression was employed to investigate the significant influence of Leadership Style (H2) and Organizational Culture (H5) on Innovative Culture. The independent variable (H2) was more than 0.05, resulting in the rejection failure of the null hypothesis. The independent variable (H5) was less than 0.05, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. Lastly, Multiple Linear Regression was employed to investigate the significant influence of Organizational Learning (H3), Innovative Culture (H4) and Organizational Culture (H6) on Organizational Performance.

Figure 6. Summary of hypothesis testing results.



The independent variable (H3) was more than 0.05, resulting in the rejection failure of the null hypothesis. The independent variable (H4) was more than 0.05, resulting in the rejection failure of the null hypothesis. The independent variable (H6) was less than 0.05, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 8. Summary of the hypothesis testing results

Statement of Hypothesis	p-value	Decision Results
H1: There is no significant influence of leadership on organizational learning In Saudi embassies.	0.669	Fail to Reject
H2: There is no significant influence of leadership on innovative culture In Saudi embassies.	0.767	Fail to Reject
H3: There is no significant influence of organizational learning on organizational performance In Saudi embassies.	0.827	Fail to Reject
H4: There is no significant influence of innovative culture on organizational performance In Saudi embassies.	0.641	Fail to Reject
H5: There is a significant influence of organizational culture on innovative culture In Saudi embassies.	< 0.001*	Rejected
H6: There is a significant influence of organizational culture on organizational performance In Saudi embassies.	< 0.001*	Rejected

5.2 Discussion and Conclusion

Upon reviewing the hypothesis testing results from Chapter 4, the researcher concludes that Leadership Styles has no significant influence on both Organizational Learning and Innovative Culture in Saudi Embassies. At the same time, Organizational Learning and Innovative Culture present no significant influence Organizational Performance. On the contrary, Organizational culture present a significant influence on both Innovative Culture or Organizational Performance.

5.2.1 Organizational culture, Innovative Culture and Organizational Performance

The study's findings underscore the paramount importance of organizational culture as the primary driver of innovative culture and organizational performance within Saudi embassies. With a robust unstandardized coefficient of 0.855, the relationship between organizational culture and innovative culture emerges as the strongest among the variables examined. This suggests that the prevailing cultural norms, values, and behaviors within an organization profoundly influence its ability to foster innovation. Moreover, the significance of organizational culture extends beyond innovation to impact organizational performance, as evidenced by the substantial unstandardized coefficient of 0.453. This implies that a strong organizational culture not only promotes innovation but also contributes positively to overall organizational effectiveness and success.

Bendak's (2020) research further supports these findings by identifying key organizational cultural traits—creativity, autonomy, collaboration, and risk-taking—as catalysts for innovation. Organizations are encouraged to cultivate these cultural attributes tailored to their specific context and industry. This cultivation may involve facilitating resource accessibility, maintaining a customer-centric focus, fostering employee involvement, promoting cooperation, embracing ongoing learning initiatives, and fostering adaptability.

The multiple linear regression model for



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Organizational Culture and Innovative Culture shows the R-square is 0.690, indicating approximately 69.0%. A higher R-square value suggests that a larger proportion of the variability in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variable. The confidence level is high at 95% indicating a high probability that the true relationship between the variables lies within the estimated parameters of the model. Whereas for Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance, the R-square value is 0.274, indicating that approximately only 27.4% of the variability in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables included in the model. It also showed a high confidence level of 95%. For Innovative Culture and Organizational Performance, the R-square is once again 0.274 or 27.4% and the confidence level is again 95%.

5.2.2 Leadership Styles, Organizational Learning, and Innovative Culture

In contrast, Innovative Culture exhibited the weakest relationship with organizational performance in the study, as indicated by the relatively low unstandardized coefficient of - 0.0714. This suggests that while Innovative Culture might play a role in shaping organizational performance, other variables may have a more significant impact in this regard. Also, Leadership Styles don't seem to play a significant role on Organizational Learning, as indicated by the relatively low unstandardized coefficient of - 0.0479. Sitinjak (2023) suggests one plausible explanation for this weaker relationship could be the concept of "adaptive learning," wherein organizational learning thrives when individuals are not constrained by rigid leadership structures. In such instances, leadership might inadvertently act as a limiting factor rather than a facilitator of learning processes within the organization. This highlights the need for leadership approaches that embrace flexibility and openness to accommodate diverse learning styles and encourage experimentation and knowledge sharing across all levels of the organization.

An R-square value in the simple linear regression model for Organizational Learning and Leadership Styles was 0.00137 or 13.7% and a multiple linear regression for Leadership Styles and Innovative Culture was 0.690 or 69.0% of the variability in the dependent variable. This suggests that the independent variables have very little explanatory power over the dependent variable in both instances. In the context of regression analysis, such a low R-square value implies that the model does not effectively capture or explain the variability in the dependent variable based on the independent variables included in the analysis. This could suggest that the model may be mis specified or that there are other influential factors not accounted for in the analysis.

5.3 Recommendations based on Findings

In this section, the researcher aims to contribute recommendations to support an understanding of the relationship of the variables within the study and the hypotheses presented. As such, Saudi embassy stakeholders should have an awareness of the variables in this study and the way they interact with one another. Stakeholders who understand the dynamics of leadership, learning, innovation, and culture within their embassies are better equipped to make informed decisions. They can better understand how to leverage learning opportunities, foster innovation, and cultivate a positive culture and a working environment where team members feel motivated, engaged, and empowered to achieve their goals.

Based on the results from this study and even if according to the Schein's model, summarized by Mikušová (2023), Organizational Culture commonly represent the core values, attitudes, and beliefs entrenched within an organization, fostering ongoing learning process and influencing job satisfaction and emotional well-being, investing a significant amount of money and time in developing Organizational Culture if the desired outcome is innovation or performance. According to this research, there's no correlation between these that would justify such investment.



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5.4 Implications based on findings and theories

The study findings provide important implications for both theoretical understanding and findings. Exploring the relationship between leadership styles and organizational culture within Saudi embassies. The results indicate that transformational leadership is positively associated with a culture of innovation, while transactional leadership is more closely associated with a culture of stability and tradition. In addition, the study results indicate the critical role of continuous learning in promoting innovation within organizations. The concept of a learning organization, where employees are encouraged to continually develop their skills and knowledge, is essential to stimulate innovation and adapt to changing external environments. By fostering a culture of learning within Saudi embassies, leaders can create a more dynamic and innovative work environment. Moreover, the results highlighted the importance of aligning organizational culture with the goals and values of the organization. Practical implications of the study's findings include the need to develop training programs focused on enhancing leadership skills, promoting a culture of learning, and nurturing innovation within Saudi embassies. By investing in leadership development initiatives, organizations can develop a cadre of effective leaders who are able to inspire and motivate their teams towards achieving organizational goals. Furthermore, the study results highlight the importance of promoting a culture of openness, cooperation, and knowledge exchange within Saudi embassies. By encouraging employees to share ideas, perspectives, and best practices, organizations can harness the collective intelligence of their workforce and drive innovation. Leaders in Saudi embassies can create a work environment conducive to innovation, growth, and success.

5.5 Limitations of the study

In accordance with the researcher's investigations, the study presented several noteworthy limitations. First and foremost, the study narrowly examined the factors influencing leadership styles and whether their success and influence on innovation, learning and performance is merely related to the leadership style per se or if they

are greatly influenced by the embassy geographical location or leaders' unique personalities. Additionally, the sample size of 136 respondents may not adequately capture and analyze the presented variables when taking into considerations that Saudi Embassies have presence worldwide and there are roughly 4500 employees. These limitations underscore the importance of exercising caution when interpreting and extending the conclusions of the study. In accordance, due to the low respondent rate of this study, there is a possibility of a higher risk of sampling error, which occurs when the characteristics of the sample differ significantly from those of the population. This can lead to biased estimates and less accurate conclusions. There is a limited ability to explore complex relationships between the variables as well presented in a sample group of this size and in a research study of this characteristics. As such, it is advised that Saudi embassies embark on further testing before implementing any recommendations outlined in this study.

5.6 Further Studies

Further study should be done to explore the significance of the relationship between all variables, in particular as it relates to Leadership Style and its influence on Organizational Learning and Innovative Culture.

Ensuring a bigger sample size would more appropriate to provide meaningful relationships between variables as well as using qualitative research to gather more nuanced data and therefore a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships is essential (Hennick & Kaiser, 2022).

Organizational Performance, which had a strong significant organizational learning and innovative culture would benefit from a deeper insight and research on the factors and other possible variables that could inform strategic decision-making and help embassy's leverage their cultural attributes to enhance overall performance and competitiveness.

Further use of control variables, confounders and intervening variables would also be advisable to



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understand the interconnectedness of the variables presented in the study (Bartram, 2021). For example, confounder variables in future studies could examine the influence of individual embassies staff amount. Furthermore, using intervening or mediator variables could consider factors such as employee motivation, communication effectiveness or organizational climate to determine to which extend leadership styles could be enhanced.

Geographical location could also influence the cultural, political, and socioeconomic dynamics of a region. By studying embassies in various locations, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how these contextual factors impact embassy operations, relationships with host countries, and diplomatic strategies (Thanh & Quang, 2022). For instance, the cultural and political stability of a region will impact the leadership styles used in that area. For future exploration, qualitative research would enable a more in-depth understanding of the reasons behind Leadership Styles and its effect on the discussed variables presented in this research, which would be extremely beneficial.

In summary, the study underscores the pivotal role leadership styles have on organizational learning and in driving both innovation and ultimately organizational performance, while also highlighting the lack of direct influence of organizational culture and performance. By understanding and nurturing the leadership styles conducive to innovation and organizational performance, embassies could enhance their capacity for competitive advantage and diplomatic relationships in today's dynamic international landscape.

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Analyzing the Influence of Social Media Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention: A Case Study of Fashion market in the Nepalese Market

Rakshya Khadka ¹, Chompu Nuangjamnong ²

Abstract

Purpose – This study investigates the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase intention within the Nepalese fashion market, focusing on social media influencers trustworthiness, social media influencers credibility, social media influencers authenticity, and social media influencers expertise as key factors. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – The research employs a quantitative approach, utilizing a sample size of 390 respondents who completed a structured questionnaire. Multiple linear regression analysis is used to analyze the data and explore the relationships between social media influencer characteristics and consumer purchase intention. **Findings** – The study reveals that while credibility and expertise significantly impact consumer purchase intention, trustworthiness and authenticity do not. Influencers perceived as credible and knowledgeable about fashion trends are more likely to influence consumer purchasing decisions. **Research Limitations/Implications** – Limitations include a sample population skewed towards younger, higher-income individuals from the central region of Nepal, as well as the reliance on closed-ended survey questions. Future research should consider a more diverse sample and employ mixed-methods approaches for deeper insights. **Originality/value** – This study contributes to understanding the nuances of influencer marketing in the Nepalese fashion industry, highlighting the importance of credibility and expertise in driving consumer purchase intention. It offers valuable insights for businesses and marketers seeking to enhance their influencer marketing strategies in Nepal.

Keywords – Social Media Influencer Trustworthiness, Social Media Influencer Credibility, Social Media Influencer Authenticity, Social Media Expertise and Consumer Purchase Intention

JEL classification code – M31, M37, O33, L81

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

With the rise of social media influencers who have a huge impact on consumer behavior, the fashion industry in Nepal has undergone a major

shift. Social media influencers, or SMIs, have emerged as important personalities who are influencing attitudes and setting trends in the Nepalese fashion industry. This study explores the dynamic relationship that exists between influencers and consumers, focusing on the effect

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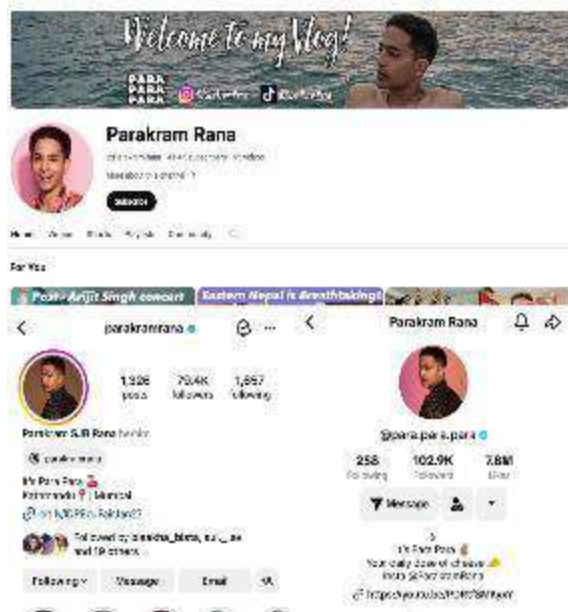


that influencers' authenticity, trustworthiness, credibility, and expertise have on consumers' intentions to make purchases. The fashion industry in Nepal is undergoing a new era as a result of the growing popularity of social media platforms. Customers are increasingly looking to influencers for guidance, recommendations, and trend insights.

A number of social media influencers have become prominent figures in Nepal's fashion industry in recent years.

For example, Parakram SJB Rana. he has a significant following due to his ability to merge traditional and current fashion with ease, and he portrays a variety of styles in an authentic way. As shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Social Media followers of Parakram SJB Rana in every social media platform



Source: Khadka, T. (2021, July 31). Parakram SJB Rana. *Nepali Trends*. Retrieved from <https://www.nepalitrends.com/parakram-sjb-rana/>

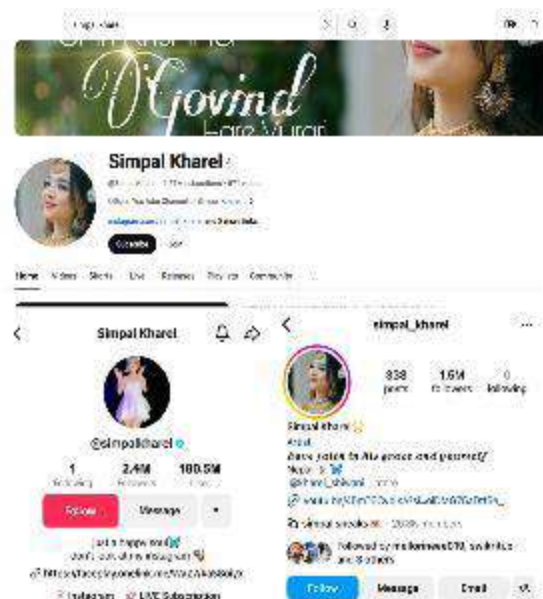
TikTok has become the source to bring hidden talented personalities among us. Parakram SJB Rana is one of them. He started making TikTok videos in 2019 and soon became popular among thousands of people. His tik tok account Para.Para. Para has more than 100K followers. He is more active in TikTok nowadays than on other platforms.

He posts about fashion trends and insights and also funny skits and fun videos with his family.

Parakram is equally active on Instagram as [@parakhamrana](#) and has almost about 80 K followers to date. He also earns from Instagram by posting videos on style and fashion. Similarly, he has started his vlogging journey through his own YouTube channel named 'Parakram Rana' with a 40K subscriber. (Khadka, 2021)

Comparably, by continuously offering insights into fashion techniques, Simpal Kharel has carved out a niche and connected with customers who care about fashion and beauty. As shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Social Media followers of Simpal Kharel in every social media platform



Source: Das, N. (2023, May 5). Simpal Kharel: Age, height, bio, wiki, family, net worth in 2023. *Mumbai Kar's Perspective*. Retrieved from <https://www.mumbaikarsperspective.com/entertainment/simpal-kharel-age-height-bio-wiki-family-net-worth-in-2023/cid10818814.htm>

Simpal Kharel is a well-known singer, and influencer. She started her career as a singer and worked in many successful music videos alongside creating content in social media platforms. From 2019 – 2023 she got famous because she started to make content on social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube shorts related to fashion and beauty alongside her singing. At



present, she has 1.5M followers on Instagram, 2.4M on TikTok and has 2.57M subscribers on YouTube. (Das, 2023)

These influencers, along with a few others, serve as examples of the various methods influencers employ to mold the fashion narrative in Nepal. In order to effectively navigate this influential landscape as it changes, brands and marketers must have a deep awareness of the complex connections that exist between customers and influencers.

With the specific context of the Nepalese fashion industry, this study aims to add significant insights to the increasing body of information on influencer marketing. Through an examination of the aspects of authenticity, trustworthiness, credibility, and expertise, this research attempts to break down the complex factors impacting consumer choices within the constantly changing domain of social media-driven fashion trends. This report offers a current and thorough investigation of the dynamic relationship that exists between consumers and social media influencers, providing actionable insights for businesses and stakeholders navigating this rapidly changing landscape as Nepal's fashion ecosystem continues to evolve.

1.2 Problem statements

Despite the growing presence of SMIs in the Nepalese fashion landscape, we don't yet have a clear understanding of how much consumers trust these influencers, perceive their content as authentic, believe in their credibility, or value their fashion expertise. The study aims to bridge this gap by delving into these specific attributes to uncover their impact on consumer behavior. By doing so, it intends to contribute valuable insights that can guide businesses, marketers, and policymakers in developing strategies that resonate more effectively with Nepalese consumers in the fashion market.

Marketers struggle to balance traditional techniques with the significant change of social media influencers (SMIs) in Nepal's dynamic fashion industry. The contradiction between traditional marketing approaches and the complex dynamics of influencer marketing is the root of the

problem at hand. Traditional strategies frequently fail to connect with digitally advanced customers in an authentic manner, making it difficult to understand how the essential influencer marketing features such as authenticity, trustworthiness, credibility, and expertise affect consumers' intentions to make purchases. The purpose of this study is to close this gap by explaining the nuanced nature of influencer marketing in the context of Nepalese fashion and guiding marketers in the direction of consumer-resonant strategies.

1.3 Objectives of study

(1) To analyze the extent of influence that social media influencers have on consumer purchase intention in the Nepalese fashion market.

(2) To examine the level of influence trustworthiness perceived by consumers in social media influencers within the Nepalese fashion market.

(3) To identify the influence authenticity of social media influencers and its impact on consumer attitudes and behaviors in the Nepalese context.

(4) To examine the influence credibility of social media influencers and its association with consumer trust and purchase intention in the Nepalese fashion industry.

(5) To examine the influence expertise in fashion demonstrated by social media influencers and its role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions.

(6) To identify ways for businesses to enhance their influencer marketing strategies based on the findings of the study.

1.4 Research questions

(1) Does the level of influence that social media influencers exert over consumers' intentions of purchasing in Nepal's fashion industry matter?

(2) Do consumer attitudes and purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion sector have a visible influence on the perceived level of trustworthiness of social media influencers?



(3) Does the authenticity of social media influencers influence the views and actions of consumers, in the context of Nepal?

(4) Does the Nepalese fashion industry's purchasing intention get influenced by the credibility of social media influencers in relation to customer trust?

(6) Does social media influencers' expertise in fashion sense have a significant influence on how customers perceive the industry and what they intend to buy in Nepal?

(7) Does the research provide businesses with influential methods to improve their influencer marketing strategies in relation to the fashion industry's insights in Nepal?

1.5 Significance of the study

1. This study explores the changing relationship between social media influencers (SMIs) and consumer behavior in Nepal's fashion industry, offering important new information about how much SMIs affect consumers' decision-making.

2. The study provides businesses in Nepal's fashion industry with concrete strategies to improve interaction with customers, improve marketing approaches, and establish genuine connections with their target audience by providing useful advice based on actual studies.

3. By connecting the gap between traditional and new marketing approaches, this study helps businesses better understand how to use influencer marketing while following their brand's values and goals. This will enable them to move confidently and quickly through Nepal's changing influencer market.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Theories related to each variable

2.1.1 SMI's Trustworthiness

It is believed that trust is a relational attribute that grows with regular interaction over time. People are able to forecast and assess the worth of upcoming exchanges based on their level of trust in

their partners. Therefore, trust plays a crucial role in maintaining partnerships (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002). Similar to this, followers who trust their influencer feel that their relationship with them would be beneficial. Customers wanted to interact with influencers and planned to buy the recommended product as a result.

Based on the idea that the younger generation is more likely to believe credible sources, Bruns-Siddiqui intends to purchase the model. According to the model, a follower's likelihood of intending to purchase an increase when they trust a genuine source. Following the model, Intention to Buy is directly and positively impacted by Trust. While trends and new items are likely to motivate Gen Z participants (Bruns, 2018), reviews are sure to excite Gen Y participants (Sethi et al., 2018)

2.1.2 SMI's Credibility

It is crucial to emphasize that firms can surpass customers' expectations by leveraging celebrity reputation. Because of the celebrity's credibility, the campaign receives positive feedback from the customer. Customers intend to heed the advice of an influencer with a high trust rating, the study shows. It seems that one of the main factors influencing consumer behavior is the influencer's trustworthiness. Furthermore, (Mainolfi & Vergura, 2021; Lin & Nuangjamnong, 2022) concluded that consumer engagement and buy intention are influenced by the social media influencers' credibility.

According to some research, influencers' credibility positively affects consumers' purchase intentions, brand trust, or both (Shamli, 2019). Influencers have been dubbed a new breed of celebrity (Khamis et al., 2017)

2.1.3 SMI's Authenticity

The significance of digital celebrities' "aura of authenticity" has been emphasized by (Pöyry et al., 2019). Additionally, they discovered that advertising behavioral results, such purchase intention, are positively impacted by providing sponsored material that is consistent with SMIs' goals and



beliefs. Duffy (2017) found that SMIs' perception of authenticity is influenced by their realness, visibility, and uniqueness, based on empirical evidence.

Authenticity by definition refers to being sincere and genuine. (Solis, 2012) bases his investigation into the use of influencers in marketing strategies on a simple idea of authenticity. He believed influencer marketing would be overused to the point that it compromised the message's legitimacy. As a result, influencer marketing would lose its credibility and lose its significance, becoming just as effective as mass media marketing. Therefore, the main advantage of influencer marketing is authenticity.

2.1.4 SMI's Expertise

Since it is the product of the communicator's professional experience and knowledge (Schouten et al., 2020), expertise is a crucial component that has been considered in a number of studies on digital influencers (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Dowpiset & Nuangjamnong, 2013; Lin & Nuangjamnong, 2022). "Experts are frequently regarded as having a high level of knowledge and being able to make trustworthy, accurate decisions" (Chetoui et al., 2020). Additionally, ref. (Wang & Wong, 2021) supported the idea that consumer involvement and purchase intention are influenced by knowledge.

2.1.5 Consumer purchase intention

Many research studies have demonstrated the impact of social influence on consumer attitudes, behaviors, and preferences. For instance, Youn and Jin (2017) demonstrated how well social impact predicts customers' intent to buy. Additionally, Kim and Johnson (2015) state that two important variables that influence a consumer's buying intentions are tight relationships with family and friends. Most studies also show that social influence impacts purchasing decisions, especially in collectivist cultures where people tend to follow what's popular" (Hanif et al., 2022).

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 SMI's Trustworthiness and Consumer Purchase Intention

Trust in influencers and purchases made through tie-ups will have a significant and positive relationship. After taking into consideration the literature, Sertoglu et al. (2014) study evaluated the reliability of the influencers and purchase intention, finding a positive relationship. A study by Toksari and Murutsoy (2019) found that an individual's decision to buy a product is positively influenced by the recommendations made by influencers regarding the product. Furthermore, it has been observed that the influencers' posted discount coupons encourage purchases, and publishing images of the products on their own accounts is said to increase consumers' interest in making a purchase.

Customers are also more likely to express their desire to purchase the recommended products if they view a digital influencer as a trustworthy source (Lu et al., 2014; Lou & Young, 2018). Esch et al. (2018) state that a consumer's trust in an Instagrammer is measured by how much they believe the opinion leader and find his advice to be trustworthy. The customer's intention for purchase will rise as a result.

H1: Trustworthiness of SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market.

2.2.2 SMI's Credibility and Consumer Purchase Intention

While research by Chai, Das, and Rao (2011) indicates that relatability and authenticity also contribute to influencer credibility, Lou and Yuan (2018) emphasize the significance of influencer credibility in influencing consumer behavior. Consequently, it follows that influencer credibility influences purchase intention in a positive way, as suggested in H2b, highlighting its importance in influencing customer behavior in influencer marketing.



The previous literature has examined various critical factors related to source credibility in social media, including influencer's endorsement and credibility (Weismueller et al., 2020; Lin & Nuangjamnong, 2022). Studies have consistently found that information from credible sources significantly influences consumers' attitudes and behavior (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018; Dummanonda & Nuangjamnong, 2021).

H2: Authenticity of SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market.

2.2.3 SMIs Authenticity and Consumer Purchase Intention

There is a research gap on perceived risk in influencer marketing, and this has been addressed by the huge impact that consumers' purchase intention has from the perceived authenticity of messaging from social media influencers. Previous study indicates that as customers become more aware of the dangers associated with a product, they look for ways to reduce those risks before making a purchase (Hilverda & Kuttschreuter, 2018; Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018). To reduce perceived risks connected with a purchase, customers respond by turning to influential sources, such as social media influencers, whom they view as relevant and credible (Biswas et al., 2006; Dean & Biswas, 2001). This supports the theory that customer purchase intention is positively influenced by the perceived authenticity of influencer communications.

H3: Credibility attributed to SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market

2.2.4 SMIs Expertise and Consumer Purchase Intention

In the context of influencer marketing, social media influencer expertise plays an important role in influencing consumers' views and purchase intentions. Previous studies have shown the importance of influencer expertise in endorsing luxury and useful brands, since buyers depend on

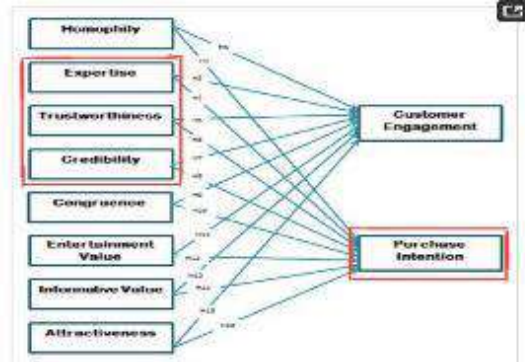
the experience and reliability of advocates (Dean and Biswas, 2001). Customers also respect influencers' knowledge or connection to the product they recommend, which results in favorable perceptions of the advertisement, the advertisement brand, and purchase intentions (Balog et al., 2008; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). In conclusion, consumer behavior in influencer marketing is greatly influenced by the selection of influencers with pertinent experience and matching them with products that are in line with their domain knowledge.

H4: Perceived fashion expertise of SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market

2.3 Theoretical frameworks

2.3.1 This theoretical framework primarily shows how the SMI's trustworthiness, credibility and expertise influence customers in purchase intention. The relationship between SMI's trustworthiness, credibility and expertise with purchase intention, as shown in Figure 3, is part of the theoretical framework which includes how it influences purchase intention (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002). Trustworthiness, credibility, and expertise are key components of the theoretical framework, each playing a distinct yet interconnected role in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors in the context of influencer marketing. Studies such as (Ao et al., 2023), conducted in the context of social media influencing, have demonstrated the relationship between these SMI's variables in influencing consumer intention.

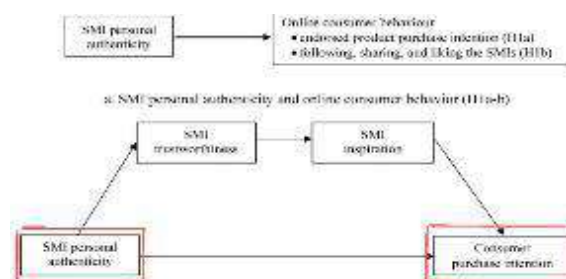
Figure 3. *Impact of Social Media Influencers on Customer Engagement and Purchase Intention: A Meta-Analysis*



Source: Ao, L., Bansal, R., Pruthi, N., & Khaskheli, M. B. (2023). Impact of Social Media Influencers on Customer Engagement and Purchase Intention: A Meta-Analysis. *Sustainability*, 15(3), 2744.

2.3.2 The second theoretical framework among the connections between SMI's authenticity and consumer purchase intention. The theoretical framework proposed here focuses on the relationship between the personal authenticity of social media influencers (SMIs) and consumers' intentions to purchase products endorsed by them, considering measures of effectiveness and consumer behavior indicators (Schwarz, 2019). Due to research studies in Figure 4 personal authenticity of SMIs is posited to have a positive relationship with consumers' intentions to purchase endorsed products. Consumers are more likely to trust and engage with influencers perceived as authentic, leading to higher purchase intentions. (Andonopoulos et al., 2023)

Figure 4. Authentic isn't always best: When inauthentic social media influencers induce positive consumer purchase intention through inspiration



Source: Andonopoulos, V., Lee, J. (Jiyeon), & Mathies, C. (2023). Authentic isn't always best: When inauthentic social media influencers induce positive consumer purchase intention through inspiration. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 75, 103521.

2.4 Hypotheses development

The researcher indicated four hyper strategies based on the conceptual framework to analyze the influence of social media influencing consumer purchase intention in the Nepalese fashion market.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Trustworthiness of SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Authenticity of SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Credibility attributed to SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market

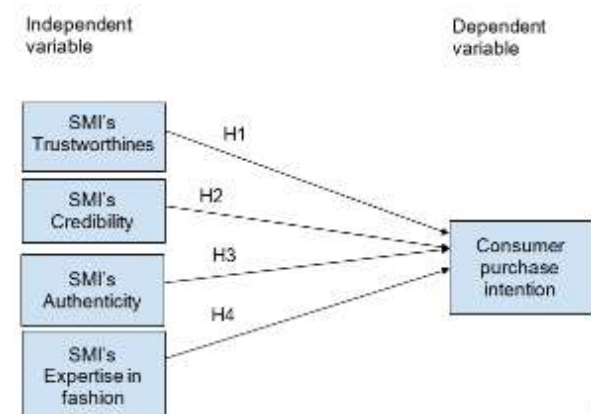
Hypothesis 4 (H4): Perceived fashion expertise of SMIs significantly influences consumer purchase intentions in the Nepalese fashion market

2.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is based on a synthesis of previous research, theoretical concepts, and literature reviews, with Social Media Influencers's trustworthiness, credibility, authenticity and expertise being the independent variable that influences the consumer purchase intention in buying fashion products in Nepal.

In the context of fashion market in Nepalese market, the conceptual framework shows how the relationship between SMI's trustworthiness, credibility, authenticity, expertise in fashion and purchase intention functions as shown in the figure below:

Figure 5. Conceptual Framework





Source: Authors

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The main purpose of this research is to explore the influence of social media influencers's trust, credibility, authenticity and expertise on the purchase intention of the customer. This research also aims to employ a research design to comprehensively explore the influence of social media influencers on consumer purchase intention in the Nepalese fashion market. The quantitative component will involve surveying a sample of consumers in the Nepalese fashion market to gather numerical data on their perceptions of social media influencers and their purchase intentions. A structured questionnaire will be administered to collect data on variables such as trustworthiness, authenticity, credibility, expertise, and purchase intention. The survey responses will be analyzed using statistical methods. For this quantitative study, Cronbach's alpha, Simple Linear Regression, and Descriptive Statistics are among the types of analysis used in this study.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections with 28 questions in total. All the questions relate to variables from the conceptual framework including 3 screening questions, 7 questions regarding demographic aspects and 18 questions related to variables.

Primarily, we begin by employing Cronbach's Alpha to assess the questionnaire's reliability and to explore potential instances of confusion or ambiguity in the measurement items.

3.2 Sampling Plan

3.2.1 Sampling Population

The sampling population for this study encompasses individuals in Nepal actively involved in the fashion market and engaged with social media platforms. Specifically, the target population includes social media users who follow and interact with fashion-related content on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other relevant platforms. Nepal, with its diverse population and growing digital presence, offers a suitable backdrop

for exploring the impact of social media influencers on consumer purchase intentions in the fashion sector. According to the latest available data, the population of Nepal in 2024 is estimated to be 31,240,315

3.2.2 Sampling Size

The determination of the sampling size in this study follows the guidelines proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and considers the estimated population of social media users in Nepal. After conducting preliminary data analysis and power calculations, the sample size is determined to be 400 respondents. This sample size ensures adequate statistical power to detect meaningful relationships between the variables of interest, given the complexity of the research model and the multiple factors being examined. Additionally, the researcher will utilize stratified sampling techniques to ensure representation across demographic variables such as age, gender, education level, and geographic location. This approach enhances the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of social media users in Nepal.

3.3 Research Instrument

Among the research questionnaires employed to be the indicator for evaluating the essential factors and the relationships allying with the research variables. The questionnaires were distributed as an online survey to the qualified samples and there are three parts consisting of. Screening questions were included in the **first section** to screen only particular respondents who are influenced in any way by social media influencers. Respondents demographic information questions are displayed in the **second section**. The **third section** consists of 18 scale items in total including dependent and independent variables.

3.4 Content validity (IOC)

The content validity of questionnaire items was evaluated by the researchers using the IOC index. After seeking the opinion of three experts, 18 out of 25 questions achieved IOC scores exceeding 0.5,



demonstrating satisfactory validity. Consequently, a refined set of 18 questions was selected, precisely tailored to the variables under investigation. This meticulous procedure guaranteed the precision and

pertinence of the questionnaire, thereby ensuring the collection of valid data for the study has shown Table 1.

Table 1: *The item Objective Congruence (IOC) index with three experts*

Variables	Before Number of items	After number of items	Range of IOC Weight Scores
Media Factors	5	4	0.67 - 1.00
Content Factors	5	4	0.67 - 1.00
Connection Motivation	5	4	0.67 - 1.00
Ad Clicks	5	3	0.67 - 1.00
Purchase intention	5	3	0.67 - 1.00

3.5 Reliability Test

The researchers chose 50 respondents to take part in the pilot test in order to check for any errors or dislocations among the questionnaire's variables. One method for ensuring consistency is Cronbach's alpha.

To ensure that the questionnaire accurately measured the desired variables and contributed to the overall validity and reliability of the study's data collection instrument, the researchers conducted a pilot test and used the Cronbach's Alpha method. Cronbach's Alpha (CA) approach is conducted to apply for the pilot for the pilot test research reliability (Cronbach, 1951). Cronbach's Alpha and Internal Consistency's Rules - $\alpha > 0.9$ Excellent, $0.8 < \alpha < 0.9$ Good, $0.7 < \alpha < 0.8$ Acceptable, $0.6 < \alpha <$

0.7 Questionable, $0.5 < \alpha < 0.6$ Poor, and $\alpha < 0.5$ Unacceptable

The independent variable was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha in a pilot test of 50 respondents. According to Cronbach's Alpha values (shown in Table 2), the Social Media Influencer's Trustworthiness is 0.913, Social Media Influencer's Credibility is 0.879, Social Media Influencer's Authenticity is 0.818, Social Media Influencer's Expertise is 0.772 and Customer Purchase Intention is 0.806. In order for the research questionnaire to be accepted for continued use, the value must be at least 0.60 or higher according to the thumb's rule. The overall result of the construct's internal consistency indicates that the research questionnaire has dependability.

Table 2. *The value of Reliability Analysis of each Item and Variable in the study*

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Social Media Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.93	Excellent
Social Media Influencer's Credibility	0.879	Good
Social Media Influencer's Authenticity	0.818	Good
Social Media Influencer's Expertise	0.772	Acceptable
Customer Purchase Intention	0.806	Good

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

Through a questionnaire distributed to the target respondents, demographic data was analyzed to understand the influence of social media

influencers in customer purchase intention. The questionnaires were filled out by 390 respondents, and all were included in the study. Hence, the entire sample size was used for data analysis. The analysis included information on age, gender, annual income, the frequency of using social media platforms and engagement with social media



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influencers. Table 3 displays the frequency distribution and percentage of demographic information for the 390 respondents as follow:

Gender: In the sample of 390 respondents, gender-wise distribution reveals that the majority of respondents 80.5% were female, making up 314 individuals. The remaining respondents, comprising 19.5% of the total sample, were male, with a total of 76 respondents.

Age: Based on the collected data, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents, accounting for a total of 51.8%, fell within the age range of 18-24 years old, constituting 202 individuals. Following closely were the respondents belonging to the age range of 25-34 years old, comprising 46.7% of all respondents, with a total of 182 individuals. And finally, 1.5% of all respondents which falls within the age group of 35-44 years old, with a total of 6 individuals.

Location: The data analysis shows that 219 individuals, accounting for 56.2% of the sample, live in the Central part of Nepal. On the other hand, 124 respondents, making up 31.8% of the participants, live in Western part of Nepal. Following with 41 individuals, accounting for 10.5% of the sample, live in the Eastern part of Nepal and finally, 6 respondents, making up 1.5% of the participants, live in the Mid- Western part of Nepal.

Monthly household Income: The majority of the 390 respondents, comprising 77.4% or 302 individuals, reported having a monthly household income above 80,000 NPR. A total of 70 respondents, which is 17.9% of the sample, reported earning 60,001-80,000 NPR. Following, a total of 15 respondents, which is 3.8% of the sample, reported earning 40,001-60,000 NPR. Only 0.8% of the respondents, which equates to 3 individuals, reported having an annual income of 20,000-40,000 NPR. These findings suggest that the respondents have relatively good household incomes. It is essential to consider participants' household

income levels while interpreting their responses because people with different income levels may have different preferences, attitudes, priorities, and limitations.

Consumer purchase habit: The analysis of the respondents' consumer purchase habit reveals how often they purchase fashion items online or instore. So, among the total of 390 individuals, 88 respondents, constituting 22.6%, stated that they purchase fashion items a few times a year. In contrast, 12 participants, making up 3.1% of the sample, reported that they purchase fashion items rarely. The majority of the respondents, making up 54.4% or a total of 212 individuals, identified purchasing fashion items once a month. Following with 20.0% or 78 individuals, identified purchasing items several times a month. These findings indicate a significant proportion of respondents who like purchasing fashion products from stores or online. Nonetheless, it is essential to consider their purchasing pattern while interpreting their responses to understand attitudes.

Engagement in Social Media: The majority of the 390 respondents, comprising 93.3% or 364 individuals, reported that they use social media several times a day. A total of 25 respondents, corresponding to 6.4% of the sample, marked that they use social media once a day. And only 0.3% or 1 respondent stated that they use social media 2-3 times a week.

Frequently used Social Media platform: The majority of the 390 respondents, comprising 56.9% or 222 individuals, reported using Instagram. A total of 90 respondents, corresponding to 23.1% of the sample, reported using Facebook. A total of 48 respondents, corresponding to 12.3% of the sample, marked that they use YouTube. And 7.7% or 30 respondents stated that they use TikTok. The popularity of Instagram may be due to its user-friendly interface and features such as private messaging, groups, and events.



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Table 3. Demographic information analysis by using frequency distribution and percentage. (n=390)

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Female	314	80.5%
Male	76	19.5%
Total	390	100%
Age		
18-24	202	51.8%
25-34	182	46.7%
35-44	6	1.5%
Total	390	100%
Location		
Central	219	56.2%
Western	124	31.8%
Eastern	41	10.5%
Mid- Western	6	1.5%
Total	390	100%
Monthly household Income		
Above 80,000	302	77.4%
60,001-80,000	70	17.9%
40,001-60,000	15	3.8%
20,000-40,000	3	0.8%
Total	390	100%
Consumer purchase habit		
Once a month	212	54.4%
Few times a year	88	22.6%
Several times a year	78	20.0%
Rarely	12	3.1%
Total	390	100%
Engagement in Social Media		
Several times a day	364	93.3%
Once a day	25	6.4%
2-3 times a week	1	0.3%
Total	390	100%
Frequently used Social Media platform		
Instagram	222	56.9%
Facebook	90	23.1%
YouTube	48	12.3%
TikTok	30	7.7%
Total	390	100%



4.2 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation

This section provides a summary of the Mean and Standard Deviation for each group variable, which includes social media influencer trustworthiness, social media influencer credibility, social media influencer authenticity, social media influencer expertise and customer purchase intention. The evaluation of mean scores based on the criteria adapted from Imsa-ard et al. (2021) is presented below.

The criteria of the interpretation of mean scores

Mean score

Interpretation

4.21 - 5.00 Strongly agree

3.41 - 4.20 Agree

2.61 - 3.20 Neutral

1.81 - 2.00 Disagree

1.00 - 1.80 Strongly disagree

Social Media Influencer Trustworthiness

Among the 390 respondents without missing any respondents, Table 4 presents the highest mean of social media influencers trustworthiness as: "I am likely to trust their recommendation, when the social media influencer recommends a fashion product" with a value of 4.08. In contrast, the lowest mean score was "I trust the information provided by the social media influencer in their fashion-related content," with a mean score 3.80. The variable with the highest standard deviation was "I perceive the social media influencer as a reliable source for fashion recommendations," having a value of 1.032. On the other hand, the lowest standard deviation was found for the statement "I am likely to trust their recommendation, when the social media influencer recommends a fashion product," with a value of 0.863.

Social Media Influencer Credibility

Among the 390 respondents without missing any respondents, Table 4 presents the highest mean of social media influencer credibility as "I believe

the social media influencer conducts thorough research before providing information about fashion products," with a value of 4.00. In contrast, the lowest mean score was "I consider the social media influencer as a credible authority on fashion-related matters," with a mean score of 3.79. The variable with the highest standard deviation was also "I believe the social media influencer conducts thorough research before providing information about fashion products," with a value of 1.092. On the other hand, the lowest standard deviation was found for the statement "The credibility of the social media influencer is important in influencing my perceptions of fashion-related content," with a value of 0.918.

Social Media Influencer Authenticity

Among the 390 respondents without missing any respondents, Table 4 presents the highest mean of social media influencer authenticity as "In my opinion, the influencer's content aligns with their personal brand and values," and "I am likely to engage with content that I perceive as authentic from the social media influencer with a value of 4.03. In contrast, the lowest mean score was "In my opinion, the social media influencer accurately represents themselves in their content," with a mean score 3.89. The variable with the highest standard deviation was "In my opinion, the social media influencer accurately represents themselves in their content," with a value of 1.025. On the other hand, the lowest standard deviation was found for the statement "I am likely to engage with content that I perceive as authentic from the social media influencer," with a value of 0.911.

Social Media Influencer Expertise

Among the 390 respondents without missing any respondents, Table 4 presents the highest mean of social media influencer expertise as "I perceive the influencer as knowledgeable about different fashion styles, trends, and subcultures," with a value of 4.25. In contrast, the lowest mean score was "I believe the influencer's content to be informative



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and enriching in terms of fashion knowledge,” with a mean score 3.85. The variable with the highest standard deviation was “I believe the social media influencer demonstrates a deep understanding of the aspects of the fashion industry,” with a value of 1.216. On the other hand, the lowest standard deviation was found for the statement “I believe the influencer's content to be informative and enriching in terms of fashion knowledge,” with a value of 0.864.

Customer Purchase Intention

Among the 390 respondents without missing any respondents, Table 4 presents the highest mean of customer purchase intention as “I am likely to

make an immediate fashion-related purchase based on the influencer's recommendation,” with a value of 4.03. In contrast, the lowest mean score was “I give careful consideration to the product for which I look for information in social media influencer's content,” with a mean score 3.83. The variable with the highest standard deviation was “I give careful consideration to the product for which I look for information in social media influencer's content,” with a value of 1.12. On the other hand, the lowest standard deviation was found for the statement “The social media influencer's endorsement influences my intention to purchase fashion products,” with a value of 1.01.

Table 4. *Mean and Standard Deviation*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
SMI Trst1: I trust the information provided by the social media influencer in their fashion-related content.	3.80	0.97	Agree
SMI Trst2: I perceive the social media influencer as a reliable source for fashion recommendations.	3.93	1.032	Agree
SMI Trst3: I am confident in the accuracy of the information shared by the social media influencer.	3.92	0.999	Agree
SMI Trst4: I am likely to trust their recommendation, when the social media influencer recommends a fashion product.	4.08	0.863	Agree
Social Media Influencer Trustworthiness	3.93	0.966	
SMI Cred1: I believe the social media influencer is knowledgeable regarding fashion trends and industry insights.	3.96	0.935	Agree
SMI Cred2: I believe the social media influencer conducts thorough research before providing information about fashion products.	4.00	1.092	Agree
SMI Cred3: I consider the social media influencer as a credible authority on fashion-related matters.	3.79	0.937	Agree
SMI Cred4: The credibility of the social media influencer is important in influencing my perceptions of fashion-related content.	3.85	0.918	Agree
Social Media Influencer Credibility	3.90	0.971	
SMI Auth1: I perceive the social media influencer as genuine and authentic in their fashion-related content.	3.92	1.012	Agree
SMI Auth2: In my opinion, the influencer's content aligns with their personal brand and values	4.03	0.911	Agree
SMI Auth3: I am likely to engage with content that I perceive as authentic from the social media influencer.	4.03	0.881	Agree
SMI Auth4: In my opinion, the social media influencer accurately represents themselves in their content.	3.89	1.025	Agree
Social Media Influencer Authenticity	3.97	0.957	



SMI Exp1: I believe the influencer's content to be informative and enriching in terms of fashion knowledge	3.85	0.864	Agree
SMI Exp2: I perceive the influencer as knowledgeable about different fashion styles, trends, and subcultures	4.25	0.875	Strongly Agree
SMI Exp3: I believe the social media influencer demonstrates a deep understanding of the aspects of the fashion industry.	3.92	1.216	Agree
Social Media Influencer Expertise	4.01	0.985	
CPI1: The social media influencer's endorsement influences my intention to purchase fashion products.	3.92	1.010	Agree
CPI2: I am likely to make an immediate fashion-related purchase based on the influencer's recommendation.	4.03	1.020	Agree
CPI3: I give careful consideration to the product for which I look for information in social media influencer's content.	3.83	1.120	Agree
Customer Purchase Intention	3.93	1.050	

4.3 Hypothesis testing results

The researchers used linear regression, a statistical analytical approach, to examine the significant influence of various variables. The analysis aimed to investigate the relationship between variables, including the influence of social media influencers trustworthiness, social media influencer credibility, social media influencer authenticity, and social media influencer expertise in customer purchase intention. In relation to the analysis of linear regression, researchers utilize a straightforward linear regression analysis in conjunction with R-square to assess the amount of variation in the dependent variable that is accounted for by independent variables. Castro et al. (2017) discovered a significant correlation between independent and dependent variables, and in regression analysis, independent variables should be considered valid if the variance inflation factor value is lower than 5, as well as using R-square to identify the portion of variance in the dependent variable that is influenced by independent variables.

4.3.1 Results of Multiple linear regression of H1, H2, H3, and H4

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

Social Media Influencers Trustworthiness (H1), Social Media Influencers Credibility (H2), Social Media Influencers Authenticity (H3) and Social Media Influencers Expertise (H4) have no significant impact on Consumer Purchase Intention in Nepalese fashion market.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a):

Social Media Influencers Trustworthiness (H1), Social Media Influencers Credibility (H2), Social Media Influencers Authenticity (H3) and Social Media Influencers Expertise (H4) have a significant impact on Consumer Purchase Intention in Nepalese fashion market

In Table 5, the results of multiple linear regression analysis elucidate the influence of Social Media Influencers Credibility (H2) and Social Media Influencers Expertise (H4) on Consumer Purchase Intention in the fashion market in Nepal. The analysis indicates that Social Media Influencers Credibility (H2) and Social Media Influencers Expertise (H4) significantly impact Consumer Purchase Intention in the Nepalese fashion market, rejecting the null hypotheses (H2 and H4; $p < 0.05$).

However, Social Media Influencers Trustworthiness (H1) and Social Media Influencers Authenticity (H3) do not exert a statistically significant impact on Consumer Purchase Intention in the Nepalese fashion market. The p -values for these variables exceed 0.05, leading to a failure to reject the null hypothesis (H1, H3).

Moreover, the coefficient of determination (R-square) for this analysis is 0.702, indicating that approximately 70.2% of the variance in the dependent variable (Consumer Purchase Intention) can be explained by the independent variables

integrated into the regression model. This suggests a moderate to high level of explanatory power in understanding the factors influencing purchase

intentions for Fashion products in the Nepalese market.

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 1, 2, 3 and 4

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
SMI Trst (H1)	-0.0692	0.076	-0.064	-0.914	0.361	6.410	Fail to reject Ho
SMI Cred (H2)	0.6361	0.068	0.545	9.390	< 0.001*	4.350	Rejected Ho
SMI Auth (H3)	-0.0485	0.076	-0.043	-0.638	0.524	5.860	Fail to reject Ho
SMI Exp (H4)	0.519	0.051	0.441	10.094	< 0.001*	2.460	Rejected Ho

Noted. $R^2 = 0.702$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.699$, * $p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable= Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI)

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

According to overall demographic data from respondents who filled out the research questionnaire and the researchers' analysis, the majority group of the 390 respondents represented a gender group that is female (314, 80.5%), the category of age is between 18-24 years old (202, 51.8%), the majority of the respondents lives in central part of Nepal (219, 56.2%), and respondent's household monthly income is above 80,000 (302, 77.4%). The majority of respondents (212, 54.4%) purchase fashion products once a month online or in-store, while the respondents engage with social media platforms several times a day (364, 93.3%) and finally, Instagram is the most popular social media platform among respondents (222, 56.9%).

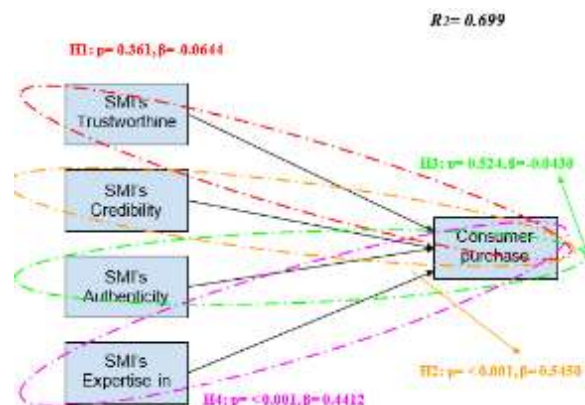
Survey instruments for factors influencing social media influencer trustworthiness, social media influencer credibility, social media influencer authenticity and social media influencer expertise in customer purchase intention include mean and standard deviation of variables. Respectively, social media influencer expertise (4.01), social media influencer authenticity (3.97), social media influencer trustworthiness (3.93), customer purchase intention (3.92) and social media influencer credibility (3.90) had the highest means, respectively. and the customer purchase intention

measure had the highest standard deviation (0.885), which was followed by social media influencer trustworthiness (0.823), social media influencer authenticity (0.785), social media influencer expertise (0.751) and social media influencer credibility (0.758).

5.2 Discussion based on Findings

The findings of this study indicated that Consumer Purchase Intention was significantly influenced by the Social Media Influencers Credibility and Social Media Influencers Expertise, but not Social Media Influencers Trustworthiness and Social Media Influencers Authenticity. Structural research model results as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Summary of hypothesis testing result.





5.2.1 SMI Trustworthiness and Consumer Purchase Intention

The results of the linear regression analysis show that, in the Nepalese fashion market, trustworthiness has no significant impact on consumer purchase intention, even if the mean score of 3.93 is very high and indicates a positive perception among consumers ($p = 0.361$). Given that respondents felt social media influencers were trustworthy, this conclusion is surprising.

There is a moderate degree of multicollinearity indicated by the trustworthiness variance inflation factor (VIF), which is 6.41. Although there is a connection, it is not significant enough to be concerning with respect to other independent variables. While trustworthiness is sometimes regarded as essential to the success of influencer marketing, this study's minimal impact on customer purchase intention implies that other characteristics may be more important in the Nepalese fashion industry.

5.2.2 SMI Credibility and Consumer Purchase Intention

In the Nepalese fashion market, credibility is found to be a major factor influencing consumers' purchase intention ($p < 0.001$). Customers are more likely to acquire fashion products when they see influencers as reliable sources of information, as indicated by their mean score of 3.90 and relatively high significance level. Credibility's VIF rating is 4.35, indicating a significant degree of multicollinearity. Although there is some correlation with other independent factors, it is not very strong and stays within a reasonable range. The results highlight how crucial it is to establish credibility when working with social media influencers in the Nepalese fashion industry, since this can have a beneficial impact on customers' decisions regarding purchases.

5.2.3 SMI Authenticity and Consumer Purchase Intention

In the Nepalese fashion market, authenticity does not significantly influence customer purchase intention, even with a favorable mean score of 3.97

($p = 0.524$). Considering how important authenticity is to influencer marketing strategies, this result is surprising. Authenticity has a modest degree of multicollinearity, as indicated by its VIF value of 5.86. The association with other independent variables is present, but it is within an acceptable level. Although authenticity is often pointed out as being essential to the success of influencer marketing, this study's low impact on it implies consumers in the Nepalese fashion sector may place a higher value on other considerations when making decisions.

5.2.4 SMI Expertise and Consumer Purchase Intention

In the Nepalese fashion market, expertise has a significant impact on consumers' purchasing intentions ($p < 0.001$). Customers are more inclined to purchase fashion products based on recommendations from influencers they believe to be informed about industry insights and fashion trends, with a mean score of 4.01 and a high importance level. Expertise's VIF rating is 2.46, which suggests a low degree of multicollinearity. Expertise appears to have a distinct influence on consumers' purchasing intentions, as seen by its low correlation with other independent factors. The results underscore the significance of knowledge and skill in influencer marketing strategies in the Nepalese fashion industry, given that influencers displaying ability are more able to influence consumer purchase decisions.

5.4 Recommendations based on Findings

The aim of the researchers in this part is to provide recommendations to establish significant connections between research concepts. It initially represented significant relationships between variables in the conclusion section. A number of recommendations are presented to businesses and influencers to enhance their influencer marketing strategies, build stronger connections with their target audience, and drive consumer engagement and purchase intention in the dynamic landscape of the Nepalese fashion market between social media influencers trustworthiness, social media



influencers credibility, social media influencers authenticity, social media influencers expertise and consumer purchase intention

First, the data clearly shows that consumers' purchase intentions are greatly influenced by the credibility of social media influencers. As a result, businesses need to give top priority to working with influencers that have a solid track record of producing accurate and dependable information about fashion. Finding influencers that have a proven track record of authenticity and trustworthiness requires in-depth research to ensure that they connect with the target demographic and the values of the business. Businesses can increase consumer trust and confidence in their products or services by forming connections with credible influencers, which will ultimately lead to a rise in purchase intent.

The study also emphasizes how crucial influencer expertise is in influencing consumers' views and purchasing decisions. Influencers with an in-depth understanding of fashion trends, styles, and industry insights should be searched out by businesses, as this knowledge appeals to consumers. Influencers can use their expertise to produce educational and inspiring content that inspires and informs their audience, building relationships and increasing engagement. Businesses can also provide influencers the chance to work with them on unique and creative campaigns that highlight their skills and set them apart from competitors. Influencers can be used by marketers to generate customer interest and purchase intent by establishing them as reliable sources within the fashion industry.

Finally, even though the current study's results did not show authenticity as a strong predictor of customer purchase intention, it is still an important aspect of influencer marketing success. Sincere and open communication develops credibility and trust, brands and influencers should place a high priority on authenticity in their content and interactions with their audience. Sincere brand partnerships, open disclosure of sponsored content, and deep interaction with followers are all ways to strengthen authenticity. Through consistent and authentic

influencer marketing, companies may gradually develop stronger relationships with customers and increase brand loyalty. All things considered, businesses may effectively utilize the power of social media influencers to promote consumer engagement and purchase intention in the ever-changing Nepalese fashion market by implementing these guidelines into their influencer marketing strategy.

5.5 Implications based on findings and theories

Based on the findings and theories presented in the research, several implications can be drawn for both academia and industry. First and foremost, the study emphasizes how crucial it is for social media influencers to have credibility and expertise in order to affect consumer purchasing habits in the Nepalese fashion industry. This suggests that businesses in this sector should place a high priority on working with influencers who are regarded as credible sources of information and who also have a thorough awareness of current fashion trends and industry insights. Businesses may increase consumer trust and engagement, which in turn drives purchase intention, by actively associating with skilled and credible influencers.

Additionally, the necessity of authentic and honest communication between brands, influencers, and consumers is highlighted by the focus placed on authenticity in influencer marketing techniques. Since authenticity is a major factor in determining the trust and loyalty of consumers, businesses should place a high priority on developing sincere connections with influencers and encouraging real conversations with their target audience. Businesses may strengthen their consumer relationships and set themselves apart in the competitive Nepalese fashion market by focusing authenticity in their influencer partnerships and content creation.

Finally, the study's implications provide larger insights into influencer marketing strategies across the Nepalese context. The results indicate that businesses in a variety of sectors stand to gain from giving credibility, expertise, and authenticity top



priority when working with influencers. Businesses may improve their influencer marketing campaigns, create closer bonds with their target market, and increase customer engagement and purchase intention by implementing these ideas and tactics. Overall, the researcher's conclusions highlight how crucial strategic and real influencer collaborations are for navigating Nepal's and other countries' rapidly changing fashion industries.

5.6 Limitations of the study

Understanding the study's limitations is necessary in order to appropriately evaluate the results. The limited demographic profile of the sample population, which was primarily created from the central area of Nepal and fell into a particular age and income range, makes it more difficult to extrapolate the findings to the larger Nepalese community. Furthermore, the study may have missed qualitative insights that are essential for understanding the complexity of consumer purchasing habits in the Nepalese fashion industry because of its focus on quantitative approaches through closed-ended survey questions. To overcome these limitations and offer a more thorough understanding of consumer behavior in this setting, future research should aim for a more diverse sample and think about incorporating qualitative methods.

In conclusion, the study's limitations in sample composition and methodology should be noted even if it provides insight into the impact of social media influencers on customer purchase intention in the Nepalese fashion sector. In order to provide a deeper understanding of the relationships between social media influencer marketing and consumer behavior in Nepal and elsewhere, future research projects should work to overcome these limitations.

5.7 Further Studies

It would be beneficial for future research on influencer marketing in the Nepalese fashion industry to expand the sample population to include a greater range of age groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographic areas. Using a mixed-methods approach could provide a more thorough

knowledge of consumer attitudes and motivations about social media influencers by combining quantitative surveys with qualitative techniques like focus groups and interviews. Further investigation into factors including brand preferences, cultural norms, and the influence of traditional advertising methods may also provide a more in-depth understanding of the dynamics of influencer marketing and consumer purchase intention in Nepal. Future studies can advance our understanding of the variables influencing consumer behavior in the Nepalese fashion market by focusing on these areas.

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A Study of Unveiling the Effect of Perceived Quality, Safety, and Destination Image on Visitor Satisfaction and Return Intentions, Thailand

Ratanawalai Prasitvipat ¹, Chompu Nuangjamnong ²

Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to explore the factors influencing tourists' perceived quality, safety in both social and natural environments, facility and management safety, destination image, and choice, and how these factors collectively impact satisfaction with the tourism experience and subsequent intention to revisit among tourists in Thailand. The research seeks to gain insights into the decision-making processes of tourists in Thailand. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – Employing a mixed-method approach, this study utilizes both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The sample comprises 390 respondents, consisting of tourists visiting Thailand. Additionally, this research integrates five theoretical frameworks from prior studies to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework. **Findings** – The study seeks to identify the determinants and characteristics influencing tourists' intention to revisit. It further examines the significance of destination image, choice, and satisfaction with the tourism experience in shaping tourists' intention to revisit. **Research Limitations/Implications** – It is acknowledged that the quantitative methodology employed in data collection may not fully capture all dimensions of tourists' perceptions. Furthermore, the scope of this study is limited to tourists visiting Thailand from various regions worldwide. **Originality/value** – This study contributes to the understanding of the factors influencing tourists' perception of quality, safety, destination image, and satisfaction, ultimately impacting their intention to revisit Thailand.

Keywords – Tourist perceived quality, safety in social and natural environments, facility and management safety, destination image, choice, satisfaction with tourism experience, intention to revisit.

Paper type – Research paper

JEL classification code – M11, M14, M16, M10

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

According to Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand (2024) reveals the data of tourists in Thailand in 2023 is 28,150,016 people. Tourism is a foundation of Thailand's economic framework, drawing millions to its shores, back countries, and cities, each year. The attraction of Thailand's rich

cultural decoration, combined with its natural beauty and hospitable services, positions it as a premier destination in the global tourism landscape. However, the dynamics of tourist satisfaction and the desire for repeat visits are influenced by a countless of factors, requiring a closer examination of perceived quality, safety, and destination image. This study aims to unravel the interaction between

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these elements and their collective impact on visitor satisfaction and subsequent return intentions.

The concept of perceived quality within the tourism sector contains a broad elements, from the tangibility of services and accommodations to the intangibility of experiential aspects. Tourists' perceptions of quality are important, as they directly influence the overall satisfaction derived from their visit. High-quality interactions, whether through service encounters or the enjoyment of facilities, set the foundation for a fulfilling tourist experience. In Thailand, where hospitality is in the culture, the perceived quality of services can significantly enhance the appeal of the destination.

Safety is a paramount concern for tourists, containing both physical and health-related dimensions. In recent years, global events have heightened tourists' sensitivity to safety issues, making it a critical factor in the decision-making process. Thailand's approach to ensuring visitor safety, from stringent health measures to the maintenance of public order, directly affects tourists' sense of security and, by extension, their satisfaction and willingness to revisit.

The image of a destination forms a complex mosaic of perceptions and preconceived notions, influenced by media, word-of-mouth, and personal beliefs. Thailand's image as a tropical paradise, related to history and culture, plays a crucial role in attracting tourists. However, sustaining and enhancing this image requires continuous effort, particularly in addressing misconceptions and ensuring that the reality meets or exceeds expectations.

Satisfaction is the emotional state that reflects the degree to which the expectations of the tourists are met or exceeded by their travel experiences. In the context of Thailand, where tourism is not just a journey but related into an ancient yet dynamically modern culture, satisfaction can be the deciding factor in transforming first-time visitors into loyal visitors. The intention to return, or even to recommend Thailand to others, is a evident to the

success of the tourism ecosystem in delivering on its promises of quality, safety, and an enriching destination image. Hence, the research aims to provide actionable insights that can support the sustainable growth of Thailand's tourism sector.

1.2 Problem statements

The sustainability and growth of Thailand's tourism sector are important for the nation's economic stability and cultural preservation. However, safety in Thailand is still not good enough and should improve in many ways such as mass shooting at Siam Paragon department store in 2023 should improve to check the weapon more than this. Moreover, understanding the dynamics that influence visitor satisfaction and the intention to return to a destination is crucial for the sustainable development of the tourism industry. This study aims to explore the impact of perceived quality, safety, and the image of destinations in Thailand on tourists' satisfaction and their intentions to revisit. Simplifying the complex interrelations between these factors, the research will assess how tourists' perceptions of the quality of services, the safety of the environment, and the overall image of Thailand as a destination contribute to their overall satisfaction and decision to return. By focusing on these elements, the study seeks to provide insights that could help in the enhancement of tourist experiences, promoting repeat visits and contributing to the growth of Thailand's tourism sector.

1.3 Objectives of study

1. To explain tourists perceived quality effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.
2. To explain tourists perceived safety of the social environment effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience.
3. To explain tourists perceived safety of the natural environment effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience.



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4. To explain tourists perceived safety of the facility and management elements effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience.

5. To explain tourism destination image and choice effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience.

6. To explain tourism destination image and choice effect on tourist revisit intention.

7. To explain satisfaction with the tourism experience effect on tourist revisit intention.

1.4 Research questions

The study's questions are as follows:

(1) Does tourist perceived quality have a significant effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience?

(2) Does tourist perceived safety of the social environment have a significant effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience?

(3) Does tourist perceived safety of the natural environment have a significant effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience?

(4) Does tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements have a significant effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience?

(5) Does tourism destination image and choice have a significant effect on satisfaction with the tourism experience?

(6) Does tourism destination image and choice have a significant effect on tourist revisit intention?

(7) Does satisfaction with the tourism experience have a significant effect on tourist revisit intention?

1.5 Significance of the study

The tourism industry in Thailand is crucial for its economic growth, contributing significantly to the country's GDP. Satisfying tourists is vital to ensure a positive reputation and repeat visits. Offering diverse attractions, cultural experiences, and excellent hospitality enhances the overall

tourism experience, fostering a sustainable industry. Building a strong good feeling to tourism is crucial such as know that what tourists perceived quality. This study, therefore, intends to provide valuable insights for people who want to do tourist industry and people who still do tourist industry seeking to understand what make tourist

Understanding the distinctions of how tourists perceive the quality of their experiences is crucial in shaping the landscape of the tourism industry. This study seeks to explore the complicated topics between perceived quality and overall satisfaction. By identifying the factors that contribute to a positive perception, businesses and destinations can make tourists have memorable experiences for their visitors.

Safety is the foundation of a satisfying tourism experience. This study investigates the impact of perceived safety in both social and natural environments on overall satisfaction. Understanding the dynamics of these safety perceptions can guide destinations in creating environments that not only attract but also make tourists feel secure, fostering a good atmosphere for exploration and enjoyment.

Facilities and management play a crucial role in shaping the tourist experience. By scrutinizing how perceived safety in these aspects influences overall satisfaction, the study aims to offer insights into improving services, enhancing facilities, and refining management strategies. This knowledge is paramount in elevating the overall quality of the tourist experience.

The destination image projects plays a crucial role in attracting tourists. This study seeks to uncover the intricate relationship between destination image, tourist choice, and subsequent satisfaction. By understanding how these elements interconnect, destinations can craft more effective marketing strategies, aligning the perceived image with the tangible experiences on offer.

A satisfied tourist is not just a one-time visitor but a potential ambassador for a destination. This study delves into the profound impact of



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satisfaction on the intention to revisit. By identifying the key drivers of satisfaction, destinations can cultivate an environment that encourages repeat visits, fostering a sustainable and thriving tourism ecosystem.

In conclusion, these studies collectively paint a comprehensive picture of the factors influencing tourist satisfaction. By analyzing perceived quality, safety in various environments, destination image, and the link between satisfaction and revisit intentions, the tourism industry gains valuable insights that can shape strategies for creating truly grateful travel experiences. These studies act as guiding the path toward a more satisfying and sustainable future for both travelers and destinations.

1.6 Definitions of the study

1.6.1 Tourist perceived quality (TPQ)

In this study, tourist perceived quality refers to how visitors feel about the overall goodness or satisfaction they get from their travel experiences. It's about how tourists see and judge the quality of what they encounter during their trip.

1.6.2 Tourist perceived safety of the social environment (TSE)

In this study, tourist perceived safety of the social environment refers to how comfortable and secure visitors feel in terms of social aspects during their travel. It involves their perception of safety in interactions with locals and the general social atmosphere.

1.6.3 Tourist perceived safety of the natural environment (TNE)

In this study, tourist perceived safety of the natural environment refers to how secure and at ease visitors feel in terms of the outdoors and nature during their travels. It involves their perception of safety in the natural surroundings and outdoor activities.

1.6.4 Tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements (TFM)

In this study, tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements refers to how safe tourists feel in places and how well things are organized. It includes their perception of safety in accommodations, facilities, and how things are managed during their travel.

1.6.5 Tourism destination image and choice (TDI)

In this study, tourism destination image and choice refers to how people see and feel about a place they might visit, and how they decide where to go. It involves the overall impression of a destination and the factors influencing a tourist's decision on where to travel.

1.6.6 Satisfaction with Tourism Experience (STE)

In this study, satisfaction with tourism experience refers to how happy and content someone feels about their trip. It's about the enjoyment and fulfillment a person gets from their travel adventures.

1.6.7 Tourist revisit intention (TRI)

In this study, tourist revisit intention refers to when someone is thinking about going back to a place they visited before. It's about whether or not a tourist plans to return to a destination for another visit.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Theories related to each variable.

2.1.1 Tourist Perceived Quality

The significance of tourist-perceived quality in research on tourist behaviors is highlighted. It defines tourist-perceived quality as an overall judgment influenced by the emotions experienced during travel. In contrast, the concept of customer experience is portrayed as broader and less constrained, operationally characterized by a multidimensional assessment shaped by various experiential cues. The summary emphasizes that tourists may evaluate their experiences in a



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simplified favorable/unfavorable format while still perceiving individual attributes separately (Chi et al., 2020). Moreover, the quality of a tourist destination is determined by many factors, such as the appearance of buildings, religious places, local history and culture, national landmarks, the surrounding landscape, the weather, cost, and available transportation. However, it's not solely about the tangible quality; perceived quality, which is what people think about a place, is also important. People often base their perceptions on others' opinions about the place. Therefore, for those promoting tourist spots, it's crucial to improve both the tangible quality and the perceived quality of their destination (Tsvetkov, 2023).

Furthermore, in other research, tourists consider the quality of products and services offered by small businesses in the Ciletuh Sukabumi Geopark tourist spots. The research revealed that most people gave positive feedback on the quality of these products and services, particularly noting that the quality of the products had the greatest impact on tourists' perceptions (Akmal et al., 2023). According to Raman (2023), tourists assess the quality of services at the Buddhist Circuit of India. The findings indicate that, overall, tourists had a favorable impression of the service quality at the destination. Tourist service quality is determined by the disparity between tourists' expectations and their actual experiences. For urban dwellers, acquiring new knowledge, such as agricultural techniques and modern farming practices, can significantly influence their perceptions of service quality (Li, 2023).

2. 1. 2 Tourist Perceived Safety of Social Environment

Sarfraz et al. (2022) define "perceived safety of the social environment (PSSE)" as the perception of environmental factors and safety assessments of destinations. Furthermore, "Sense of safety toward tourism destinations: A social constructivist perspective" highlights that tourism safety is often

not well-organized and is perceived as part of how people view a destination. Some researchers conducted a revealing study on tourists' perceptions of safety, suggesting that these perceptions include five main components: feeling safe with people around, evaluating facilities and equipment, assessing natural surroundings, considering the social environment, and evaluating the management of the place. These ideas were derived from safety system theory and the 4Ms concept (material, method, machine, man) used in accident systems (Zou, 2022).

Alkier et al. (2022) posit that one factor affecting tourists' perception of safety post-COVID is their perception of the social environment. In simple terms, how people perceive the safety of the social atmosphere is considered a factor in tourists feeling safe post-COVID. According to Seger-Guttmann and Gilboa (2023), tourist-perceived safety of the social environment can affect satisfaction with the tourism experience.

Furthermore, "Tourists' Safety Perception Clues in the Urban Forest Environment: Visual Quality, Facility Completeness, Accessibility— A Case Study of Urban Forests in Fuzhou, China" examines how good services (such as visual quality, facility completeness, and accessibility) in urban forests are related to people's perceptions of safety in those areas. In simpler terms, it explores whether the quality of services influences how safe people perceive urban forests to be (Wang et al., 2022).

2. 1. 3 Tourist Perceived Safety of Natural Environment

Wang et al. (2022) emphasized that "The service quality and safety perception of urban forests are important factors that influence tourists to choose them as recreation destinations." Furthermore, Ding and Wu (2022) defined "tourism safety perception" as the subjective feelings and perceptions of tourists about the safety of a destination under the influence of external information involvement and their own



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factors. Tourists' perception of destination safety may be both positive and negative. Scholars generally measure tourism safety perception of destinations based on the natural and social environment of destinations and tourism elements and types of tourism safety issues.

When tourists perceive the natural environment as safe, it implies that they can have a good time and feel at ease. Some areas, such as places with volcanoes or spots where natural disasters have occurred before, might pose risks (Sarfranz et al., 2022). Additionally, Rittichainuwat (2013) explained in previous studies that areas prone to natural disasters, like volcanoes or places where disasters have occurred before, are perceived as risky. People assess the safety of these places by gathering information about past incidents, which helps them form their own perceptions about how safe these places are. Xie et al. (2020) explored that the perceived safety of the natural environment significantly affects tourists' perceived safety at destinations.

2.1.4 Tourist Perceived Safety of Facility and Management Elements

Xie et al. (2020) defined "Perceived Safety of Facility and Equipment Elements (PSFE)" as safety assessments and perceptions of the state of facilities and equipment within destinations. Furthermore, Zou and Yu (2022) stated that "Tourism scholars have proposed various ways to argue that safety is part of a destination image. Examples include a stable social order, a balanced environment, the friendliness of locals, the presence of public security systems, and available facilities and equipment."

Sarfranz et al. (2022) highlighted that "The findings of this study show that the effect of the perceived safety of the social environment, perceived safety of facility and equipment elements, perceived safety of human elements, perceived safety of management elements, and perceived safety of natural environments is

significant and positive on the tourist destination choice (TDC)." The study investigates how safe people feel while enjoying recreation, such as surfing in Taiwan, and its consequences. It explores whether feeling safe affects people's involvement and satisfaction with their experience, their attachment to the place, and their loyalty to the destination. Essentially, the research examines how the safety atmosphere during recreation impacts different aspects of people's experiences and connections to the surfing destination in Taiwan (Cheng et al., 2022). Furthermore, Li (2023) explained in previous studies that high tourist-perceived safety of facility and management elements leads to high satisfaction with the tourism experience.

2.1.5 Tourism Destination Image and Choice

Goyal and Taneja (2023) highlighted that "The results depicted that the wellness destination's image has a significant influence on wellness tourists' satisfaction level and their eWOM intentions. Furthermore, it also came to light that the satisfaction level of wellness tourist satisfaction was found to be significantly influencing their eWOM intentions. The mediating role of wellness tourists' satisfaction was found to be significant from destination image (post-visit) to eWOM intentions." Furthermore, destination image influences tourist behaviors and experiences (Homer et al., 2023). Additionally, Luong (2023) explained in previous studies that people's perceptions of a place (destination image) are connected to their planned activities there (behavioral intentions). It also considers satisfaction as an intermediate step, influencing how people decide what they want to do at a destination. Zakiah et al. (2023) explored how people's perception of a place (destination image) affects their satisfaction with their visit (tourist satisfaction) and whether they will want to return (loyalty). In simple terms, it examines how the image of a destination shapes tourists' feelings and whether it motivates them to



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return. This article recognizes tourism destination image as a relevant factor influencing both the decision-making process in selecting a destination and the quality of the destination's image in tourism destination selection (Camprubí & Gassiot-Melion, 2023).

2.1.6 Satisfaction with Tourism Experience

This article examines the impact of experiential marketing on consumer satisfaction and identifies its importance in the tourism industry using SPSS AMOS software. The study found that experiential marketing is represented by five components, namely sense, feel, think, act, and relate, while behavioral intention was represented by three components, including word of mouth, revisit intention, willingness to pay, and tourism satisfaction (Achmad & Aruan, 2023).

Furthermore, "The Structural Relationship among Tourism Experience, Tourism Satisfaction, Storytelling, and Revisit Intention: Focused on Gyeongju" discusses the positive influence of enjoyment, refreshment, involvement, and local culture on tourism satisfaction in the context of Gyeongju tourism (Jeon & Koo, 2023). Moreover, Yulianto et al. (2023) explained in a previous study that when tourists are happy with their visit (tourist satisfaction) and have a special and memorable experience (memorable tourism experience) in Osing Kemiren Heritage Village, it encourages them to return (intention to revisit). In simple terms, enjoying the visit and having a memorable experience make people want to return to the heritage village. Abbasj et al. (2021) explored that people who are satisfied when traveling are more likely to revisit that place.

In this paper, the effect of destination brand experience on tourist behavioral intention through tourist satisfaction has been investigated using an associative method with a descriptive quantitative approach. The results of this study indicate that tourist satisfaction with destination brand experiences is at a high level, and tourists also

express intentions to engage in positive word of mouth and make return visits (Nurhayati et al., 2022).

2.1.7 Tourist revisit intention

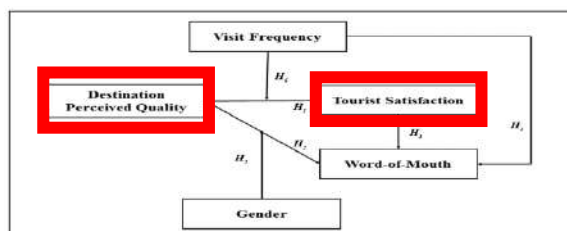
The paper recommends that upcoming marketing plans should concentrate on improving services at tourist spots to increase the chances of visitors wanting to come back (Ambarwati et al., 2023). Furthermore, Gregoriades et al. (2023) mentioned that the paper applies computer techniques to study hotel reviews, finding trends that show why tourists might choose to visit again. Moreover, Abbasj et al. (2021) noted that "The results show that perceived behavioral control, perceived value, destination image, and satisfaction significantly affect visitors' revisit intention." Additionally, in this paper, the effect of destination brand experience on tourist behavioral intention through tourist satisfaction has been investigated using an associative method with a descriptive quantitative approach. The results of this study indicate that tourist satisfaction with the destination brand experiences is at a satisfactory level. Tourists also express their intention to engage in positive word-of-mouth and make return visits (Nurhayati et al., 2022). According to Zhou et al. (2022), "The authenticity of heritage tourism is an important factor for attracting tourists. Research has shown that authenticity is related to revisit intention."

2.3 Theoretical frameworks

2.3.1 The first theoretical framework from Destination perceived quality, tourist satisfaction and word-of-mouth (Wang et al., 2017). Figure 1, this research provided the relationship between destination perceived quality which link to tourists satisfaction.

Figure 1.

Destination perceived quality, tourist satisfaction and word-of-mouth

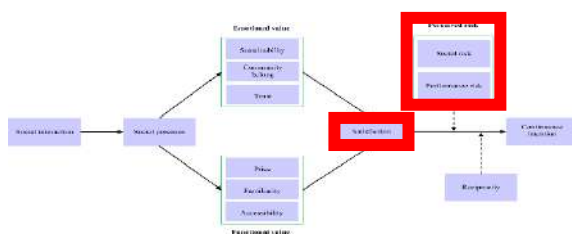


Source. Wang, T.-L., Tran, P. T., & Tran, V. T. (2017). Destination perceived quality, tourist satisfaction and word-of-mouth. *Tourism Review*, 72(4), 392–410. <https://doi.org/10.1108/tr-06-2017-0103>

2.3.2 Lho et al. (2022) in the sharing economy in the hospitality sector: The role of social interaction, social presence, and reciprocity in eliciting satisfaction and continuance behavior is the second theoretical framework. Figure 2 shows the relationship between perceived risk of social risk and performance risk.

Figure 2.

The sharing economy in the hospitality sector: The role of social interaction, social presence, and reciprocity in eliciting satisfaction and continuance behavior



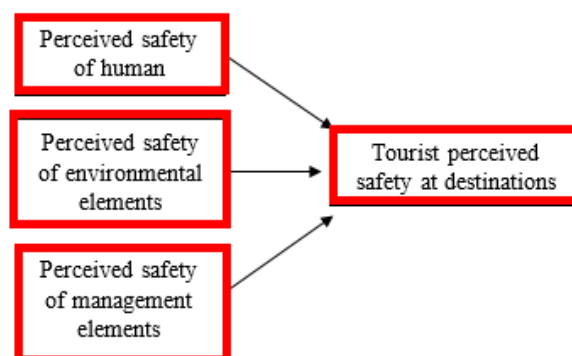
Source. Lho, L. H., Quan, W., Yu, J., & Han, H. (2022). The sharing economy in the hospitality sector: The role of Social Interaction, social presence, and reciprocity in eliciting satisfaction and continuance behavior. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01379-y>

2.3.3 Xie et al. (2020) in Developing a Scale to Measure Tourist Perceived Safety is the third

theoretical framework. Figure 3 shows the relationship between perceived safety of environmental elements, perceived safety of management elements and tourist perceived safety at destinations.

Figure 3.

Developing a Scale to Measure Tourist Perceived Safety

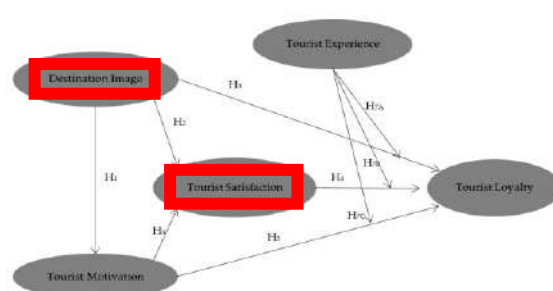


Source. Xie, C., Zhang, J., & Morrison, A. M. (2020). Developing a scale to measure tourist perceived safety. *Journal of Travel Research*, 60(6), 1232–1251. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287520946103>

2.3.4 Hung et al. (2021) in The Influence of Tourists' Experience on Destination Loyalty: A Case Study of Hue City, Vietnam is the forth theoretical framework. Figure 4 shows the relationship between destination image and choice and tourist satisfaction.

Figure 4.

The Influence of Tourists' Experience on Destination Loyalty: A Case Study of Hue City, Vietnam

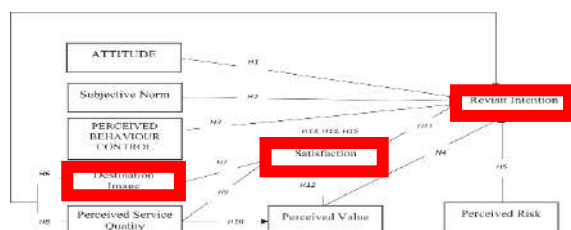


Source. Hung, V. V., Dey, S. K., Vaculickova, Z., & Anh, L. T. (2021). The influence of tourists' experience on destination loyalty: A case study of hue city, Vietnam. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 8889. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13168889>

2.3.5 Abbasj et al. (2021) in Understanding the intention to revisit a destination by expanding the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is the fifth theoretical framework. Figure 5 shows the relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention.

Figure 5.

Understanding the intention to revisit a destination by expanding the theory of planned behaviour (TPB)



Source. Abbasi, G. A., Kumaravelu, J., Goh, Y.-N., & Dara Singh, K. S. (2021). Understanding the intention to revisit a destination by expanding the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). *Spanish Journal of Marketing - ESIC*, 25(2), 282-311. <https://doi.org/10.1108/sjme-12-2019-0109>

2.4 Hypotheses development

The researchers established 7 hypotheses based on the provided conceptual framework to explore the factors that affect satisfaction with tourism experience and tourist revisit intention. The following are the proposed hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Tourist perceived quality has a significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Tourist perceived safety of the social environment has a significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Tourist perceived safety of the natural environment has a significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements has a significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Tourism destination image and choice have a significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 6 (H6): Satisfaction with tourism experience has a significant effect on tourist revisit intention.

Hypothesis 7 (H7): Tourism destination image and choice have a significant effect on tourist revisit intention.

2.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is developed based on previous research about the effect of tourist perceived quality, tourist perceived safety of social environment, tourist perceived safety of natural environment, tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements and tourism destination image and choice toward satisfaction with tourism experience, satisfaction with tourism experience and tourist revisit intention. In study, will be focus at seven hypotheses that explain in Figure 6 showing how each variables effect satisfaction with tourism experience and tourist revisit intention.

Figure 6.

The conceptual Framework of A Study of Unveiling the Effect of Perceived Quality, Safety, and Destination Image on Visitor Satisfaction and Return Intentions, Thailand.



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384 persons. As the number of samples keep falling on the other hand the population keeps increasing. Hence the researcher firmly decided to use the number 390 as samples for the 28,150,016 people.

3.2.3 Sampling Procedures

The researcher decided to employ a non-probability sampling method by utilizing a convenience sampling method (or haphazard sampling) of all received responses data screened beforehand to align with the objective of the research. Because of the limited time available for data collection, researchers aspire to use a non-probability sampling method. To summarize, based on an appropriation of data collection time frame

along with the process. This method is the best selection to apply in this research.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

3.3.1 The Content Validity

The content validity of the questionnaire items was evaluated by the researchers using the IOC index. After seeking the opinions of three experts, IOC scores exceeding 0.5 (Table 1), demonstrating satisfactory validity. Consequently, a refined set of 31 questions was selected, precisely revised to the variables under investigation. This procedure guaranteed the precision and pertinence of the questionnaire, thereby ensuring the collection of valid data for the study.

Table 1. *The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Index with three experts*

Variables	Before Number of Items	After Number of Items	IOC Weight Scores
Tourist Perceived Quality	5	4	0.67 – 1.00
Tourist perceived safety of the social environment	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Tourist perceived safety of the natural environment	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Tourism destination image and choice	5	4	0.67 – 1.00
Satisfaction with Tourism Experience	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Tourist revisit intention	5	3	0.67 – 1.00

3.3.2 Reliability Test

A pilot survey with 30 people was conducted to check for any issues or flaws in the questionnaire. The trustworthiness of each section was measured using Cronbach's alpha, a statistical tool. According to standards set by Cronbach's (1951), alpha scores over 0.9 are outstanding, scores from 0.8 to 0.9 are good, and scores from 0.7 to 0.8 are acceptable. Scores between 0.6 and 0.7 are seen as questionable, scores from 0.5 to 0.6 are poor, and scores under 0.5 are not acceptable. In this study, the reliability of different sections like tourist perceived quality, tourist perceived safety of social environment,

tourist perceived safety of natural environment, tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements, tourism destination image and choice, satisfaction with tourism experience, and tourist revisit intention was evaluated with Cronbach's alpha from the trial. The results showed scores of 0.791 for tourist perceived quality, 0.802 for tourist perceived safety of social environment, 0.799 for tourist perceived safety of natural environment, 0.805 for tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements, 0.776 for tourism destination image and choice, 0.765 for satisfaction with tourism experience and 0.801 for tourist revisit



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intention, as shown in Table 2 All these scores are above 0.60, meaning they are considered reliable and suitable for use in the full survey.

Table 2. *The Value of Reliability Analysis of the entire study Questions and Variables (n=50)*

	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Tourist Perceived Quality (TPQ)	0.791	Acceptable
Tourist Perceived Safety of Social Environment (TSE)	0.802	Good
Tourist Perceived Safety of Natural Environment (TNE)	0.799	Acceptable
Tourist Perceived Safety of Facility and Management Elements (TFM)	0.812	Good
Tourism Destination Image and Choice (TDI)	0.776	Acceptable
Satisfaction with Tourism Experience	0.765	Acceptable
Tourist Revisit Intention	0.801	Good

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

Descriptive statistics with frequency and percentage for demographic data, as detailed below.

Gender: Based on a total of 390 respondents, including 63 males, comprising 16.2% of all respondents, and 327 females, accounting for 83.8% of all respondents, excluding those whose gender was not specified.

Age: The predominant age group among respondents to the questionnaire is 31 - 34 years old, with 269 respondents, representing 73.7%. The second most prevalent age range is 21 - 30 years old, with 101 respondents, making up 25.9%. The third age range comprises individuals over 40 years old, with 17 respondents, totaling 4.4%. The final age range consists of individuals aged 18 - 20 years old, with a total of 3 respondents, comprising 0.7%.

Continent: The majority of respondents are from Asia, with 120 respondents, accounting for 30.8%. The second largest group is from Europe, with 116 respondents, representing 29.7%. South America follows with 67 respondents, comprising 17.2%, and Australia with 56 respondents, totaling 14.4%. North America has 21 respondents, accounting for

5.4%, while Antarctica has 7 respondents, making up 1.8%. Lastly, Africa has 3 respondents, totaling 0.8%.

Number of Times Been to Thailand: The majority of respondents have been to Thailand twice, with 322 respondents, comprising 82.6%. The second most common occurrence is visiting Thailand once, with 43 respondents, accounting for 11.0%. Finally, visiting Thailand more than twice is reported by 25 respondents, representing 6.4%.

Days to Stay in Thailand: The majority of respondents reported staying in Thailand for 4 - 6 days, with 280 respondents, totaling 71.8%. The second most common duration is 7 - 10 days, with 99 respondents, comprising 25.4%. Additionally, 6 respondents reported staying for 1 - 3 days, accounting for 1.5%, and 5 respondents reported staying for more than 10 days, totaling 1.3%.

Travel Companion: The majority of respondents traveled with family, with 323 respondents, representing 82.8%. The second most common travel companion is friends, with 60 respondents, making up 15.4%. Lastly, 7 respondents reported traveling alone, accounting for 1.8%.

Budget: The majority of respondents reported a budget of over 80,000 baht, with 163 respondents,



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comprising 41.8%. The second most prevalent budget range is 50,001 – 80,000 baht, with 158 respondents, accounting for 40.5%. Additionally, 65 respondents reported a budget of 30,000 – 50,000 baht, making up 16.7%, while 4 respondents reported a budget of less than 30,000 baht, totaling 1.0%.

4.2 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation

In this section, the summary of the Mean and Standard Deviation for each group

variable consisted of tourist perceived quality, tourist perceived safety of the social environment, tourist perceived safety of the natural environment, tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements, tourism destination image and choice, satisfaction with tourism experience, and tourist revisit intention. The following criteria for evaluating the mean scores were adapted from Imsa-ard et al., (2021) displayed below:

The criteria of the interpretation of mean scores

Mean score	Interpretation
4.210 - 5.000	Strongly agree
3.410 - 4.200	Agree
2.610 - 3.200	Neutral
1.810 - 2.600	Disagree
1.000 - 1.800	Strongly disagree

Tourist Perceived Quality

Table 3 represented the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of Tourist Perceived Quality was "The promotional materials and online content for Thailand positively influence your decision to revisit." which equals 4.04. Conversely, the lowest mean was "I satisfied with overall tourist experience in Thailand." which equals 3.580. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "I satisfied with overall tourist experience in Thailand." which is equal to 1.069. Nevertheless, the lowest was "The promotional materials and online content for

Thailand positively influence your decision to revisit." which equals 0.982.

Tourist Perceived Safety of the Social Environment

Table 3 represented the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of Tourist Perceived Safety of the Social Environment was "The perceived safety of the social environment during my return trip to Thailand significantly added to my overall satisfaction." which equals 4.050. Conversely, the lowest mean was "The security measures in Thailand extremely effective.." which equals 3.620. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "The availability of clear and accessible safety information about the social environment in Thailand contributed to my overall feeling of security." which is equal to 1.052. Nevertheless, the lowest was "I felt safe in public spaces such as parks, streets, and public transportation in Thailand very safe." which equals 0.938.

Tourist Perceived Safety of the Natural Environment

Table 3 represented the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of Tourist Perceived Safety of the Natural Environment was "My perception of safety during wildlife encounters in Thailand's natural environment was extremely safe." which equals 4.040. Conversely, the lowest mean was "The security measures in Thailand's natural environment were extremely effective." which equals 3.530. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "I felt very safe on trails and paths in natural areas in Thailand." which is equal to 1.061. Nevertheless, the lowest was "The security measures in Thailand's natural environment were extremely effective." which equals 0.989.

Tourist Perceived Safety of Facility and Management Elements



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Table 3 represented the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of Tourist Perceived Safety of Facility and Management Elements was "I had access to information about safety measures related to facilities and management elements in Thailand completely." which equals 4.180. Conversely, the lowest mean was "The perceived safety of facilities and management elements in Thailand is a key factor influencing my intention to revisit in the future." which equals 3.770. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "The visibility and accessibility of emergency exits in facilities in Thailand contributed to my sense of safety extremely safe." which is equal to 1.065. Nevertheless, the lowest was "My perception of trust in the maintenance of facilities in Thailand contributed to my overall sense of safety completely." which equals 0.922.

Tourism Destination Image and Choice

Table 3 represented the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of Tourism Destination Image and Choice was "The marketing efforts promoting Thailand as a tourist destination were extremely effective." which equals 4.230. Conversely, the lowest mean was "The unique and diverse local cuisine in Thailand plays a pivotal role in my decision to choose it for a revisit." which equals 3.90. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "The overall image and diverse range of activities and attractions available during my return trip to Thailand significantly influenced my choice to revisit." which is equal to 1.013. Nevertheless, the lowest was "The cultural appeal and overall destination image of Thailand significantly contribute to my choice to revisit." which equals 0.898.

Satisfaction with Tourism Experience

Table 3 represented the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of Satisfaction with Tourism Experience was "I very satisfied with the quality of transportation services (e.g., public transport, taxis) in Thailand." which equals 3.770. Conversely, the lowest mean was "The overall satisfaction with my tourism experience in Thailand, including the diverse range of activities and attractions during my trip, significantly influences my intention to revisit" which equals 3.45. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "The overall satisfaction with my tourism experience in Thailand, including the diverse range of activities and attractions during my trip, significantly influences my intention to revisit." which is equal to 1.18. Nevertheless, the lowest was "I very satisfied with the quality of transportation services (e.g., public transport, taxis) in Thailand." which equals 1.14.

Tourist Revisit Intention

Table 3 represented the results among 390 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of Tourist Revisit Intention was "I am wholeheartedly planning to revisit the destination in Thailand within the next year." which equals 3.830. Conversely, the lowest mean was "Memorable experiences, cultural richness, and safety influence my decision to revisit Thailand." which equals 3.400. Furthermore, the highest standard deviation was "I really want to go back to the same place in Thailand someday." which is equal to 1.15. Nevertheless, the lowest was "Memorable experiences, cultural richness, and safety influence my decision to revisit Thailand." which equals 1.061.



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Table 3. Mean and standard deviation

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Tourist Perceived Quality			
TPQ1: I satisfied with overall tourist experience in Thailand.	3.58	1.069	Agree
TPQ2: Quality of accommodation in Thailand is good.	3.76	1.056	Agree
TPQ3: The promotional materials and online content for Thailand positively influence your decision to revisit.	4.04	0.982	Agree
TPQ4: The quality of cultural experiences during your initial visit significantly impact your decision to consider revisiting Thailand.	3.79	1.005	Agree
Tourist Perceived Safety of the Social Environment			
TSE1: The security measures in Thailand extremely effective.	3.62	0.991	Agree
TSE2: The visible presence of law enforcement in Thailand contributed to my sense of safety completely.	3.82	0.944	Agree
TSE3: I felt safe in public spaces such as parks, streets, and public transportation in Thailand very safe.	4.04	0.938	Agree
TSE4: The perceived safety of the social environment during my return trip to Thailand significantly added to my overall satisfaction.	4.05	0.945	Agree
TSE 5: The availability of clear and accessible safety information about the social environment in Thailand contributed to my overall feeling of security.	3.99	1.052	Agree
Tourist Perceived Safety of the Natural Environment			
TNE1: The overall safety in the natural environment of Thailand my visit was very safe.	3.88	1.062	Agree
TNE2: The security measures in Thailand's natural environment were extremely effective.	3.53	0.989	Agree
TNE3: The visibility of rangers or guides in natural areas in Thailand contributed to my sense of safety completely.	3.78	1.007	Agree
TNE4: I felt very safe on trails and paths in natural areas in Thailand.	4.03	1.061	Agree
TNE5: My perception of safety during wildlife encounters in Thailand's natural environment was extremely safe.	3.63	1.043	Agree
Tourist Perceived Safety of Facility and Management Elements			
TFM1: The visibility and accessibility of emergency exits in facilities in Thailand contributed to my sense of safety extremely safe.	3.87	1.065	Agree
TFM2: My level of trust in the emergency response and management capabilities of facilities in Thailand significantly influenced my satisfaction with the overall travel experience.	4.01	1.043	Agree
TFM3: The perceived safety of facilities and management elements in Thailand is a key factor influencing my intention to revisit in the future.	3.77	0.949	Agree
TFM4: I had access to information about safety measures related to facilities and management elements in Thailand completely.	4.18	1.061	Agree
TFM5: My perception of trust in the maintenance of facilities in Thailand contributed to my overall sense of safety completely.	4.04	0.922	Agree
Tourism Destination Image and Choice			
TDI1: The marketing efforts promoting Thailand as a tourist destination were extremely effective.	4.23	0.97	Agree



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TDI2: The overall image and diverse range of activities and attractions available during my return trip to Thailand significantly influenced my choice to revisit.	4.01	1.013	Agree
TDI3: The cultural appeal and overall destination image of Thailand significantly contribute to my choice to revisit.	4.03	0.898	Agree
TDI4: The unique and diverse local cuisine in Thailand plays a pivotal role in my decision to choose it for a revisit.	3.9	0.995	Agree
Satisfaction with Tourism Experience			
STE1: The overall satisfaction with my tourism experience in Thailand, including the diverse range of activities and attractions during my trip, significantly influences my intention to revisit.	3.45	1.18	Agree
STE2: I very satisfied with various attractions and landmarks that I visited in Thailand.	3.69	1.15	Agree
STE3: I very satisfied with the quality of transportation services (e.g., public transport, taxis) in Thailand.	3.77	1.14	Agree
STE4: I very satisfied with the local cuisine and dining experiences in Thailand.	3.63	1.15	Agree
STE5: I would gladly suggest returning to Thailand to others because it's a fantastic place to explore and left me very satisfied.	3.53	1.16	Agree
Tourist Revisit Intention			
TRI1: I really want to go back to the same place in Thailand someday.	3.51	1.15	Agree
TRI2: I am wholeheartedly planning to revisit the destination in Thailand within the next year.	3.83	1.068	Agree
TRI3: Memorable experiences, cultural richness, and safety influence my decision to revisit Thailand.	3.4	1.061	Agree

4.3 Hypothesis testing results

4.3.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of

H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5

Statistical Hypothesis

Ho: Tourist perceived quality (H1), tourist perceived safety of the social environment (H2), tourist perceived safety of the natural environment (H3), tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements (H4), and tourism destination image and choice (H5), have no significant influence on the satisfaction with tourism experience in Thailand

Ha: Tourist perceived quality (H1), tourist perceived safety of the social environment (H2), tourist perceived safety of the natural environment (H3), tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements (H4), and tourism destination image and choice (H5), have significant influence on the satisfaction with tourism experience in

Thailand

Table 4.9 presents the outcomes of a multiple linear regression analysis, revealing that tourist perceived quality, tourist perceived safety of the social environment, tourist perceived safety of the natural environment, tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements, and tourism destination image and choice have significantly influenced on satisfaction with tourism experience in Thailand. In relation to hypothesis 1, the analysis of tourist perceived quality yields a P-value of 0.002, which aligns with the significance threshold ($P < 0.05$). In Hypothesis 2, the analysis of tourist perceived safety of the social environment yields a P-value of 0.002, which aligns with the significance threshold ($P < 0.05$). In Hypothesis 3, the analysis of tourist perceived safety of the natural environment yields a P-value of 0.002, which aligns with the significance threshold ($P < 0.05$). In Hypothesis 4,



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the analysis of tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements yields a P-value of $<0.001^*$, which aligns with the significance threshold ($P < 0.05$). In Hypothesis 5, the analysis of

tourism destination image and choice yields a P-value of 0.012, which aligns with the significance threshold ($P < 0.05$). As a result, the findings indicate the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Tourist perceived quality	0.661	0.238	0.1406	2.85	0.002*	1.15	Rejected Ho
H2: Tourist perceived safety of the social environment	0.068	0.061	0.052	4.44	0.002*	1.17	Rejected Ho
H3: Tourist perceived safety of the natural environment	0.660	0.228	0.1496	2.88	0.002*	1.15	Rejected Ho
H4: Tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements	0.158	0.0590	0.1282	2.50	$<0.001^*$	1.17	Rejected Ho
H5: Tourism destination image and choice	0.140	0.090	0.1096	2.17	0.012*	1.18	Rejected Ho

Note: $\square^2 = 0.144$, Adjust $\square^2 = 0.133$, $*p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable = satisfaction with tourism experience

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | B = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

4.3.2 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H6 and H7

Statistical Hypothesis

Ho: Satisfaction with tourism experience (H6) and tourism destination image and choice (H7), have no significant influence on the tourist revisit intention in Thailand

Ha: Satisfaction with tourism experience (H6) and tourism destination image and choice (H7), have significant influence on the tourist revisit intention in Thailand

Table 5 presents the outcomes of a multiple linear regression analysis, revealing that

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 6 and 7

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H6: Satisfaction with tourism experience	0.45	0.05	0.12	8.89	0.002*	1.02	Rejected
H7: Tourism destination image and choice	0.39	0.04	0.06	9.61	$<0.001^*$	1.03	Rejected

satisfaction with tourism experience and tourism destination image and choice have significantly influenced on tourist revisit intention in Thailand. In relation to hypothesis 6, the analysis of satisfaction with tourism experience yields a P-value of 0.002, which aligns with the significance threshold ($P < 0.05$). In Hypothesis 7, the analysis of tourism destination image and choice yields a P-value of <0.001 , which aligns with the significance threshold ($P < 0.05$). As a result, the findings indicate the rejection of the null hypothesis.



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Note: $\square^2 = 0.359$, Adjust $\square^2 = 0.350$, $*p < 0.05$. Dependent Variable = tourist revisit intention

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | B = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Research Intentions

The research objectives and questions serve as fundamental components guiding this study. This section aims to delve into the analysis of six variables that influence the relationships underlying tourist revisit intention in Thailand. Seven research questions are formulated to address various aspects of the study:

- (1) To investigate whether tourist perceived quality significantly affects satisfaction with the tourism experience.
- (2) To examine the impact of tourist perceived safety of the social environment on satisfaction with the tourism experience.
- (3) To assess the influence of tourist perceived safety of the natural environment on satisfaction with the tourism experience.
- (4) To determine the significance of tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements on satisfaction with the tourism experience.
- (5) To explore the effect of tourism destination image and choice on satisfaction with the tourism experience.
- (6) To investigate whether tourism destination image and choice significantly impact tourist revisit intention.
- (7) To analyze the relationship between satisfaction with the tourism experience and tourist revisit intention, determining whether satisfaction significantly affects revisit intention.

By addressing these research questions, this study aims to provide insights into the factors influencing tourist behavior and decision-making processes in the context of tourism in Thailand.

Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 6 presents the outcomes of hypothesis testing conducted to examine the relationships between various factors and satisfaction with tourism experience, as well as tourist revisit intention. Each hypothesis was formulated to investigate whether specific factors significantly affect the respective dependent variables. The summary of the hypothesis testing results is as follows:

Hypothesis H1o proposed that tourist perceived quality has no significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience. The p-value obtained was 0.002, indicating statistical significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, suggesting that tourist perceived quality significantly influences satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis H2o posited that tourist perceived safety of the social environment has no significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience. The p-value was 0.002, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, it was concluded that tourist perceived safety of the social environment significantly affects satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis H3o suggested that tourist perceived safety of the natural environment has no significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience. The p-value obtained was 0.002, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. Therefore, it was determined that tourist perceived safety of the natural environment significantly influences satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis H4o hypothesized that tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements has no significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience. The p-value was less than 0.001, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence, it was concluded that tourist perceived



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safety of facility and management elements significantly affects satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis H5o proposed that tourism destination image and choice have no significant effect on satisfaction with tourism experience. The p-value obtained was 0.012, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, it was determined that tourism destination image and choice significantly influence satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis H6o suggested that satisfaction with tourism experience has no significant effect on tourist revisit intention. The p-value obtained was 0.002, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Therefore, it was concluded that satisfaction with tourism experience significantly influences tourist revisit intention.

Hypothesis H7o posited that tourism destination image and choice have no significant effect on tourist revisit intention. The p-value was less than 0.001, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence, it was determined that tourism destination image and choice significantly influence tourist revisit intention.

Overall, with p-values less than the significance level of 0.05, all hypotheses were rejected, indicating that the factors examined significantly impact both satisfaction with tourism experience and tourist revisit intention.

Table 6. Summary of the hypothesis testing results.

Statement of hypothesis	p-Value	Decision Results
H1o: Tourist perceived quality has no significantly effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.	0.002*	Rejected Ho
H2o: Tourist perceived safety of social environment has no significantly effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.	0.002*	Rejected Ho
H3o: Tourist perceived safety of natural environment has no significantly effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.	0.002*	Rejected Ho
H4o: Tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements has no significantly effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.	<0.001*	Rejected Ho
H5o: Tourism destination image and choice has no significantly effect on satisfaction with tourism experience.	0.012*	Rejected Ho
H6o: Satisfaction with tourism experience has no significantly effect on tourist revisit intention.	0.002*	Rejected Ho
H7o: Tourism destination image and choice has no significantly effect on tourist revisit intention.	<0.001*	Rejected Ho

*p-value < 0.05

5.2 Summary of Findings

5.2.1 Multiple linear regression analysis for H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5

The multiple linear regression analysis for H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5 examined the relationship between several variables and satisfaction with tourism experience, serving as the dependent

variable. The results are summarized below and shown in Figure 7.

Hypothesis 1 (H1) posited that tourist perceived quality would influence satisfaction with tourism experience. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.661, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.238. The standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.1406. The t-value was 2.85, with a corresponding p-value of 0.002, indicating statistical significance. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was 1.15. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected, suggesting that tourist perceived quality significantly affects satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) proposed that tourist perceived safety of the social environment would impact satisfaction with tourism experience. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.068, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.061. The standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.052. The t-value was 4.44, with a p-value of 0.002, indicating statistical significance. The VIF was 1.17. Consequently, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between tourist perceived safety of the social environment and satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) suggested that tourist perceived safety of the natural environment would influence satisfaction with tourism experience. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.660, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.228. The standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.1496. The t-value was 2.88, with a p-value of 0.002, indicating statistical significance. The VIF was 1.15. Thus, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected, indicating a significant association between tourist perceived safety of the natural environment and satisfaction with tourism experience.

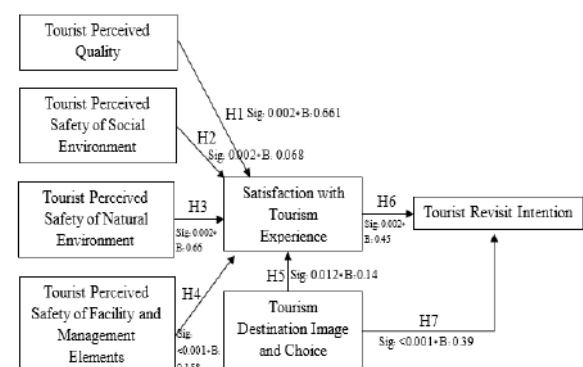
Hypothesis 4 (H4) proposed that tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements would affect satisfaction with tourism experience. The regression coefficient (B) was

0.158, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.059. The standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.1282. The t-value was 2.50, with a p-value of <0.001, indicating statistical significance. The VIF was 1.17. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected, suggesting that tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements significantly impacts satisfaction with tourism experience.

Hypothesis 5 (H5) hypothesized that tourism destination image and choice would influence satisfaction with tourism experience. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.140, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.090. The standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.1096. The t-value was 2.17, with a p-value of 0.012, indicating statistical significance. The VIF was 1.18. Consequently, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between tourism destination image and choice and satisfaction with tourism experience.

Overall, the model's R-squared (R^2) value was 0.144, suggesting that approximately 14.4% of the variance in satisfaction with tourism experience can be explained by the independent variables. The adjusted R-squared (Adjusted R^2) value was 0.133. All results were significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

Figure 7. The Result of Structural Model



5.2.2 Multiple linear regression analysis for H6, and H7

The multiple linear regression analysis of H6 and H7 examined the relationships between several



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variables and tourist revisit intention, serving as the dependent variable. The results are summarized below:

Hypothesis 6 (H6) proposed that satisfaction with tourism experience would influence tourist revisit intention. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.45, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.05. The standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.12. The t-value was 8.89, with a corresponding p-value of 0.002, indicating statistical significance. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was 1.02. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, suggesting that satisfaction with tourism experience significantly affects tourist revisit intention.

Hypothesis 7 (H7) suggested that tourism destination image and choice would influence tourist revisit intention. The regression coefficient (B) was 0.39, with a standard error (SE B) of 0.04. The standardized coefficient (Beta) was 0.06. The t-value was 9.61, with a p-value of <0.001, indicating statistical significance. The VIF was 1.03. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between tourism destination image and choice and tourist revisit intention.

Overall, the model's R-squared (R^2) value was 0.359, suggesting that approximately 35.9% of the variance in tourist revisit intention can be explained by the independent variables. The adjusted R-squared (Adjusted R^2) value was 0.350. All results were significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

5.3 Discussion based on Findings

5.3.1 Based on dependent variable - Satisfaction with tourism experience (STE)

The findings of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed several significant relationships between independent variables and satisfaction with tourism experience (STE). Specifically, tourist perceived quality (TPQ), tourist perceived safety of the social environment (TSE), tourist perceived

safety of the natural environment (TNE), tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements (TFM), and tourism destination image and choice (TDI) demonstrated standardized coefficients of 0.1406, 0.0520, 0.1496, 0.1282, and 0.1096, respectively as shown in Table 7.

Tourist perceived quality emerged as a significant predictor of satisfaction with tourism experience, as evidenced by its positive standardized coefficient of 0.1406. This implies that tourists who perceive higher levels of quality in various aspects of their tourism experience, such as accommodations, attractions, and services, are more likely to report greater satisfaction. This finding underscores the importance of maintaining and enhancing quality standards across different facets of the tourism industry to ensure positive visitor experiences.

Similarly, the perceived safety of both the social and natural environments significantly influences satisfaction with tourism experience. Tourists who feel secure and safe in their surroundings are more likely to enjoy their travel experiences and report higher levels of satisfaction. This emphasizes the importance of implementing effective safety measures and promoting a sense of security among tourists to enhance their overall satisfaction levels.

Furthermore, the perceived safety of facility and management elements emerged as another significant predictor of satisfaction with tourism experience. This suggests that tourists' perceptions of the maintenance, cleanliness, and management efficiency of tourism facilities significantly impact their overall satisfaction. Hence, maintaining high standards of facility upkeep and efficient management practices is crucial for fostering positive visitor experiences and satisfaction.

Moreover, tourism destination image and choice also play a significant role in shaping satisfaction with tourism experience. The positive standardized coefficient of 0.1096 indicates that tourists who perceive a destination positively and make informed choices based on their preferences are

more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction with their overall tourism experience. Thus, destination marketers and tourism stakeholders must focus on managing and enhancing destination image perceptions to attract and satisfy tourists effectively.

Overall, the findings highlight the multidimensional nature of satisfaction with tourism experience and underscore the importance of various factors, including perceived quality, safety, and destination image, in shaping tourists' perceptions and satisfaction levels. Addressing these factors effectively can contribute to the enhancement of overall visitor satisfaction and the sustainability of the tourism industry.

Table 7. Summary strengths of Satisfaction with tourism experience.

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Standardized Coefficient
Satisfaction with tourism experience (STE)	Tourist perceived quality (TPQ)	0.1406
	Tourist perceived safety of the social environment (TSE)	0.0520
	Tourist perceived safety of the natural environment (TNE)	0.1496
	Tourist perceived safety of facility and management elements (TFM)	0.1282
	Tourism destination image and choice (TDI)	0.1096

5.3.2 Based on dependent variable - Tourist revisit intention (TRI)

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed significant relationships between independent variables and tourist revisit intention (TRI). Specifically, satisfaction with tourism experience (STE) and tourism destination image and choice (TDI) demonstrated standardized coefficients of 0.12 and 0.06, respectively as shown in Table 8.

Satisfaction with tourism experience emerged as a significant predictor of tourist revisit intention, as evidenced by its positive standardized coefficient of 0.12. This finding suggests that tourists who report higher levels of satisfaction with their overall tourism experience are more inclined to express intentions to revisit the destination in the future. It implies that positive experiences play a crucial role in fostering loyalty and encouraging repeat visitation among tourists. Therefore, destination managers and tourism stakeholders must prioritize efforts to enhance visitor satisfaction by delivering high-quality services, ensuring safety, and providing memorable experiences.

Furthermore, tourism destination image and choice also exhibited a significant but relatively smaller effect on tourist revisit intention, with a standardized coefficient of 0.06. This suggests that while perceptions of the destination and the decision-making process regarding destination choice do influence revisit intentions, their impact may be less pronounced compared to satisfaction with the tourism experience. Nonetheless, a positive destination image and favorable perceptions of the destination's offerings can still contribute to tourists' intentions to revisit. Therefore, destination marketers should focus on promoting positive destination images and facilitating informed destination choices to encourage repeat visitation.

Overall, the findings underscore the importance of both satisfaction with tourism experience and tourism destination image and choice in shaping tourists' intentions to revisit a destination. By prioritizing efforts to enhance visitor satisfaction and manage destination perceptions effectively, destination managers and tourism stakeholders can cultivate positive experiences and encourage repeat visitation, thereby contributing to destination sustainability and long-term success.



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Table 8. *Summary strengths of Tourist revisit intention.*

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Standardized Coefficient
Tourist revisit intention (TRI)	Satisfaction with tourism experience (STE)	0.12
	Tourism destination image and choice (TDI)	0.06

5.4 Recommendations based on Findings

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the factors influencing satisfaction with tourism experiences and tourists' intentions to revisit in Thailand. Based on the results presented above, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance tourist experiences and encourage repeat visitation.

Firstly, enhance quality standards. Given the significant influence of tourist-perceived quality on satisfaction with tourism experiences, tourism stakeholders should prioritize efforts to maintain and enhance quality standards across various aspects of the tourism industry. This includes improving the quality of accommodations, attractions, and services to meet the expectations of tourists. For example, tourism establishments and service providers should regularly assess and improve the quality of their offerings by soliciting feedback from tourists, implementing training programs for staff members, and investing in necessary infrastructure upgrades.

Secondly, ensure safety and security. As the findings underscore the importance of ensuring safety and security in both social and natural environments, destination management organizations should collaborate with local authorities to implement effective safety measures, enhance surveillance systems, and promote safe tourism practices to instill confidence among tourists. For instance, developing and implementing comprehensive safety protocols and emergency response plans to address potential safety concerns, such as improving signage, enhancing lighting in

public areas, and increasing police patrols in tourist-heavy areas.

Thirdly, manage destination image. Given the significant impact of tourism destination image and choice on satisfaction with tourism experiences and tourists' revisit intentions, destination marketers should focus on managing and enhancing destination perceptions. This includes promoting positive aspects of the destination, showcasing unique attractions, and leveraging digital marketing strategies to influence tourist decision-making. For example, developing targeted marketing campaigns that highlight the unique cultural heritage, natural beauty, and authentic experiences offered by the destination and utilizing social media platforms, travel influencers, and user-generated content to enhance the destination's online reputation and appeal to prospective tourists.

Fourthly, monitor and improve visitor satisfaction. To foster repeat visitation, tourism stakeholders should prioritize efforts to monitor and improve visitor satisfaction levels. This may involve collecting feedback through surveys, conducting satisfaction assessments, and implementing continuous improvement initiatives based on visitor feedback. For instance, establishing a feedback mechanism, such as online surveys or comment cards, to collect real-time feedback from tourists regarding their experiences and using this feedback to identify areas for improvement and implement targeted interventions to enhance visitor satisfaction.

Lastly, foster destination loyalty. Recognizing the significant role of satisfaction with tourism experiences in influencing tourists' revisit intentions, destination managers should focus on fostering destination loyalty among tourists. This can be achieved through personalized marketing efforts, loyalty programs, and special promotions aimed at incentivizing repeat visits. For example, implementing a loyalty program that rewards frequent visitors with discounts, special offers, or exclusive experiences, and creating personalized marketing campaigns that target past visitors and



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emphasize the benefits of returning to the destination.

By implementing these recommendations, tourism stakeholders can create a more positive and memorable experience for tourists, ultimately encouraging repeat visitation and contributing to the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry in Thailand.

5.5 Implications based on findings and theories

The findings of this study, coupled with relevant theories in the field of tourism, carry several implications for both academia and industry practitioners. These implications shed light on the significance of various factors influencing tourist behavior and decision-making processes. The following implications are drawn from the findings and theoretical frameworks.

Practical Implications for Tourism Stakeholders

The study highlights the importance of factors such as perceived quality, safety, and destination image in shaping tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions. Tourism stakeholders, including destination management organizations, tourism businesses, and policymakers, can utilize these insights to develop targeted strategies aimed at enhancing the overall tourist experience. For instance, by investing in infrastructure upgrades, implementing safety measures, and promoting positive destination perceptions, stakeholders can create a more favorable environment for tourists, ultimately leading to increased satisfaction and repeat visitation.

Marketing and Promotion Strategies

The findings underscore the critical role of destination image and choice in influencing tourist behavior. Destination marketers can leverage these insights to develop effective marketing and promotion strategies aimed at shaping tourist perceptions and preferences. By highlighting the unique attractions, cultural heritage, and experiences offered by the destination, marketers

can attract more tourists and encourage repeat visitation. Moreover, leveraging digital marketing channels, social media influencers, and user-generated content can amplify the destination's appeal and reach a wider audience of prospective tourists.

Sustainable Tourism Development

The study emphasizes the importance of sustainability in tourism development. By prioritizing factors such as quality standards, safety, and visitor satisfaction, tourism stakeholders can contribute to the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry. Sustainable tourism practices, including responsible resource management, community engagement, and cultural preservation, are essential for preserving natural and cultural assets, minimizing negative impacts on the environment, and ensuring the well-being of local communities.

The implications derived from the findings and theories presented in this study offer valuable insights for both academia and industry practitioners. By incorporating these insights into their practices and decision-making processes, tourism stakeholders can contribute to creating more fulfilling and sustainable tourism experiences for visitors while ensuring the long-term viability of the tourism industry.

5.6 Limitations of the study

Despite the valuable insights generated from this study, it is essential to acknowledge several limitations that may have impacted the research process and the interpretation of findings. These limitations include:

In terms of sample size and generalizability, the study's sample size, consisting of respondents from a specific demographic or geographic area, may limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population of tourists. As such, caution should be exercised when extrapolating the results



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to other tourist populations or destinations with different characteristics.

The cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to establish causality between the variables examined. While the study identifies associations between factors influencing tourist behavior, it cannot determine the direction of causality or account for potential confounding variables that may influence the relationships observed.

The reliance on self-reported data, such as survey responses, introduces the possibility of response bias and social desirability bias. Participants may provide responses that they perceive as socially acceptable or in line with societal norms, potentially influencing the accuracy and reliability of the data collected.

The measurement of constructs such as tourist satisfaction, perceived quality, and destination image may be subject to measurement error or subjectivity. While efforts were made to use validated scales and established measurement techniques, variations in interpretation or understanding of survey items may have influenced the results.

The study may not have accounted for all contextual factors that could influence tourist behavior and decision-making processes. Factors such as cultural differences, economic conditions, and political stability may play a significant role in shaping tourist experiences and revisit intentions but were not explicitly addressed in the study.

The study may have been subject to time constraints, limiting the depth and scope of data collection and analysis. As a result, certain aspects of the research questions may not have been fully explored, and potential nuances or complexities in the relationships between variables may have been overlooked.

The external validity of the findings may be limited due to the specific context in which the study was conducted. Factors unique to the study setting, such as the tourism landscape in Thailand, may limit the applicability of the findings to other destinations or contexts.

Acknowledging these limitations is crucial for ensuring the transparency and validity of the research findings. Future studies addressing these limitations and employing more robust research designs can contribute to advancing knowledge in the field of tourism and enhancing the practical implications of research findings for industry stakeholders and policymakers.

5.7 Further Studies

The study opens avenues for future research in the field of tourism. Researchers can further investigate the complex relationships between various factors influencing tourist behavior and decision-making processes. Additionally, longitudinal studies and cross-cultural comparisons can provide deeper insights into the dynamics of tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions across different destinations and cultural contexts. Furthermore, exploring emerging trends such as sustainable tourism, digital innovation, and experiential tourism can contribute to advancing knowledge in the field and informing industry practices.

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Influencing Factor of Price, Facilities, and Destination Image on Customer Satisfaction toward Glamping Revisit Intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand

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Abstract

Purpose – the purpose of this study is to investigate the influencing factor of Price, Facilities, and Destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. and understand the factors that contribute to their revisit intention. **Design/Methodology/Approach** – This study utilizes both primary and secondary data collection techniques to examine the influencing factor of price, facility, and destination on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The data was gathered from 400 respondents, consisting of glamper in Chiang Mai including both Thai and non-Thai tourists. Additionally, this research draws upon the theoretical framework from previous studies to construct a new conceptual framework. **Findings** – This study is intended to find the factors influencing customer satisfaction. Followed by investigating the role of customer satisfaction that effect glamping revisit intention among the tourists in Chiang Mai, Thailand. It's too narrow focus on Chiang Mai restricts the generalizability of its findings to other glamping destinations. **Research Limitations/Implications** – the limitations of the research displayed several element limits among the price, facilities and destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Narrowly examining only these factors, it overlooks the potential influence of other variables that may impact tourists' choices of glamping locations. **Originality/value** – This study focuses on influencing factors of price, facilities, and destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Keywords – Price, Facilities, Destination image, customer satisfaction, glamping, revisit intention

JEL classification code – L83, M31

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

COVID-19 has transformed global travel, prioritizing health and hygiene. As international travel resumes, trends point to niche travel preferences, emphasizing smaller groups and Free Independent Travelers (FITs), with a rise in green, responsible, and community-based tourism. Safety-first travel sees a shift towards domestic or regional

trips, exploring lesser-known destinations, and a willingness to pay more for premium services. Digitalization plays a crucial role, fostering seamless, contactless travel experiences with virtual travel, online queuing, and contactless payment methods gaining prominence. The pandemic has accelerated technology adoption across the entire tourism supply chain (Surawattananon et al., 2021).

Current global tourism trends increasingly prioritize environmentally responsible practices.

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Numerous tourist groups are placing greater emphasis on engaging in activities that are environmentally friendly and do not destroy nature (Kwanmongkonchai et al., 2023). Glamping is a new term that combines the words “glamorous” and “camping” together. It can indicate luxury camping where people can enjoy outdoor experience or nature in comfortable accommodations (Lamb, 2011). The word “glamorous” makes glamping different from camping. Glamping offers an ideal solution for experiencing the outdoors in a relaxed manner, without the need for traditional camping with bringing your own tents and sleeping bags (Ma et al., 2023). Post 2010, glamping became very popular and began attracting guests due to its affordability and value for money (Jagat et al., 2021). More and more travelers are in search of distinctive and genuine experiences, and glamping provides a blend of outdoor adventure and luxury, making it an appealing choice for those seeking to break away from the usual (Sun & Huang, 2022). The company Global information Inc. has estimated the market size of the glamping business in the global market specifying that during the year 2021-2027 will expand approximately 5.3%, the value reaching \$3.9 billion US dollar in 2027 (Global information Inc., 2022). Thailand's glamping market is expected to reach THB 3.2 billion by 2025, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.2%. (Camping - Thailand., 2023).

In Thailand, glamping has become a popular trend, allowing people to experience the country's beautiful landscapes in a unique way. Glamping sites in Thailand can be found in various places popular in the north or north-east of Thailand because of the mountainous areas. Chiang Mai, located in northern Thailand, is known for its picturesque landscapes, cultural richness, and proximity to nature. While the region offers a variety of accommodation options, including traditional hotels and resorts, glamping sites have become increasingly popular for those seeking a unique and luxurious camping experience. Several glamping sites can be found in and around

Chiang Mai, offering a blend of comfort and immersion in nature. These sites often provide stylish tents, comfortable furnishings, and amenities that go beyond traditional camping. The experience allows guests to enjoy the beauty of the natural surroundings while still enjoying some of the comforts of a more conventional hotel stay (Aresia, 2023). Chiang Mai is one of the best destinations for glamping because of the location in Chiang Mai is the mountain and there are a lot of mountain tops which is the popular destination in Thailand. So, over 500 glamping sites are now operating across the country, with more popping up every month (Lespurque, 2023).

There are several factors that make a great experience to glamping. Most of the previous research studies about the dimension of tourism experiential quality through glamping satisfaction (Aresia, 2023). Research has shown that the strong relationship between the price, facilities, destination image, customer satisfaction, and revisit intention. For example, a study by Ilyas and Mustafa (2022) that factors such as price, promotion, and supporting facilities have a significant and positive influence on customer satisfaction. Piranayagam et al. (2020) found that when tourists have positive experiences that meet or surpass their expectations, it not only attracts them to a destination but also motivates them to return for future visits. This study explored the key influencing factor of Price, Facilities, and Destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

1.2 Problem statements

Glamping, a term derived from glamorous camping, has emerged as a popular global trend in recent years (Global information Inc., 2022). This luxurious approach to camping has captured the interest of outdoor enthusiasts who seek a more comfortable and stylish way to connect with nature. Glamping offers a unique and enjoyable experience, blending the beauty of the outdoors with the comforts of upscale accommodations. As the popularity of glamping continues to grow, with more glamping



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places popping up, there's a chance for the glamping industry to make more revenue by revisiting glamping. This study focuses on finding out the influence factors, like price, facilities, and the image of the destination, make customers satisfied and want to revisit for more glamping experiences in Chiang Mai. By figuring out these factors, can help glamping businesses improve, make customers satisfied, and keep the glamping trend going strong in this region.

This study aims to understand the role of price, facilities, and destination image that may impact through revisit intention by customer satisfaction or destination image. The role of those objectives may include promotion, bathroom or accommodation, and weather. The research seeks to provide insights into the critical elements that contribute to customer satisfaction and influence their intention to revisit glamping sites in Chiang Mai. This investigation is essential for both the glamping industry and tourism management in Chiang Mai, as it can inform strategies to enhance customer experiences, satisfaction, and revisit.

1.3 Objectives of study

This research is designed to investigation of the influencing factor of Price, Facilities, and Destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand had the following objective:

- (1) To identify the cause of price effects on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- (2) To identify the cause of facilities effects on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- (3) To identify the cause of destination image effects on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- (4) To identify the cause of customer satisfaction effect on glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

- (5) To identify the cause of destination image effect on glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

1.4 Research questions

There are five research questions:

- (1) Does price have a significant influence on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (2) Do facilities have a significant influence on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (3) Does destination image have a significant influence on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (4) Does customer satisfaction have a significant influence on the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (5) Does destination image have a significant influence on the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?

1.5 Significance of the study

This research investigates the factors influencing customer satisfaction in the growing trend of glamping in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Globally, the glamping industry is booming, with a projected expansion of about 5.3% to reach a staggering \$3.9 billion by 2027. In Thailand, specifically, the glamping market is expected to witness substantial growth, reaching THB 3.2 billion by 2025 with an impressive Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.2%. This increasing trend shows that more people in Thailand, both locals and tourists, are becoming interested in glamping experiences.

The popularity of glamping is evident in the increasing number of glamping sites emerging across the country. With this trend, there is a significant opportunity for the glamping industry in Thailand to capitalize on the growing demand for unique and comfortable outdoor accommodations. As more glamping destinations pop up, the industry has the



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potential to tap into new markets and generate increased revenue.

The study specifically focuses on understanding the factors of Price, Facilities, and Destination image and their impact on customer satisfaction. The research aims to provide valuable insights that can help glamping businesses in Chiang Mai stay ahead of the trend, ensuring that their offerings align with customer preferences. Eventually, this study contributes to the sustainable growth and success of the glamping industry in Thailand.

1.6 Scopes of the study

According to the trend of glamping and many previous studies indicate that glamping has become widespread nowadays. The purpose of this research is to investigate the influencing factor price, facilities, and destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The study was conducted by referring to previous studies. The study model was developed and consisted of 5 variables which influence glamping revisit intention of glampers. There are 4 independent variables such as price, facilities, destination image, and customer satisfaction. There are 2 dependent variables such as customer satisfaction and glamping revisit intention while customer satisfaction can be both dependent and independent variable.

The research scope encompassed individual glampers who have ever revisited in the same glamping place in Chiang Mai, Thailand as the sample population. The survey questionnaire was distributed between February to April 2024 to gather primary data for this study. The questionnaire was administered to diverse groups of glampers, allowing for an examination of key demographic factors such as gender, age, and glamping hobby, which play a significant role in glamping revisit intention.

In addition to the primary data collected through the survey, this research also employed a secondary data collection method. Information was sourced from reputable articles, journals, and reliable internet sources published by previous researchers, with

proper citations and references provided. By integrating both primary and secondary data, this study aimed to attain a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing glamping revisit intention among the glamper in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Theories related to each variable

2.1.1 Price

Price, as defined by Kotler (2012), is the specific amount charged for a product or service, encompassing everything given by customers to benefit from owning or using the offered products or services. This definition is broad and emphasizes the comprehensive nature of what customers give in exchange for value. Sandvik and Sandvik (2003) build on this by explaining that price is the amount of money required, potentially including some products, to acquire specific combinations of products and services. In the macroeconomic context, as highlighted by Dhirasasna et al. (2020), pricing plays a vital role for the economy, customers, and companies. In the economy, pricing is crucial for various reasons. Additionally, pricing is a significant factor in the hospitality business, such as hotels, where promotional activities, defined as streams of information or persuasion to stimulate exchanges in marketing, are essential elements in the marketing mix (Susanto et al., 2021). According to Ozuem et al. (2019), the main objective of pricing is to generate profits within a specific market segment.

2.1.2 Facilities

Ilyas and Mustafa (2022) defined that in the tourism industry, "facilities" refers to the physical and non-physical resources and services provided to travelers to enhance their experience and meet their needs. These facilities can include accommodations, amenities, transportation services, recreational areas, and any other infrastructure or services that



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contribute to the convenience and satisfaction of tourists during their visit (Bucak, 2014). In simpler terms, tourism facilities are everything that makes a traveler's stay enjoyable and comfortable, such as hotels, restaurants, transportation options, and entertainment venues (Santoso, 2021). Kusuma et al. (2018) emphasizes that facilities in the service sector play a crucial role in minimizing consumer movement. These facilities, as highlighted by Iskandarsyah and Utami (2017), take different forms and are designed to meet consumer needs, aiming to provide them with the highest level of satisfaction.

2.1.3 Destination image

Destination image typically encompasses the associations that individuals connect with a particular destination and retain in their memories (Huang & Cai, 2015). As highlighted by Echtner and Ritchie (2003), the destination image is not only shaped by an individual's perceptions of specific destination attributes but also arises from the overall impression created by the destination. Consequently, the destination image plays a crucial role in influencing tourists' decision-making processes, impacting their decisions to visit or revisit a destination (Pike & Bianchi, 2016; Pratt & Sparks, 2014; Li & Nuangjamnong, 2023). Understanding the multifaceted nature of a destination image is essential in comprehending its significance and its sway on tourists' intentions to explore or return to a particular location. The concept of destination image pertains to the captivating qualities of a tourism destination. Consequently, a positive destination image plays a significant role in influencing tourists' perception of a specific tourism destination (Le et al., 2020).

2.1.4 Customer Satisfaction

According to Kotler et al. (2012), customer value is when customers compare all the benefits and costs associated with a given offer. Satisfying customers is crucial for a successful business (Krivobokova, 2009). It is a top priority for global companies. When

customers are happy with a product, they are likely to buy it again, remain loyal, and recommend it to others. However, if they are dissatisfied, they might switch to another brand, complain, and share their negative experiences. This can significantly affect the company's reputation in the long run (Nair & Nair, 2013). Customers conduct an assessment to determine their level of satisfaction with the company's performance in delivering services or products that meet their needs and expectations (Atmari & Putri, 2021). According to Cole and Scott (2008) and Quintal and Polczynski (2010), satisfaction in the tourism industry refers to the sense of enjoyment and fulfillment experienced by tourists during their visits.

2.1.5 Revisit intention

The concept of revisit intention is a significant focus in tourism literature, as highlighted by Li et al. (2018). Revisiting a tourism destination is considered a form of post-consumption behavior, encompassing a visitor's repetition of activities or return visits to a destination, as defined by Baker and Crompton (2000). Cole and Scott (2008) argue that the intention to revisit can be defined as the inclination or desire to visit a destination for a second time. Additionally, it involves the visitor's judgement regarding the likelihood or plans to revisit the same destination, as explored by Khasawneh and Alfandi (2019), or the willingness to recommend the destination to others, as noted in the same study (Chen & Tsai, 2007).

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 Price to customer satisfaction

Previous studies have provided evidence regarding the connection between price and customer satisfaction. According to Ilyas and Mustafa (2022), the results of their study indicate a simultaneous and partially positive impact of independent variables on dependent variables. Specifically, the study found that factors such as price, promotion, and supporting facilities have a significant and positive influence on customer satisfaction.



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Therefore, the hypothesis that suggests a correlation between price and customer satisfaction can be supported. When consumers perceive observer variables such as price affordability, reasonable prices, price flexibility, price relief, price discounts, price suitability with product quality, price competitiveness, and price compatibility with benefits positively, it enhances their perception of the price factor as favorable. This positive perception further contributes to the overall positive experience of consumers at Aston Pluit Hotel & Residence Jakarta (Jaya & Djumarno, 2021). According to Susanto et al. (2021) study, the result also showed that the price has a positive significance influence on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *There is a causal relationship between price and customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.*

2.2.2 Facilities to customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is also influenced by facility factors as facilities play a crucial role in shaping customers' perception and interaction with them (Mitchell & Ketzes, 2003). The findings from testing the second hypothesis demonstrate that both service quality and facilities exhibit a simultaneous positive and highly significant impact on customer satisfaction at Grand Inna Hotel. Based on the study's conclusions, it can be inferred that service quality and facilities contribute positively to customer satisfaction (Sabhienna & Setiono, 2023). According to data analysis, the facilities offered at Antares hotels have a significant and substantial influence on visitor satisfaction. This study's results align with other research studies that have also determined a positive and impactful relationship between amenities and visitor enjoyment. It was found that when the quality of facilities improves, the impact on client happiness (Putri & Winata, 2023).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *There is a causal relationship between facilities and customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.*

2.2.3 Destination image to customer satisfaction

According to research conducted by Suhuda et al. (2019), tourists are more likely to visit a destination repeatedly if they have a memorable experience that leaves them feeling satisfied. This satisfaction is achieved when the reality of their experience exceeds their initial expectations. Similarly, Piranayagam et al. (2020) found that when tourists have positive experiences that meet or surpass their expectations, it not only attracts them to a destination but also motivates them to return for future visits. According to Wantara and Anugrahini (2021) studies showed the positive significant influence of destination image effect on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *There is a causal relationship between destination image and customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.*

2.2.4 Customer satisfaction to revisit intention.

Um et al. (2006) suggest that revisit intention can be seen as an outcome of satisfaction. When tourists have a pleasant experience at a tourism destination, it is likely that they will feel satisfied with their visit, which in turn increases their intention to revisit. This idea is supported by numerous studies in the literature, such as the research conducted by Assaker and Hallak (2013), which highlights the positive influence of tourist satisfaction on revisit intention. According to Nguyen Viet et al. (2020) studies have a positive significant influence of customer satisfaction on revisit intention.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *There is a causal relationship between customer satisfaction and revisit intention toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.*

2.2.5 Destination image to revisit intention.

Tourists who hold a positive perception of a specific destination not only experience high levels of satisfaction, but also have an increased likelihood of revisiting the place, recommending it to others, and being more willing to pay higher prices for cultural activities compared to other destinations (Jebbouri et al., 2021; Li & Nuangjamnong, 2023). The findings of Kim et al. (2012) study demonstrated that the travel experience had a collective and positive impact on individuals' perception of a destination, ultimately influencing their intention to revisit. Thiumsak and Ruangkanjanases (2016), previous study focuses on researching tourists who visited Bangkok, Thailand, seeking to establish a relationship between their perception of the destination and their intention to revisit. The results reveal a strong correlation between the image individuals hold of the destination and their desire to return for future visits.

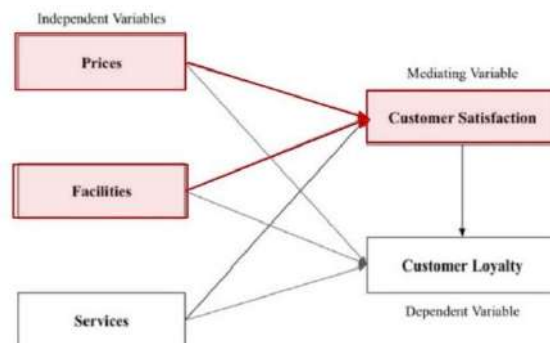
Hypothesis 5 (H5): *There is a causal relationship between destination image and revisit intention toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.*

2.3 Theoretical frameworks

2.3.1 First and foremost, this theoretical framework represents the determinant factors of hotels' customer loyalty during the COVID-19 pandemic in Thailand. The determinants comprise prices, facilities, services, and mediating effect of customer satisfaction. (Thipsingh et al., 2022). Due to the Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between the price and facilities influences on the customer satisfaction.

Figure 2.1

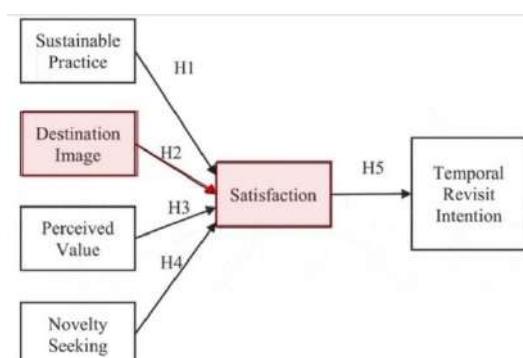
Determinants of hotels' customer loyalty during the covid-19 pandemic in Thailand. Journal of Management Information and Decision Sciences by Siripipattanakul et al. (2022)



2.3.2 Thipsingh et al. (2022) the impact of sustainable practices, destination image, perceived value and novelty seeking on tourist satisfaction and temporal revisit intention. Figure 2.2 shows the relationship between destination image and customer satisfaction which destination image influences the customer satisfaction.

Figure 2.2

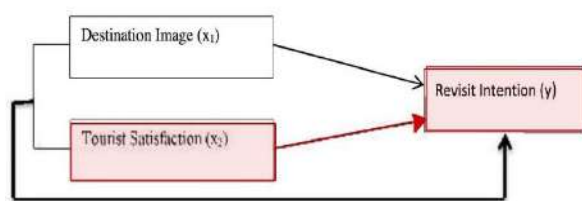
Social and sustainable determinants of the tourist satisfaction and temporal revisit intention: A case of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Cogent Social Sciences by Thipsingh et al. (2022)



2.3.3 This theoretical framework from analysing the effects of destination image and tourist satisfaction on revisit intention in case Bunaken National Park. Jurnal Berkala Ilmiah Efisiensi (Samsudin, 2016). Figure 2.3, this research provides the relationship between customer satisfaction to revisit intention.

Figure 2.3

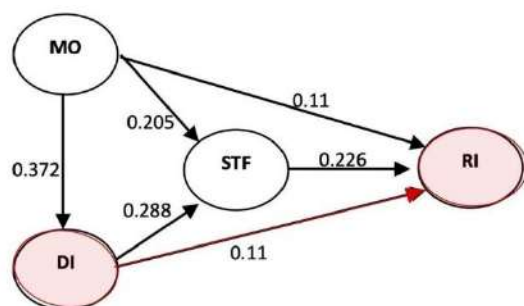
Analyzing the effects of destination image and tourist satisfaction on revisit intention in case Bunaken National Park. Jurnal Berkala Ilmiah Efisiensi by Samsudin (2016)



2.3.4 In literature review the roles of motivation and destination image in predicting tourist revisit intention: A case of Bandung - Indonesia. International Journal of Innovation Management and Technology (Pratminingsih, 2014). Figure 2.4 shows the relationship between destination image (DI) and revisit intention (RI) which destination image influences revisit intention in glamping.

Figure 2.4

Roles of motivation and destination image in predicting tourist revisit intention: A case of Bandung - Indonesia. International Journal of Innovation Management and Technology by Pratminingsih (2014)



2.4 Hypotheses development

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a causal relationship between price and customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a causal relationship between facilities and customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is a causal relationship between destination image and customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): There is a causal relationship between customer satisfaction and revisit intention toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

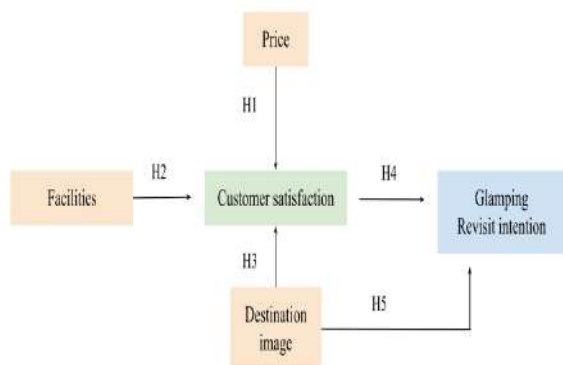
Hypothesis 5 (H5): There is a causal relationship between destination image and revisit intention toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

2.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is created on four previous study and theoretical concepts by first previous study show the relationship between the price and facility has a significant influence on customer satisfaction. The second previous study show about the significant factor relationship between the destination image on customer satisfaction. Another previous study shows about the relationship between the customer satisfaction and revisit intention. Last previous study shows the relationship between destination image and revisit intention. This research conceptual framework provided the role of customer satisfaction influencing the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The independent variable that influences the role of customer satisfaction in this research is Price, Facilities, and Destination image as shown in the figure 2.5 below:

Figure 2.5

Conceptual framework of this study by the researcher



3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study aims to investigate the influencing factors of Price, Facilities, and Destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This study used quantitative methods and various analytical techniques, such as Cronbach's Alpha and Multiple Linear Regression.

The research instrument employed a questionnaire comprising three sections totaling 33 items. These items were organized as follows: three screening question to ensure participant eligibility, six item of demographic question, and 24 items designed to measure the key variables of interest. Then, the researcher design to check and evaluate validity and reliability to ensure all the items inside questions are applicable with research objective and question.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, a well-established measure of reliability. To ensure the questionnaire's effectiveness and identify any potential ambiguity or uncertainty of the items, a pilot test was conducted involving a small sample of 50 respondents. This pilot testing procedure allowed for the refinement and validation of the questionnaire prior to its full-scale implementation.

To access respondents' attitudes and level of agreement regarding each variable, a Likert scale was utilized. This psychometric instrument is structured with "1" indicating as "Strong disagree" processing to

"5" as "Strongly agree". The Likert scale provided a standardized and reliable method for measuring the intensity and direction of respondents' opinion on the variables under investigation.

This study uses both primary and secondary data to investigate the relationship between price, facilities, destination image, customer satisfaction, and revisit intention. Primary data is collected through a questionnaire distributed to employees of a particular organization, secondary data is collected from reliable sources such as journal, article, and previous research related of this study. Secondary data provides important context and background information that helps to interpret the primary data findings. For example, secondary data can be used to learn about the different types of various factor influence customer satisfaction and revisit intention. By combining primary and secondary data, this study is able to provide a more comprehensive and understanding of the complex relationships between these variables.

3.2 Population and Sampling

3.2.1 Sampling Population

In this study, the target population is people who are travelling to Chiang Mai, Thailand and have been glamping in Chiang Mai. According to Phalaharn (2024), the traveler in Chiang Mai in 2023 recording 3.9 million people.

3.2.2 Sampling size

According to the limitation of population size this research utilizes sample size estimating instead. Yamane (1970) formula has been applied in this research. The sample size of this study has 3.9 million people of traveler in Chiang Mai in 2023.

Yamane (1967) represented the sample size formula which has a suitable sample size number of 3.9 million is 400 people. However, the number of travelers is adjusting daily which may lead to the minor change of sample size number. Thus, the researcher considered that 400 respondents are



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acceptable to comply with 3.9 million people. Details of the formula as below:

$$\frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where

n = sample size required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error (%)

* 95% confidence level and $p = 0.5$ are assumed

$$n = \frac{3,900,000}{1+3,900,000(0.05)^2}$$

$$= 399.99 \text{ or } 400$$

3.2.3 Sampling Procedure

The researcher decided to employ a non-probability sampling method, specifically employing a convenience sampling method (or haphazard sampling). This involved screening all received response data in advance to ensure alignment with the research objectives. Due to time constraints, the researchers chose a non-probability sampling method for data collection. In summary, considering the allocated time frame and the overall process, this method was deemed the most suitable for the research.

3.3 Research Instrument

3.3.1 Questionnaire Design

Screening Questions

- 1) Have you ever participated in glamping activities in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
 - 2) Have you ever revisited the same glamping place in Chiang Mai?
 - 3) Do you often look at the destination image before going to the glamping place?
- ☐ Yes, please continue.
- ☐ No, thank you for your attention and please return the questionnaire to the researcher.

Demographic profile

- 1) What is your gender?
- 2) What is your age?
- 3) What is your nationality?
- 4) Employment status?
- 5) How often do you go glamping in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- 6) Budget for glamping?

Measuring Variables

Price (P): The concept of "price" refers to how much money that customer is willing to spend for a glamping experience. Glamping, which means glamorous camping, is like camping with more comfortable and luxury accommodation in nature. The customer satisfaction from pricing may include promotion and reasonable price.

P1: I think the price of glamping was a significant factor in my satisfaction.

P2: I may be satisfied when I get the lower price from the glamping place.

P3: I always prefer the pricing of glamping services in Chiang Mai aligns with the level of comfort and luxury offered in the accommodations.

P4: I am satisfied with the promotional activities related to glamping services in Chiang Mai, such as discounts, packages, or special offers.

P5: I think I am willing to pay for comfortable accommodation to my satisfaction.

Facilities (F): In the context of glamping, "facilities" refer to the various amenities, services, and features provided at a glamping site to enhance the comfort and experience of customers. Glamping, or glamorous camping, combines the adventure of camping with luxurious accommodations and services. The facilities in this research focus on accommodation, bathroom, Air conditioning, pool and dining options.

F1: I think I will be satisfied with the glamping place that has an air conditioner more than not.

F2: I think the availability and cleanliness of bathroom facilities significantly contribute to the



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overall satisfaction of my glamping experience in Chiang Mai

F3: I am satisfied with the dining options provided at the glamping site in Chiang Mai, including the variety and quality of meals offered.

F4: The overall quality of facilities, including accommodation, bathroom, air conditioning, and dining, significantly influences my satisfaction and decision to revisit a glamping site in Chiang Mai?

F5: The presence of modern amenities, such as a bathtub, rain shower, breakfast in the pool enhances the convenience and satisfaction of my glamping experience in Chiang Mai

Destination Image (DI): In the context of glamping, the term "destination image" refers to the overall perception or impression that potential guests have about a specific glamping location or site. It encompasses the unique characteristics, atmosphere, and appeal associated with the destination where the glamping experience is offered. The destination image plays a crucial role in influencing the decision-making process of individuals who are considering a glamping getaway.

DI1: Destination image makes me satisfied with the glamping place.

DI2: The destination image of Chiang Mai plays a crucial role in shaping my expectations and satisfaction.

DI3: I think the destination image or atmosphere are the important decision to revisit the glamping place.

DI4: The overall appeal of Chiang Mai as a glamping destination significantly influenced your decision to experience glamping in this location.

DI5: I think the destination image or location of glamping has a significant influence on your revisit intention.

Customer satisfaction (CS): In the glamping industry, "customer satisfaction" refers to the overall contentment and positive feelings that guests experience during and after their glamping stay. It is

a measure of how well the glamping site or service meets or exceeds the expectations and needs of the customer. And make customers want to come back or revisit the glamping place.

CS1: I want to revisit the same glamping place because I am satisfied with the experience.

CS2: I think I will not revisit the glamping place if I am not satisfied with it.

CS3: I am satisfied with the price, facilities and destination image during my glamping stay, considering the overall experience.

CS4: I will recommend the glamping site in Chiang Mai to others because of the satisfaction.

Revisit Intention (RI): In the context of glamping, "revisit intention" refers to the tendency of customers to return to the same glamping site for another stay in the future. The customer satisfaction and destination image the key success of a glamping business. Revisit intention is influenced by various factors related to the customer's satisfaction, perceptions during their stay and the destination image.

RI1: The glamping experience in Chiang Mai influenced my intention to return to the same site.

RI2: The destination image of Chiang Mai as a glamping location influences my intention to revisit.

RI3: The atmosphere of the glamping place influences me to revisit.

RI4: I am revisiting the glamping place because of the satisfaction.

RI5: I am revisiting the glamping place because of the destination image.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

3.4.1 Content validity (IOC)

The content validity of questionnaire items was evaluated by the researchers using the IOC index. After seeking the opinion of three expert, 20 out of 24 questions achieved IOC scores exceeding 0.5, demonstrating satisfactory validity. Consequently, a refined set of 20 questions was selected, precisely



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tailored to the variables under investigation. This meticulous procedure guaranteed the precision and pertinence of the questionnaire, thereby ensuring the collection of valid data for the study.

Table 3.1

Item Objective Congruence (IOC) index with three experts

Variables	Before Number of items	After number of items	Range of IOC Weight Scores
Price	5	3	0.67 – 1.00
Facilities	5	4	0.67 – 1.00
Destination image	5	4	0.67 – 1.00
Customer satisfaction	4	4	0.67 – 1.00
Revisit intention	5	5	0.67 – 1.00

3.4.2 Reliability Test

A pilot test involving 50 participants was conducted to identify any inconsistencies or flaws in the questionnaire items. The reliability of each variable was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. Following Cronbach's (1951) categorization, alpha values surpassing 0.9 are considered excellent, those

within the 0.8 to 0.9 range are deemed good, while values ranging from 0.7 to 0.8 are considered acceptable. Scores falling between 0.6 and 0.7 are viewed as questionable, those within 0.5-0.6 are considered poor, and any score below 0.6 is deemed unacceptable.

In this study, the reliability of various variables, including price, facilities, destination image, customer satisfaction, and revisit intention, was assessed using Cronbach's alpha values obtained from the pilot test. The results revealed Cronbach's alpha values of 0.749 for three items related to price, 0.848 for four items related to facilities, 0.716 for four items related to destination image, 0.764 for four items related to customer satisfaction, and 0.757 for five items related to revisit intention, as presented in Table 3.2. All the assessed items met the criteria for Cronbach's alpha, with values exceeding 0.60, indicating that these items are considered acceptable and reliable for administration to the intended survey participants.

Table 3.2

The value of reliability analysis of the entire study question and variable (n=50)

		Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Price (P)		0.749	Acceptable
P1	I think the price of glamping was a significant factor in my satisfaction.	0.678	Questionable
P2	I may be satisfied when I get the lower price from the glamping place.	0.711	Acceptable
P3	I always prefer the pricing of glamping services in Chiang Mai aligns with the level of comfort and luxury offered in the accommodations	0.606	Questionable
Facilities (F)		0.848	Good
F1	I think I will be satisfied with the glamping place that has an air conditioner more than not	0.841	Good
F2	I think the availability and cleanliness of bathroom facilities significantly contribute to the overall satisfaction of my glamping experience in Chiang Mai	0.781	Acceptable
F3	The overall quality of facilities, including accommodation, bathroom, air conditioning, and dining, significantly influences my satisfaction and decision to revisit a glamping site in Chiang Mai	0.802	Good



F4	The presence of modern amenities, such as a bathtub, rain shower, breakfast in the pool enhances the convenience and satisfaction of my glamping experience in Chiang Mai	0.801	Good
Destination image (DI)		0.716	Acceptable
DI1	Destination image makes me satisfied with the glamping place.	0.691	Questionable
DI2	The destination image of Chiang Mai plays a crucial role in shaping my expectations and satisfaction.	0.606	Questionable
DI3	I think the destination image or atmosphere are the important decision to revisit the glamping place.	0.662	Questionable
DI4	The overall appeal of Chiang Mai as a glamping destination significantly influenced your decision to experience	0.654	Questionable
Customer satisfaction (CS)		0.764	Acceptable
CS1	I want to revisit the same glamping place because I am satisfied with the experience.	0.734	Acceptable
CS2	I think I will not revisit the glamping place if I am not satisfied with it	0.779	Acceptable
CS3	I am satisfied with the price, facilities and destination image during my glamping stay, considering the overall experience.	0.628	Questionable
CS4	I will recommend the glamping site in Chiang Mai to others because of the satisfaction	0.656	Questionable
Revisit intention (RI)		0.757	Acceptable
RI1	The glamping experience in Chiang Mai influenced my intention to return to the same site	0.732	Acceptable
RI2	The destination image of Chiang Mai as a glamping location influences my intention to revisit	0.745	Acceptable
RI3	The atmosphere of the glamping place influences me to revisit	0.708	Acceptable
RI4	I am revisiting the glamping place because of the satisfaction	0.689	Questionable
RI5	I am revisiting the glamping place because of the destination image	0.692	Questionable

3.5 Statistical Treatment of Data

In this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation will be used for analyzing demographic profiles and measurement items. Inferential statistics applies two multiple linear regression methods, in which first method will contain Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2, and Hypothesis 3 (price, facilities, and destination image on customer satisfaction) . Furthermore, second method will contain Hypothesis 4, and Hypothesis 5 (Customer satisfaction and destination image on revisit intention).

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Reliability testing

Table 4.1

The value of reliability analysis of each item and variable in this study (n=400)

	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Price (P)	0.761	Acceptable
Facilities (F)	0.787	Acceptable
Destination image (DI)	0.691	Questionable
Customer satisfaction (CS)	0.784	Acceptable
Revisit intention (RI)	0.823	Good

4.2 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

Gender: Among the respondents, 51.2% (205 individuals) identified as female, 35% (140



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individuals) identified as male, and 13.8% (55 individuals) did not specify their gender.

Age: The majority age group of respondents was 2-30 years old, comprising 70.3% of the total. The second largest group was 31-40 years old, accounting for 27.5%, while the remaining 2.3% were over 40 years old.

Nationality: Among the respondents, 71.3% were Thai nationals, while 28.7% were of other nationalities.

Status: Of the respondents, 41.3% were full-time employees, 25% were part-time employees, 21% were students, and 12.8% were unemployed.

Frequency of travel to Chiang Mai: The largest group, comprising 33.6% of respondents, traveled to Chiang Mai 2-3 times per year. The second largest group, representing 23.8% of respondents, traveled to Chiang Mai more than 3 times per year. Additionally, 23.5% traveled to Chiang Mai once per year, while 16.5% traveled to Chiang Mai less than once per year.

Budget: Among the respondents, 59.3% allocated a budget of 3500-5000 baht, 14.8% budgeted 5000-8000 baht, 10.5% budgeted 8000-10,000 baht, 9.3% budgeted less than 3500 baht, and 6.3% budgeted over 10,000 baht.

4.3 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation

In this section, the summary of the Mean and Standard Deviation for each group variable consisted of price, facility, destination image, customer satisfaction, and revisit intention. The following criteria for evaluating the mean scores were adapted from Imsa-ard et al. (2021) displayed below:

The criteria of the interpretation of mean scores

Mean score	Interpretation
4.210 - 5.000	Strongly agree
3.410 - 4.200	Agree
2.610 - 3.200	Neutral
1.810 - 2.600	Disagree

1.000 - 1.800

Strongly disagree

4.3.1 Mean and Standard Deviation of Price

According to the data shown in Table 4.2 among 400 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of price was "I always prefer the pricing of glamping services in Chiang Mai aligns with the level of comfort and luxury offered in the accommodations" which equal 4.00. However, the lowest mean was 3.79 for "I think the price of glamping was a significant factor in my satisfaction". According to the standard deviation, the highest score was 1.08 for "I think the price of glamping was a significant factor in my satisfaction.". On the other hand, the lowest score was 0.942 for "I always prefer the pricing of glamping services in Chiang Mai aligns with the level of comfort and luxury offered in the accommodations".

Table 4.2

The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of price

Price	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
P1: I think the price of glamping was a significant factor in my satisfaction	3.79	1.08	Agree
P2: I may be satisfied when I get the lower price from the glamping place.	3.97	1.02	Agree
P3: I always prefer the pricing of glamping services in Chiang Mai aligns with the level of comfort and luxury offered in the accommodations.	4.00	0.942	Agree

4.3.2 Mean and Standard Deviation of Facilities

According to the data shown in Table 4.3 among 400 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of facilities was "The presence of modern amenities, such as a bathtub, rain shower, breakfast in the pool enhances the convenience and satisfaction of my glamping experience in Chiang Mai" which equal 4.09. However, the lowest mean



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was 3.94 for “I am satisfied with the dining options provided at the glamping site in Chiang Mai, including the variety and quality of meals offered”. According to the standard deviation, the highest score was 0.977 for “I think I will be satisfied with the glamping place that has an air conditioner more than not.”. On the other hand, the lowest score was 0.914 for “I am satisfied with the dining options provided at the glamping site in Chiang Mai, including the variety and quality of meals offered”.

Table 4.3

The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of facilities

Facilities	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
F1: I think I will be satisfied with the glamping place that has an air conditioner more than not	4.04	0.977	Agree
F2: I am satisfied with the dining options provided at the glamping site in Chiang Mai, including the variety and quality of meals offered	3.94	0.914	Agree
F3: The overall quality of facilities, including accommodation, bathroom, air conditioning, and dining, significantly influences my satisfaction and decision to revisit a glamping site in Chiang Mai	4.00	0.918	Agree
F4: The presence of modern amenities, such as a bathtub, rain shower, breakfast in the pool enhances the convenience and satisfaction of my glamping experience in Chiang Mai	4.09	0.971	Agree

4.3.3 Mean and Standard Deviation of Destination Image

According to the data shown in Table 4.4 among 400 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of facilities was “I think the destination

image or atmosphere are the important decision to revisit the glamping place” which equal 4.28. However, the lowest mean was 4.00 for “The overall appeal of Chiang Mai as a glamping destination significantly influenced your decision to experience glamping in this location”. According to the standard deviation, the highest score was 0.996 for “The overall appeal of Chiang Mai as a glamping destination significantly influenced your decision to experience glamping in this location”. On the other hand, the lowest score was 0.732 for “I think the destination image or atmosphere are the important decision to revisit the glamping place.”.

Table 4.4

The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of destination image

Destination image	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
DI1: Destination image makes me satisfied with the glamping place.	4.09	0.971	Agree
DI2: The destination image of Chiang Mai plays a crucial role in shaping my expectations and satisfaction.	4.09	0.942	Agree
DI3: I think the destination image or atmosphere are the important decision to revisit the glamping place.	4.28	0.732	Strong Agree
DI4: The overall appeal of Chiang Mai as a glamping destination significantly influenced your decision to experience glamping in this location	4.00	0.996	Agree

4.3.4 Mean and Standard Deviation of Customer Satisfaction

According to the data shown in Table 4.5 among 400 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of facilities was “I want to revisit the same glamping place because I am satisfied with the experience” which equal 4.26. However, the lowest mean was 3.91 for “I think I will not revisit the

glamping place if I am not satisfied with it". According to the standard deviation, the highest score was 0.965 for "I will recommend the glamping site in Chiang Mai to others because of the satisfaction". On the other hand, the lowest score was 0.732 for "I want to revisit the same glamping place because I am satisfied with the experience".

Table 4.5

The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of customer satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
CS1: I want to revisit the same glamping place because I am satisfied with the experience.	4.26	0.732	Strong Agree
CS2: I think I will not revisit the glamping place if I am not satisfied with it	3.91	0.925	Agree
CS3: I am satisfied with the price, facilities and destination image during my glamping stay, considering the overall experience.	3.92	0.943	Agree
CS4: I will recommend the glamping site in Chiang Mai to others because of the satisfaction	4.03	0.965	Agree

4.3.5 Mean and Standard Deviation of Revisit Intention

According to the data shown in Table 4.6 among 400 respondents and 0 missing respondents, the highest mean of facilities was "The glamping experience in Chiang Mai influenced my intention to return to the same site" which equal 4.244. However, the lowest mean was 3.88 for "The destination image of Chiang Mai as a glamping location influences my intention to revisit". According to the standard deviation, the highest score was 0.958 for "The destination image of Chiang Mai as a glamping location influences my intention to revisit". On the other hand, the lowest score was 0.783 for "I am

revisiting the glamping place because of the satisfaction".

Table 4.6

The result of Mean and Standard Deviation of revisit intention

Revisit intention	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
RI1: The glamping experience in Chiang Mai influenced my intention to return to the same site	4.24	0.785	Strong Agree
RI2: The destination image of Chiang Mai as a glamping location influences my intention to revisit	3.88	0.958	Agree
RI3: The atmosphere of the glamping place influences me to revisit	4.00	0.996	Agree
RI4: I am revisiting the glamping place because of the satisfaction	4.22	0.783	Strong Agree
RI5: I am revisiting the glamping place because of the destination image	3.92	0.943	Agree

4.4 Hypothesis Testing Result

The researchers utilize statistical analytical method, specifically multiple linear regression to analyze the results of hypothesis testing. This involves investigating significant relationships between various variables such as the influencing factors of price, facilities, and destination image on customer satisfaction, as well as the influencing factors of destination image and customer satisfaction on revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. In the analysis the multiple linear regression approach is used along with the R-square statistic, to assess the proportion of variability in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. To examine the substantial impact between the dependent and independent variables, it is important to consider the acceptability of independent variables in the regression analysis. An independent variable is determined by its Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), which should be below 5. Additionally, the R-square value helps to estimate the extent to which the variance in the



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dependent variable can be attributed to the independent variables

4.4.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H2, and H3

Statistical hypothesis

$\square_0$: Price (H1), Facilities (H2), and Destination image (H3) have no significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

$\square_1$: Price (H1), Facilities (H2), and Destination image (H3) have significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Table 4.7 presents the results of a multiple linear regression analysis aimed at investigating the impact of price (H1), facilities (H2), and destination image (H3) on customer satisfaction. Focusing on hypothesis

1, the analysis revealed that the p-values for price, facilities, and destination image were all below 0.05, specifically <0.001. Consequently, the null hypothesis for all three variables are rejected. Further examination of the regression analysis unveiled that the model accounts for a substantial variance of 67.4%, demonstrating statistical significance with a p-value below 0.05. The R-square value of 0.674 indicates a high level of explanatory power, while the model holds a confidence level of 95%. Specifically, the findings for price (B=0.101, p-value <0.001), facilities (B=0.372, p-value<0.001), and destination image (B=0.504, p-value<0.001) were significant. Moreover, the low values of the variation inflation factor (VIF) for each variable, all less than 5, assure that no issues related to multicollinearity are present in the analysis.

Table 4.7: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 1, 2, and 3

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Price	0.101	0.0241	0.121	4.183	<.001*	1.02	Rejected $\square_0$
H2: Facilities	0.372	0.0401	0.393	9.280	<.001*	2.20	Rejected $\square_0$
H3: Destination image	0.504	0.0449	0.479	11.287	<.001*	2.20	Rejected $\square_0$

Note: $R^2=0.676$, Adjust $R^2= 0.674$, * $p<0.05$. Dependent Variable = Customer Satisfaction

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = The standard error for the under standardized beta | β = The standardized beta | t = t value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance Inflation Factors

4.4.2 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H4 and H5

$\square_0$: Customer satisfaction (H4) and Destination image (H5) have no significant influence on glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

$\square_1$: Customer satisfaction (H4) and Destination image (H5) have significant influence on glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Table 4.8 presents the results of a multiple linear regression analysis aimed at investigating the impact

of customer satisfaction (H4) and destination image (H5) on revisit intention. Focusing on two hypotheses, the analysis revealed that the p-values for customer satisfaction and destination image were all below 0.05, specifically <0.001. Consequently, the null hypothesis for all two variables are rejected. Further examination of the regression analysis unveiled that the model accounts for a substantial variance of 64.5%, demonstrating statistical significance with a p-value below 0.05. The R-square value of 0.645 indicates a high level of explanatory power, while the model holds a confidence level of 95%. Specifically,



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the findings for customer satisfaction ($B=0.515$, p -value <0.001) and destination image ($B=0.352$, p -value <0.001) were significant. Moreover, the low

values of the variation inflation factor (VIF) for each variable, all less than 5, assure that no issues related to multicollinearity are present in the analysis.

Table 4.8: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 4 and 5

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	P	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H4: Customer satisfaction	0.515	0.0489	0.495	10.52	$<0.001^*$	2.05	Rejected
H5: Destination image	0.352	0.0462	0.358	7.81	$<0.001^*$	2.05	Rejected

Note: $R^2=0.647$, Adjust $R^2=0.645$, $*p<0.05$. Dependent Variable = revisit intention

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = The standard error for the under standardized beta | β = The standardized beta | t = t value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance Inflation Factors

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 summary of Research Intentions

The purpose of this research is to investigate the influencing factor of Price, Facilities, and Destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The following five research question are provided in this part, which analyze five variables:

- (1) Does price have a significant influence on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (2) Do facilities have a significant influence on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (3) Does destination image have a significant influence on the customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (4) Does customer satisfaction have a significant influence on the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?
- (5) Does destination image have a significant influence on the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand?

Base on the data collection by questionnaire survey of tourist who have revisited glamping place in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This research employs a quantitative approach. An estimated population size was used to determine the sample size base on the information supplied by Phalaharn (2024). Yamane (1967) represented the sample size formula which has

a suitable sample size number of 3.9 million is 400 people.

In the research, closed-ended questions were utilized to craft the questionnaire design. Ahead of its distribution, it was imperative for the researcher to assess the validity and reliability of the questions. This process involved conducting tests such as item-objective congruence (IOC) and Cronbach's alpha. The results of the IOC indicated that 20 out of 25 questions successfully passed the validity test. The Cronbach Alpha's reliability test had been utilized in this research and were provided to 50 respondents. The Cronbach Alpha reliability result must be more than 0.6, which has been proved correct. Furthermore, two statistical techniques had been applied to generate the data findings, and five variables were tested using two multiple linear regression.

5.2 Summary of Findings

According to the overall demographic data from respondents who completed the study questionnaire, the majority group from the total 400 respondents were female (205, 51.2%) of Thai people (285, 71.3%) between the age of 21-30 years old (281, 70.3%) who has fulltime job (165, 41.3%) and the budget range of 3500-5000 (237, 59.3%).

The questionnaire survey used to investigate the influencing factor of Price, Facilities, and Destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand are the mean and standard deviation of variables. The highest

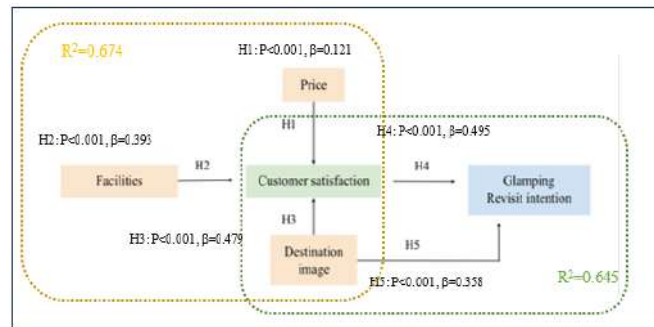
mean score is destination image ($\bar{x} = 4.11$, $SD = 0.660$), then revisit intention ($\bar{x} = 4.05$, $SD = 0.687$), following by customer satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 4.03$, $SD = 0.698$), facility ($\bar{x} = 4.02$, $SD = 0.739$), and the lowest is price ($\bar{x} = 3.92$, $SD = 0.835$).

There are two multiple linear regression (MLR) were used in this study to analyze the significant influence on each hypothesis. The first multiple linear regression used to investigate the influencing factor

of price, facilities, and destination image on customer satisfaction among the glamping in Chiang Mai, Thailand where all independent variables are less than 0.05. Another multiple linear regression used to investigate the influencing factor of destination image and customer satisfaction on the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand, all factors were below than 0.05. To conclude, all the results were rejected the null hypothesis as shown in Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1

Summary of hypothesis testing results.



Lastly, the researcher created the rank of factor by ranking the standardized coefficient. From the first multiple linear regression, the investigate of influencing factor of price, facilities, and destination image on customer satisfaction. The table 5.2 shown strongest factor influence on customer satisfaction is destination image ($\beta = 0.479$), then facilities ($\beta = 0.393$),

and last rank was price ($\beta = 0.121$). The second multiple linear regression were investigated the influencing factors of destination image and customer satisfaction on revisit intention, from the Table 5.3 shown the strongest factor was destination image ($\beta = 0.495$) and the second rank was customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.358$).

Table 5.1

Summary of the hypothesis resting results.

Statement of Null Hypothesis	p-value	Decision Results
□ ₁₀ : Price has no significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.	<.001*	Rejected □ ₀
□ ₂₀ : Facilities has no significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.	<.001*	Rejected □ ₀
□ ₃₀ : Destination image has no significant influence on customer satisfaction toward the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.	<.001*	Rejected □ ₀
□ ₄₀ : Customer satisfaction has no significant influence on the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.	<.001*	Rejected □ ₀



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$\square_5$: Destination image has no significant influence on the glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

<.001*

Rejected $\square_0$

5.3 Discussion based on Findings

5.3.1 Price, facilities, and destination image on Customer satisfaction

In this study, H1o suggests that price significantly affects customer satisfaction. Statistical analysis yielded a highly significant value of <.001, indicating a substantial impact of price on customer satisfaction. The standardized coefficient (β) for this relationship is 0.121, indicating a positive relationship between price and customer satisfaction. According to Susanto et al. (2021) study, the result also showed that the price has a positive significance influence on customer satisfaction.

Similarly, H2o indicates that facilities significantly influence customer satisfaction. The statistical analysis also yielded a highly significant value of <.001, suggesting a substantial impact of facilities on customer satisfaction. The standardized

coefficient (β) for this relationship is 0.393, indicating a positive association between facilities and customer satisfaction. According to Sabhiena and Setiono (2023) study result, it can be inferred that service quality and facilities contribute positively to customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, H3o reveals that destination image significantly affects customer satisfaction. The statistical analysis yielded a highly significant value of <.001, indicating a substantial impact of destination image on customer satisfaction. The standardized coefficient (β) for this relationship is 0.479, suggesting a positive relationship between destination image and customer satisfaction. From previous study of Wantara and Anugrahini (2021), the result shown that the positive significant influence of destination image effect on customer satisfaction.

Table 5.2

Summary strengths of influencing factors of Customer Satisfaction variables

Rank	Independent variable	Standardized Coefficient
1 st	Destination image (DI)	0.479
2 nd	Facilities (F)	0.393
3 rd	Price (P)	0.121

5.3.2 Customer satisfaction, Destination image and Revisit intention

The findings of this study indicate that customer satisfaction significantly influences revisit intention (H4o). Statistical analysis produced a highly significant value of <.001, suggesting a substantial impact of customer satisfaction on revisit intention. The standardized coefficient (β) for this relationship is 0.358, indicating a positive association between customer satisfaction and revisit intention. According to Nguyen Viet et al. (2020) studies have a positive significant influence of customer satisfaction on revisit intention.

Similarly, the study demonstrates that destination image significantly affects revisit intention (H5o). The statistical analysis yielded a significant value of <.001, indicating a highly significant impact of destination image on revisit intention. The standardized coefficient (β) for this relationship is 0.495, suggesting a positive relationship between destination image and revisit intention. The findings of study demonstrated that the travel experience had a collective and positive impact on individuals' perception of a destination, ultimately influencing their intention to revisit (Anutarawaykin



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et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2012; Zin May Zaw & Nuangjamnong, 2023).

Table 5.3

Summary strengths of influencing factors of Revisit Intention variable

Rank	Independent variable	Standardized Coefficient
1 st	Destination image (DI)	0.495
2 nd	Customer satisfaction (CS)	0.358

5.4 Recommendations based on findings

5.4.1 Recommendation based on customer satisfaction

Destination image (DI)

The significant influence of destination image underscores the importance of promoting Chiang Mai as an appealing glamping destination. Collaboration among glamping operators, local tourism authorities, and other stakeholders is crucial to showcase Chiang Mai's unique features, natural beauty, cultural heritage, and recreational opportunities. Strategic marketing campaigns, social media engagement, influencer partnerships, and participation in tourism events can effectively highlight Chiang Mai's allure as a glamping destination. Additionally, they organize community clean-up events where guests can volunteer to help preserve the natural beauty of the surrounding areas.

Facilities (F)

Since facilities has a significant influencing on customer satisfaction, glamping sites must continuously enhance and modernize their amenities and services. This may include upgrading accommodations, offering high-quality dining experiences, providing diverse recreational activities, and maintaining excellent customer service standards. By consistently elevating the overall guest experience, increase satisfaction levels and encourage revisit intention. Additionally, they could provide on-site gourmet dining options featuring locally sourced ingredients, a wellness spa offering traditional Thai massages, and guided nature walks led by knowledgeable local guides

Price (P)

Given the substantial impact of price on customer satisfaction, it is imperative for glamping operators in Chiang Mai to meticulously review their pricing strategies. While ensuring profitability, operators should aim to provide competitive pricing that aligns with customer expectations and perceived value. Employing dynamic pricing tactics or offering enticing discounts during off-peak periods could attract more travelers without compromising revenue. Additionally, they could introduce promotional deals such as "stay 3 nights, pay for 2" or "early bird discounts" for bookings made in advance.

5.4.2 Recommendation based on revisit intention

Customer satisfaction (CS)

Recognizing the significant influence of customer satisfaction on revisit intention, glamping operators should focus on providing outstanding experiences for guests. This includes personalized services, attention to detail, quick resolution of any problems, and actively seeking feedback for ongoing improvement. By surpassing guest expectations and encouraging positive word-of-mouth, operators can elevate satisfaction levels and boost the chances of tourist revisiting. For example, upon check-in at the glamping site in Chiang Mai, guests are greeted with a personalized welcome message and a refreshing local beverage. During their stay, they receive attentive service from staff who anticipate their needs and preferences, whether it's arranging for a guided hike through the nearby forest or preparing a special meal to accommodate dietary restrictions.

Destination image (DI)



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The researcher emphasizes that destination image is the most influential factor impacting revisit intention. To further bolster revisit intention, concerted efforts should be directed toward enhancing Chiang Mai's overall attractiveness and appeal as a glamping destination. This may involve sustainable development initiatives, preservation of natural landscapes, cultural conservation endeavors, infrastructure enhancements, and collaboration with local communities. By investing in the long-term sustainability and attractiveness of the destination, glamping operators can foster enduring interest and loyalty among travelers.

5.5 Implications based on findings and theories

The study's findings offer significant implications for both theoretical understanding and finding in the glamping tourism in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Theoretical implications include the need to refine price-effect models, explore the relationship between facilities and customer satisfaction, and understand the dynamics of destination image constructs.

Practically, the findings suggest opportunities for strategic pricing decisions, improvements in facilities, destination branding and marketing efforts, and initiatives to enhance guest experiences. By leveraging these insights, glamping operators and destination management organizations can optimize customer satisfaction, attract repeat visitors, and foster sustainable growth in the glamping tourism sector in Chiang Mai.

5.6 Limitations of the study

The study examining the influencing factors of Price, Facilities, and Destination image on customer satisfaction toward glamping revisit intention in Chiang Mai, Thailand, has several noteworthy limitations. Firstly, its narrow focus on Chiang Mai restricts the generalizability of its findings to other glamping destinations. Secondly, by narrowly examining only these factors, it overlooks the potential influence of other variables that may impact

tourists' choices of glamping locations. Additionally, the sample size of 400 respondents may not adequately capture the diverse preferences and behaviors of glampers and tourists. These limitations underscore the importance of exercising caution when interpreting and extending the conclusions of the study.

5.7 Further Studies

Further studies could explore how Price, Facilities, and Destination image influence customer satisfaction and the likelihood of tourists returning to glamping sites in Chiang Mai, Thailand. One potential area for investigation is the impact of local culture and experiences on tourists' perceptions of glamping in Chiang Mai. Understanding the role of culture could help enhance the authenticity and enjoyment of glamping experiences for travelers. Additionally, research could focus on assessing the quality of service and hospitality at glamping sites, including factors such as staff training and facility cleanliness, to identify areas for improvement and increase tourist satisfaction and repeat visits. Another avenue of study could examine the influence of online reviews and social media content on tourists' decision-making processes regarding glamping in Chiang Mai. Analyzing online feedback can provide insights into effective marketing strategies and areas needing improvement. Furthermore, investigating the relationship between environmental sustainability practices at glamping sites and tourists' satisfaction levels could contribute to understanding the importance of eco-friendly initiatives such as waste management and community engagement. By examining these factors, researchers can gain valuable insights into enhancing customer satisfaction and promoting sustainable tourism practices in Chiang Mai's glamping industry.

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Factors Influencing Ad Clicks and Purchase Intention in Social Media Marketing Advertising: The Role of Media Factors, Content Factors and Connection Motivation (Yangon, Myanmar)

Su Myat Noe¹, Chompu Nuangjamnong²

Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this research is to explore and understand the key factors that influence the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns in Yangon, Myanmar. By investigating the impact of media factors, content factors, and connection motivation on ad clicks and purchase intention in social media advertising. **Design/Methodology/Approach** - This study employs quantitative methods and analytical techniques such as Cronbach's Alpha, Simple Linear Regression, and Multiple Linear Regression to investigate factors influencing ad clicks and purchase intention in social media advertising campaigns. The research instrument, a questionnaire, comprises screening questions, demographic information, and items aimed at assessing attitudes using a five-point. **Findings** - Content factors such as quality and type of content used in advertisements have a significant positive impact on ad clicks, leading to increased user engagement and click-through rates. Media factors, including platforms and channels used for advertising, show little to no influence on ad clicks, suggesting platform choice may not affect user engagement. Connection motivation, reflecting reasons for engaging with ads, has minimal impact on ad clicks, indicating motivation may not significantly influence ad performance. Ad clicks through social media marketing have a positive impact on purchase intention. **Research Limitations/Implications** - While the study provides valuable insights into ad clicks and purchase intention in social media marketing in Yangon, Myanmar, it is limited by sampling bias, generalizability constraints, and temporal issues. **Originality/value** - The focus of this study is to conduct an analysis of the key factors that influence ad clicks and purchase intention in social media marketing advertising.

Keywords - Ad clicks, Media factors, Content factors, Connection Motivation, Purchase Intention, Social Media Marketing Management

JEL classification code - M31, L82, L86

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Social media has transformed into a multifaceted platform serving as a source of news, entertainment, and inspiration for millions of users worldwide.

Concurrently, it has evolved into one of the most potent channels for digital marketing, with companies increasingly recognizing and harnessing its power. According to Statista, global digital advertising spending reached a staggering \$522.5 billion in 2021, a figure projected to soar to \$836

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billion by 2026. In Myanmar specifically, digital advertising expenditure is expected to reach \$142.8 million in 2024, reflecting the rapid growth and adoption of digital marketing practices in the region (Fuxman et al., 2024)

This surge in digital advertising expenditure can be attributed to several factors. Rising costs associated with traditional media have prompted many advertisers to shift their focus and resources towards interactive advertising on the internet, mobile phones, and social networks. The dynamic nature of social media platforms offers advertisers unparalleled opportunities to engage with their target audience in real-time, foster meaningful interactions, and drive brand awareness and loyalty.

However, despite the immense potential of social media advertising, achieving optimal results remains a challenge for many companies. According to Social Insider, the average click-through-rate for social media ads is a mere 1.36%, with engagement rates varying significantly across platforms. For instance, TikTok, the platform with the highest engagement, boasts a click-through-rate of only 4.25%, while Facebook registers the lowest at 0.06%. These statistics underscore the importance of understanding the factors influencing social media marketing clicks to enhance advertising effectiveness and maximize return on investment.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to investigate the factors influencing ad clicks and purchase intention in social media marketing advertising, with a focus on the Yangon region in Myanmar. Specifically, the study will examine the role of media factors, content factors, and connection motivation in shaping user engagement with social media advertisements. By identifying and understanding these factors, companies can tailor their content, select appropriate media channels, and cultivate trust with their target audience, thereby optimizing their advertising strategies for higher ad click-through rates and increased purchase intention.

1.2 Problem statements

In Yangon, Myanmar, businesses and marketers are facing the challenge of making their ads on social media more effective. They want to ensure not only people see their ads, they want the people to click on the ads and also buy their products. This depends on a few key factors. Firstly, it's about the type of media used in the ads - whether it's images, videos, or text. Secondly, it's about what the ad actually says - is it interesting, informative, or entertaining? Lastly, it's about why people are using social media in the first place - are they looking for inspiration, staying connected with friends, or seeking entertainment?

As Yangon's online marketplace continues to grow rapidly, understanding these factors becomes increasingly important for advertisers. By knowing what types of ads work best and why, businesses can tailor their marketing strategies to better suit the preferences and behaviors of the local audience. This research aims to delve deeper into these factors and how they interact to influence the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns in Yangon, providing valuable insights for businesses looking to improve their online marketing efforts.

1.3 Objectives of study

- (1) To investigate the influence of media factors on Ad clicks, purchase intention in social media advertising.
- (2) To evaluate the influence of content factors on Ad clicks, purchase intention in social media advertising.
- (3) To examine the influence of connection motivation on Ad clicks, purchase intention in social media advertising.
- (4) To analyze the influence of media factors, content factors, and connection motivation on social media advertising effectiveness.

1.4 Research questions

- (1) Do media factors have a significant influence on Ad clicks in social media advertising in Yangon?



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(2) Do content factors have a significant influence on ad clicks in social media advertising in Yangon?

(3) Does connection motivation have a significant influence on ad clicks in social media advertising in Yangon?

(4) Do ad clicks have a significant influence on purchase intention in social media advertising in Yangon?

1.5 Significance of the study

1.5.1 Localized Understanding of Social Media Advertising: The study focuses on Yangon, Myanmar, providing a localized understanding of the factors influencing ad clicks and purchase intention, in the context of social media marketing. This is crucial as advertising effectiveness can vary significantly across different cultural and economic settings.

1.5.2 Guidance for Optimizing Advertising Strategies: By exploring the relationships between media factors, content characteristics, connection motivation, and advertising effectiveness, the study seeks to offer guidance for businesses aiming to optimize their advertising strategies. This includes tailoring content, selecting the right media channels, and building trust to enhance click-through rates.

1.5.3 Contributions to Academic and Practical Knowledge: The findings of the study are expected to contribute both to academic knowledge in the field of marketing and communication and to practical insights for businesses operating in Yangon's digital landscape. This dual contribution adds to the significance of the research, bridging the gap between theoretical understanding and real-world application.

1.6 Scopes of the study

This research aims to investigate the factors influencing Ad Clicks and Purchase Intention, in the context of Social Media Marketing Advertising in Yangon, Myanmar. The study will focus on the following parameters:

The primary geographical focus of this study is Yangon, Myanmar, the largest city and commercial hub of the country. Yangon's vibrant and diverse population, coupled with its unique cultural heritage and rapidly evolving economic landscape, makes it an ideal setting for examining the dynamics of social media advertising. By focusing on Yangon, this study aims to provide insights that are relevant and applicable to businesses and marketers operating within this specific regional context.

The research will cover the period January 2024 to March 2024. This time frame is carefully selected to capture recent trends and dynamics in social media advertising within Yangon. Given the fast-paced nature of digital marketing, the chosen time frame allows for the collection of timely and relevant data that accurately reflects current practices and behaviors among social media users in Yangon.

The study will target social media users in Yangon, Myanmar, encompassing individuals from diverse demographic backgrounds and varying levels of online engagement. This includes but is not limited to young adults, professionals, entrepreneurs, and consumers of various age groups and socio-economic statuses who actively use social media platforms for personal and professional purposes.

The research will consider major social media platforms prevalent in Yangon, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. These platforms are widely used by individuals and businesses across various sectors in Yangon, making them key channels for social media advertising and engagement. By examining multiple platforms, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of user behaviors and perceptions across different social media environments, allowing for nuanced insights into the effectiveness of advertising strategies across various platforms.

For this study, a quantitative research method will be employed to gather data and analyze user behaviors and perceptions related to social media advertising in Yangon, Myanmar. The quantitative approach will involve the use of surveys administered



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to a sample of social media users within the target population.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Theories related to each variable

2.1.1 Media Factors

Add4profit Digital Media Agency (2024) website highlights the significance of media factors such as algorithms on social media platforms in determining the reach and visibility of digital marketing efforts. Additionally, the type of social media platform used is crucial in social media marketing advertising. Voorveld et al. (2018) suggest that due to the many differences among platforms, each offers a unique context for advertising. Advertising formats vary across platforms; for instance, on Instagram, companies use attractive pictures, while on Snapchat, they offer sponsored lenses, and on Twitter, they post short messages (Newberry, 2016). Therefore, media factors such as the type and quality of social media can influence engagement with social media advertising, including ad clicks (Voorveld et al., 2018).

2.1.2 Content Factors

A good content strategy is crucial if someone intend to launch a social media marketing advertising campaign. With a good content, companies can share important links and quotations, encouraging customer to interact with ad like ad clicks on their online social media platforms. Enhancing clarity further by including images or powerful thoughts inside the content enables users to click on them especially on social media like Twitter and Facebook "Importance of Content Marketing" (n.d.). Rowley (2008) highlights how the distinct features of digital content shape marketing approaches, emphasizing the importance of engaging consumers actively and involving them in creating experiences, particularly in the realm of ad clicks and social media marketing. Moreover, according to the Hierarchy Effect of Advertising, whether an ad is effective depends on

the ability of the content of the ad to make consumers engage in thinking and feeling about the product in the ad before they take an action, buy or not to buy. Also, when consumers perceive the display ads on social media to be informative, a good source of product/service information, yet entertaining, and they are involved with the ads, they are more likely to click on the display ads (Mao & Zhang, 2015).

2.1.3 Connection Motivation

In social media marketing advertising, connection motivation plays a pivotal role in influencing ad clicks. Studies have shown that individuals are more likely to engage with advertisements and share their experiences through electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) when they perceive social cues or pressure from their peers (Cheung et al., 2014). Social media platforms provide users with opportunities to connect with friends, family, and acquaintances, facilitating the spread of information and opinions about advertised products or services. According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), individuals are driven to engage with advertisements and content that reinforce their sense of belonging to a social group, leading to increased ad clicks as users seek connection with like-minded individuals. Finally, Bandura's work on observational learning and social modeling emphasizes the significant role of individuals' behaviors, including the ad-clicking behavior of their connections (Bandura, 2002).

2.1.3 Ad Clicks (Social Media Marketing Advertising)

In the realm of social media marketing advertising, advertisers are increasingly leveraging platforms to stimulate digital engagement, particularly through ad clicks (McCarthy, 2017). The effectiveness of these engagement strategies is typically evaluated using social media monitoring tools, which offer quantitative metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and ad clicks (Scheinbaum, 2016). Individuals tend to engage with media content that aligns with their existing attitudes and beliefs. Ad



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clicks often reflect individuals' selective exposure to advertising content that resonates with their preferences and interests. When users click on an ad, they indicate their interest in the promoted product or service, potentially influencing their purchase intentions (Zillmann, 2000).

2.1.4 Purchase intention

Social media platforms play a crucial role for companies' marketing teams, allowing them to understand their target audience's preferences and interests. This enables businesses to deliver personalized advertisements that resonate with consumers' needs and expectations. By leveraging social media, companies can easily engage with potential customers and effectively promote their offerings. The main aim of such advertisements is to attract consumers' attention, provide them with relevant information while increasing the purchase intention (Todi, 2008; Wang et al., 2009).

Research by Colliander et al. (2015) suggests that blogs have a greater influence on purchase intention compared to online newspapers. Additionally, viral marketing campaigns on platforms like Facebook have been found to enhance brand image and value, leading to a higher intention to purchase among consumers (Dehghani & Tumer, 2015). Furthermore Balakrishnan et al. (2014) highlight the positive impact of social media marketing advertising, participation in online communities, and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) on purchase intention via social media platforms. Overall, studies by Godey et al. (2016) emphasize the positive influence of marketing activities on social media platforms on purchase intention.

2.2 Related literature review

2.2.1 Media Factor and Ad Clicks (Social Media Marketing Advertising)

In media research, various studies have explored the impact of media factors on ad clicks, including information-seeking, entertainment, and interaction (Bronner & Neijens, 2006; Malthouse et al., 2007).

While earlier research has focused on social media experiences, it often overlooks direct comparisons among platforms, leading to a gap in understanding users' engagement patterns (Muntinga et al., 2011; Lin & Nuangjamnong, 2022). However, it's anticipated that users interact differently with each platform due to their distinct functionalities, interfaces, and content, suggesting that platform-specific "media factors" play a crucial role in influencing ad clicking behavior.

The ad-media congruency effect highlights the importance of aligning ads with the platform or medium they are displayed on. When ads seamlessly integrate with the style and content of the social media platform, consumers are more likely to click on them (Mao & Zhang, 2015). Voorveld et al. (2018) suggest that platform-specific media factors are key determinants of advertising effectiveness.

Overall, media factors significantly influence user behavior and outcomes in social media marketing advertising. By understanding and leveraging these factors, advertisers can optimize their strategies to enhance ad clicks and drive greater success in their marketing campaigns.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *There is a significant influence of media factors on ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.*

2.2.2 Content Factors and Ad Clicks (Social Media Marketing Advertising)

When consumers find display ads on social media both informative and entertaining, and they actively engage with the ads, they are more inclined to click on them. This suggests that when ads provide useful product or service information in an engaging and enjoyable way, consumers are more likely to interact with them by clicking on them (Mao & Zhang, 2015). Additionally, the emotional appeal of advertisements is a pivotal aspect in influencing user behavior on social media platforms, constituting one of the key content factors. Emotional content, encompassing ads that evoke joy, surprise, or excitement, has shown to



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drive higher levels of user engagement and sharing compared to neutral or informational content (Escalas & Stern, 2003).

Ads that include content which evoke positive emotions are more likely to be clicked and shared by users with their social networks (Berger & Milkman, 2012). Moreover, the visual and interactive components of advertisements significantly influence user perception and engagement, representing crucial content factors. Visual content, encompassing images and videos, typically garners more attention and evokes stronger emotional reactions than text-based content (Escalas & Stern, 2003).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): *There is a significant influence of content factors on ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.*

2.2.3 Connection Motivation and Ad Clicks (Social Media Marketing Advertising)

Connection motivation refers to individuals' intrinsic desire to connect with others and cultivate social relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Hoffman and Fodor (2010) identified four key consumer motivations driving online behavior: connections, creation, consumption, and control. However, Mao and Zhang (2015) focus on two motivations – consumption (or shopping) and connection (or communication), and predict that the former is a facilitator and the latter is an inhibitor to consumers' ad clicking behavior. If consumers are driven by consumption motivation when they browse social media sites (e.g., getting more information about a product or making a purchase), they are more likely to click on ads on social media. In contrast, if they are driven by connection motivation (e.g., catching up with friends), they tend to pay little attention to ads and hence are less likely to click on the ads.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *There is no significant influence of connection motivation on ad clicks*

(social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.

2.2.4 Ad Clicks (Social Media Marketing Advertising) and Purchase intention

Zhang and Mao (2016) argued that the studies on mobile advertising indicate that rich content (which includes visually engaging and interactive elements such as high-quality images, videos, animations, and interactive features), meets the needs of consumers, generates positive advertising attitudes, and helps attract more clicks from consumers. Rich content also assists consumers in obtaining sufficient product information through advertising descriptions, which in turn influences their purchase decisions. Compared to unclicked ads, clicking behavior represents a positive response to the product; when the intention or frequency of ad clicks is higher, it will affect the evaluation of the advertised product (Mao & Zhang, 2016; Log & Nuangjamnong, 2023).

In their study, Supoththamjaree and Srinaruewan (2021) stated that by examining different aspects of consumer engagement, it shows how clicking on ads can affect whether someone decides to make a purchase. Ultimately, it emphasizes the importance of understanding how ad clicks can impact people's decision-making process when it comes to buying products or services. Studies have also found that online advertising, online communities, and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) on social media platforms positively impact purchase intention (Balakrishnan et al., 2014). Overall, marketing activities on social media platforms tend to have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention (Godey et al., 2016; Nuangjamnong, 2022).

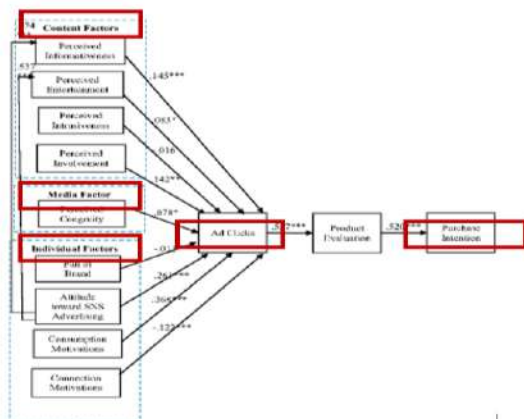
Hypothesis 4 (H4): *There is a significant influence of ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) on purchase intention in Yangon, Myanmar.*

2.3 Theoretical frameworks

2.3.1 Figure 1, this theoretical framework highlights what influences ad clicks and purchase intention in social media advertising. This theoretical framework focuses on how content factors, media factors, and individual factors (like connection motivation) affect ad clicks and purchase intention. The study aims to help us better understand why consumers react to social media ads. By looking at the roles of content, media, and individual factors, we hope to uncover why people do what they do when they see ads on social media.

Figure 1.

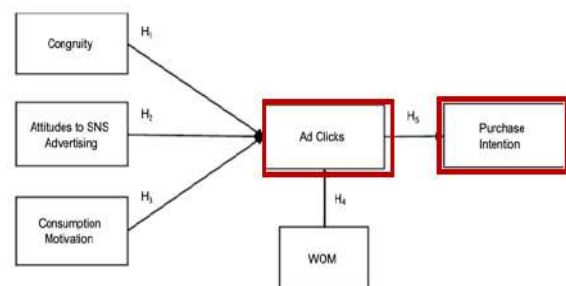
What drives consumers to click on social media ads? The roles of content, media, and individual factors by Mao and Zhang (2015).



2.3.2 The second theoretical framework (Figure 2) illustrates the relationship between ad clicks and purchase intention. Building upon these hypotheses, the research model is designed to elucidate how factors such as congruity, attitudes towards social networking site (SNS) advertising, consumption motivation, and word-of-mouth (WOM) influence purchase intention through ad clicks. The study aims to advance understanding of how ad clicks impact purchase intentions on social media platforms. The findings underscore the significance of consumer behavior in utilizing social media and its influence on purchase intention among Turkish consumers.

Figure 2.

The Relationship with Ad Clicks and Purchase Intention: An Empirical Study of Online Consumer Behavior: Based on these hypotheses, the research model is structured to explain how Congruity, Attitudes to SNS Advertising, Consumption Motivation and WOM affect Purchase Intention through Ad Click by Erdem et al. (2017).



2.4 Hypotheses development

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a significant influence of media factors on ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a significant influence of content factors on ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is no significant influence of connection motivation on ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): There is a significant influence of ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) on purchase intention in Yangon, Myanmar.

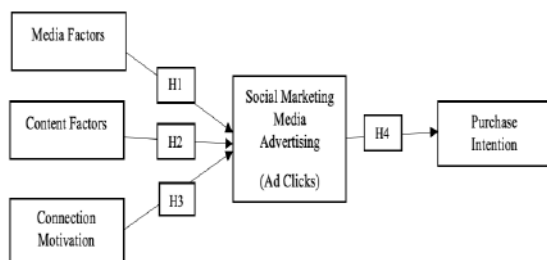
2.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 3 is based on a synthesis of previous research, theoretical concepts, and literature reviews, with media factors, content factors and connection motivation being the independent variables that influence ad clicks and purchase intention which are dependent variables. In the context of social media marketing advertising, the

conceptual framework shows how the relationship between media factors, content factors, connection motivation, social media marketing advertising (ad clicks), purchase intention and as shown in the figure below:

Figure 3.

The conceptual framework of factors influencing ad clicks and purchase intention in social media marketing advertising: the role of media factors, content factors and connection motivation (Yangon, Myanmar)



Source. Constructed by researcher

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study aims to investigate the factors influencing the ad clicks and purchase intention. This study uses quantitative methods and various analytical techniques such as Cronbach's Alpha, Simple Linear Regression and Multiple Linear Regression.

The research instrument employed the questionnaire which includes three distinct sections. These items were systematically organized as follows: two screening questions to ensure participant eligibility, six items dedicated to collecting pertinent demographic information and 21 items.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, a well-established measure of reliability. To ensure the questionnaire's effectiveness and identify any potential ambiguity or uncertainty in the items, a pilot test was conducted involving a small sample of 30 respondents. This pilot testing procedure allowed for the refinement and

validation of the questionnaire prior to its full-scale implementation,

To assess respondents' attitudes and levels of agreement regarding each variable, a five-point Likert scale was utilized. This psychographic instrument is structured with "1" indicating "Strongly Disagree" progressing to "5" signifying "Strongly Agree". The Likert scale provided a standardized and reliable method for measuring the intensity and direction of respondents' opinions on the variables under investigation.

This study uses both primary and secondary data to investigate the factors influencing the ad clicks and purchase intention. Primary data is collected through the questionnaire distributed to the audience who are familiar and get targeted to the social media marketing advertisements daily. Secondary data is collected from reliable sources such as articles, journals and previous research on these topics. Secondary data provides important context and background information that helps to interpret primary data findings. For example, secondary data can be used to learn about the media factors, content factors and connection motivation and their influence on ad clicks and purchase intention. By combining primary and secondary data, this study is able to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex relationship between these variables.

3.2 Population and Sampling

3.2.1 Sample Unit

The sampling population for this study encompasses individuals residing in Yangon, Myanmar, who actively participate in social media platforms. Specifically, the target population comprises social media users who have engaged with advertising content on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Yangon, being the largest city in Myanmar with a dynamic digital landscape, offers an ideal context for investigating the factors influencing ad clicks and purchase intention in social media marketing advertising. According to



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Macrotrned website, the population of Yangon, Myanmar in 2024 is 5,710,000.

3.2.2 Sample Size

The determination of the sampling size is guided by the principles outlined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), considering the estimated population of social media users in Yangon. Based on preliminary data analysis and power calculations, the sample size for this study is set at 384 respondents. This sample size allows for sufficient statistical power to detect meaningful relationships between the variables of interest, considering the complexity of the research model and the diversity of factors under investigation. Additionally, the researcher will employ stratified sampling techniques to ensure representation across demographic variables such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of social media users in Yangon, Myanmar

3.2.3 Sampling Procedures

The researcher decided to utilize a non-probability sampling approach, specifically employing convenience sampling (or haphazard sampling). This entailed screening all collected response data beforehand to ensure its relevance to the research goals. Due to time limitations, the researchers selected a non-probability sampling technique for data collection. In essence, given the time constraints and overall workflow, this approach was deemed the most appropriate for the study.

3.3 Research Instrument

3.3.1 Questionnaire Design

There are three parts to the online questionnaire comprising

Part I. Screening questions (2 questions):

Part II. Demographic questions (6 questions):
Gender, Age, Employment Status, how often do you use social media platforms for personal purposes? Which social media platforms do you use most

frequently? and, how likely are you to purchase after seeing an advertisement on social media?

Part III. Measuring Variables (21 items)

Media Factors: Media factors in social media advertising encompass elements such as platform selection, ad formats, placement strategies, targeting options, and algorithmic changes, all of which influence the effectiveness and impact of advertising campaigns (3 items).

Content Factors: Content factors in social media advertising refer to elements like visuals, copywriting, and messaging that influence the effectiveness of ads (5 items).

Connection Motivation: Connection motivation in social media advertising refers to the underlying reasons and incentives that drive individuals to connect with brands, products, or services on social media platforms, such as seeking entertainment, social interaction, information, inspiration, or utility (5 items).

Ad Clicks: Ad clicks in social media advertising refer to the instances when users interact with an advertisement by clicking on it, typically to learn more about the promoted product, service, or brand (5 items).

Purchase Intention: Purchase intention in social media advertising represents the likelihood or inclination of consumers to make a purchase or engage in a transaction with a brand or product after exposure to advertising messages or content on social media platforms (3 items).

3.4 Validity and Reliability

3.4.1 Content validity (IOC)

The content validity of questionnaire items was evaluated by the researchers using the IOC index. After seeking the opinion of three expert, 21 out of 25 questions achieved IOC scores exceeding 0.5, demonstrating satisfactory validity. Consequently, a refined set of 21 questions was selected, precisely tailored to the variables under investigation. This meticulous procedure guaranteed the precision and pertinence of the questionnaire, thereby ensuring the



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collection of valid data for the study as shown Table

1.

Table 1.

The item Objective Congruence (IOC) index with three experts

Variables	Before Number of items	After number of items	Rang of IOC Weight Scores
Media Factors	5	3	0.67 – 1.00
Content Factors	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Connection Motivation	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Ad Clicks	5	5	0.67 – 1.00
Purchase intention	5	3	0.67 – 1.00

3.4.2 Cronbach's Alpha with Reliability Test

A pilot test involving 50 participants was conducted to identify any inconsistencies or flaws in the questionnaire items. The reliability of each variable was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. According to Cronbach's (1951) categorization, alpha values surpassing 0.9 are considered excellent; those within the 0.8 to 0.9 range are deemed good, and values ranging from 0.7 to 0.8 are considered acceptable. Scores falling between 0.6 and 0.7 are considered questionable, those within 0.5–0.6 are considered poor, and any score below 0.6 is deemed unacceptable.

This study assessed the reliability of various variables, including media factors, content factors,

connection motivation, ad clicks, and purchase intention, using Cronbach's alpha values obtained from the pilot test. The results revealed Cronbach's alpha values of 0.733 for three items related to media factors, 0.769 for five items related to content factors, 0.761 for five items related to connection motivation, 0.697 for five items related to ad clicks, and 0.669 for three items related to purchase intention, as presented in Table 2. All the assessed items met the criteria for Cronbach's alpha, with values exceeding 0.60, indicating that these items are considered acceptable and reliable for administration to the intended survey participants.

Table 2.

The value of reliability analysis of the entire study question and variable (n=50)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Media Factors	0.733	Acceptable
Content Factors	0.769	Acceptable
Connection Motivation	0.761	Acceptable
Ad Clicks	0.697	Questionable
Purchase Intention	0.669	Questionable

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Descriptive analysis of demographic data

Based on Table 3 the demographic data collected from 390 respondents, the analysis reveals several

key insights into the factors influencing ad clicks and purchase intention in social media marketing advertising in Yangon, Myanmar.



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Age distribution among respondents shows that the largest proportion falls within the age range of 25-34, constituting 54.1% of the sample, followed by those aged 18-24 (33.6%). A smaller percentage falls within the age ranges of 35-44 (10.8%) and over 45 (1.5%).

In terms of gender, female respondents dominate the sample, accounting for 57.2%, while male respondents make up 34.4%. A minority preferred not to disclose their gender, representing 8.5% of the sample.

Regarding employment status, students represent the largest group, comprising 49.5% of respondents, followed by employees (42.6%), owners (7.2%), and retirees/unemployed individuals (1%).

When it comes to the choice of social media platforms, Facebook emerges as the most popular, with 59.0% of respondents using it, followed by TikTok (24.1%) and Instagram (16.9%).

Analyzing the frequency of social media usage, the majority of respondents reported using social

media once a day (99.0%), while a very small portion reported using it multiple times a day (0.8%) or a few times a week (0.3%).

Regarding the intention of purchase, a significant portion of respondents indicated a likelihood to make a purchase, with 44.1% being either very likely or likely to purchase, while 31.8% expressed a neutral stance. A smaller proportion expressed unlikeliness to purchase, with 6.2% being either unlikely or very unlikely to make a purchase.

This descriptive analysis provides valuable insights into the demographic composition and behaviors of respondents in Yangon, Myanmar, which are crucial for understanding the dynamics of social media marketing advertising in this context. Further analysis will explore the relationships between these demographic factors and the variables related to media factors, content factors, and connection motivation in social media marketing advertising strategies.

Table 3.

Demographic information analysis by using frequency distribution and percentage. (n=390)

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percent
Age		
18-24	131	54.1%
25-34	211	33.6%
35-44	42	10.8%
over 45	6	1.5%
Total	390	100%
Gender		
Female	223	57.2%
Male	134	34.4%
Prefer not to say	33	8.5%
Total	390	100%
Employment Status		
Employee	165	49.5%
Student	193	42.6%
Owner	28	7.2%
Retire/Unemployed	4	



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Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percent
		1%
Total	390	100%
Choice of Social media		
Facebook	230	59%
Instagram	66	24.1%
Tiktok	94	16.9%
Total	390	100%
Frequency of Social Media Usage		
Multiple times a day	386	99%
Once a day	3	0.8%
A few times a week	1	0.3%
A few times a month	-	-
Total	390	100%
Intention of Purchase		
Very Likely	66	16.9%
Likely	172	44.1%
Neutral	124	31.7%
Unlikely	24	6.1%
Very Unlikely	4	1.02%
Total	390	100%

4.2 Descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation

This section provides a summary of the Mean and Standard Deviation for each group variable, which includes media factors, content factors, connection motivation, ad clicks and purchase intention. The evaluation of mean scores based on the criteria adapted from Imsa-ard et al. (2021) is presented below.

Mean score	Interpretation
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly agree
3.41 - 4.20	Agree
2.61 - 3.20	Neutral
1.81 - 2.00	Disagree
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly disagree

Table 4 displays illuminating results from the mean and standard deviation analyses of media

factors among 390 respondents. The statement "I believe that targeted advertising on social media platforms is more relevant to my interests and needs" garnered the highest mean score of 4.05, suggesting a strong agreement with the relevance of targeted advertising. Following closely is the statement "I click on the advertisements out of curiosity when I see the same social media advertisement for a brand frequently," with a mean score of 4.03, indicating a generally positive attitude towards engaging with advertisements out of curiosity.

In contrast, the lowest mean score of 3.96 was recorded for the statement "I engage with social media advertisements that offer valuable content or information relevant to my interests." Although still indicating agreement, it suggests a slightly lower



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level of engagement compared to the other statements.

Regarding standard deviation, the statement with the highest variability was "I click on the advertisements out of curiosity when I see the same social media advertisement for a brand frequently," with a standard deviation of 0.971. This indicates that there was more variability in responses to this statement compared to others. Conversely, the statement with the lowest standard deviation was "I engage with social media advertisements that offer valuable content or information relevant to my interests," which had a standard deviation of 0.895, suggesting a more consistent level of agreement among respondents regarding this aspect of advertisement engagement.

The mean and standard deviation of content factors (CF) among 390 respondents in Table 4 reveal insights into their views and actions regarding social media advertising. The statement "I am more likely to engage with social media advertisements that offer useful information about the product/service that I am interested in," achieved the highest mean score of 4.20. This suggests a preference for informed ads and reflects a positive attitude toward informative content. Following closely is "The clear messaging of social media advertisements can influence my decision to engage with them," with a mean score of 4.15. This indicates that clear messaging influences ad engagement, showing strong agreement among respondents. The mean score of 4.09 for "I engage with social media advertisements that are visually appealing or creative" indicates respondents' positive reception towards visually appealing ads. In contrast, "Social media advertisements that resonate with my personal experiences can influence me to engage with them," and "The authenticity and transparency of social media advertisements influence my perception of the brand," had mean scores of 3.92 and 3.94, respectively. Despite these relatively lower scores, respondents agreed that personal resonance and authenticity influence ad engagement. These

assertions exhibit similar standard deviations, ranging from 0.764 to 0.992, indicating moderate consumer factor agreement in responses.

Table 4 displays the mean and standard deviation of connection motivation (CM) among 390 respondents, shedding light on the reasons behind people's interactions with social media ads. The statement "I connect with brands or products on social media because it offers me practical utility or benefits in my daily life" achieved the highest mean score of 4.17. This indicates that respondents seek practical benefits in their daily lives and strongly believe that engaging with brands or products on social media is beneficial. Following closely is "I engage with social media advertisements to gather information about products or services that interest me," with a mean score of 4.13. This suggests a high level of agreement that social media ads offer valuable information about products or services of interest, highlighting the importance of informational content in stimulating engagement. The mean score of 3.98 for "I follow or engage with social media advertisements to seek entertainment or enjoyment" demonstrates respondents' strong preference for social media ads, indicating how entertainment value drives ad engagement. Respondents also agreed with "I engage with social media advertisements to feel part of a community associated with the brands or products" and "Social media advertisements provide me with opportunities to express my values by connecting with brands or products that resonate with me," with mean scores of 3.99 and 3.94, respectively. This underscores the desire for social connection and alignment of values with ads. Standard deviation variability ranged from 0.836 to 0.974, demonstrating moderate agreement among respondents regarding connection motivation variables driving social media ad engagement.

Table 4 presents the mean and standard deviation of ad clicks (AC) among 390 respondents, shedding light on their propensity to click on social media ads. The statement "I often click on social media



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advertisements to learn more about the products or services being advertised" achieved the highest mean score of 4.34. This indicates that respondents are proactive in seeking product or service information by clicking on ads. Following closely is "I click on social media advertisements that provide clear and concise information about the advertised product or service," with a mean score of 4.21. This suggests high agreement that clear and simple information drives advertisement clicks, emphasizing the value of useful content in engagement. Participants also agreed that "Social media advertisements that offer discounts or special offers are more likely to prompt me to click on them," scoring 4.06. Discounts and special offers drive ad clicks, indicating a desire for value. Survey respondents agreed that "I only click on the social media advertisement of popular brands or brands that I am already familiar with," with a mean score of 3.97. While significantly lower than other claims, it still demonstrates a predisposition to click on familiar or popular brand ads, underlining the impact of brand awareness and familiarity in interaction. The standard deviation varied from 0.816 to 1.196, demonstrating moderate agreement among respondents regarding the factors influencing their social media ad clicks.

Table 4 illustrates the mean and standard deviation of purchase intention (PI) among 390

respondents, unveiling their intentions to make purchases based on social media advertising. The statement "Social media advertisements that align with interests increase my intention to purchase the advertised brands or products" garnered the highest mean score of 4.12. Respondents strongly believe that when advertisements align with their interests, it positively impacts their purchasing intentions. This underscores the significance of relevance and personalization in advertising techniques, as it suggests that targeting individual interests enhances purchase intentions. Following closely is "I consider purchasing after clicking on a social media advertisement that interests me," with a mean score of 4.01. This implies that engaging with compelling ads heightens buying intentions. Participants also concurred that "My purchase intention is influenced by online exclusive offers of the brands," scoring an average of 3.91. Although slightly lower than the other claims, it still indicates that online exclusive offers influence purchase intention, underscoring the importance of promotional incentives in consumer behavior. The standard deviation ranged from 0.978 to 1.109, indicating considerable agreement among respondents regarding the factors impacting their purchasing intentions.

Table 4.

Mean and Standard deviation

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Media factors (MF)			
MF1: I engage with social media advertisements that offer valuable content or information relevant to my interests.	3.96	0.895	Agree
MF2: I click on the advertisements out of curiosity when I see the same social media advertisement for a brand frequently.	4.03	0.971	Agree
MF3: I believe that targeted advertising on social media platforms is more relevant to my interests and needs.	4.05	0.951	Agree
Content factors (CF)			
CF1: I am more likely to engage with social media advertisements that offer useful information about the product/service that I am interested.	4.2	0.764	Agree
CF2: I engage with social media advertisements that are visually appealing or creative.	4.09	0.839	Agree



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CF3: The clear messaging of social media advertisements can influence my decision to engage with them.	4.15	0.992	Agree
CF4: Social media advertisements that resonate with my personal experiences can influence me to engage with them.	3.92	0.896	Agree
CF5: The authenticity and transparency of social media advertisements influence my perception of the brand.	3.94	0.900	Agree
Connection motivation (CM)			
CM1: I follow or engage with social media advertisements to seek entertainment or enjoyment.	3.98	0.950	Agree
CM2: I connect with brands or products on social media because it offers me practical utility or benefits in my daily life.	4.17	0.836	Agree
CM3: I engage with social media advertisements to gather information about products or services that interest me.	4.13	0.846	Agree
CM4: I engage with social media advertisements to feel part of a community associated with the brands or products.	3.99	0.974	Agree
CM5: Social media advertisements provide me with opportunities to express my values by connecting with brands or products that resonate with me.	3.94	0.859	Agree
ad Clicks (AC)			
AC1: I often click on social media advertisements to learn more about the products or services being advertised.	4.34	0.816	Strongly Agree
AC2: I only click on the social media advertisement of popular brands or brands that I am already familiar with.	3.97	1.196	Agree
AC3: Social media advertisements that offer discounts, or special offers are more likely to prompt me to click on them.	4.06	0.947	Agree
AC4: I click on social media advertisements that provide clear and concise information about the advertised product or service.	4.21	0.92	Strongly Agree
AC5: Social media advertisements that use engaging visuals or interactive elements (e.g., videos, GIFs) are more likely to capture my attention.	3.94	1.098	Agree
Purchase intention (PI)			
PI1: I consider making a purchase after clicking on a social media advertising that interests me.	4.01	1.000	Agree
PI2: Social media advertisements that align with interests increase my intention to make a purchase from the advertised brands or products.	4.12	0.978	Agree
PI3: My purchase intention is influenced by online exclusive offers of the brands.	3.91	1.109	Agree

4.3 Hypothesis Testing Result

The researchers used linear regression, a statistical analytical approach, to examine the significant influence of various variables. The analysis aimed to investigate the relationship between variables, including the influence of media factors, content factors and connection motivation on ad clicks and purchase intention in a social media marketing management. In relation to the analysis of linear regression, researchers utilize a

straightforward linear regression analysis and multiple linear regression in conjunction with R-square to assess the amount of variation in the dependent variable that is accounted for by independent variables. Castro et al. (2017) discovered a significant correlation between independent and dependent variables, and in regression analysis, independent variables should be considered valid if the variance inflation factor value is lower than 5, as well as using R-square to identify the portion of



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variance in the dependent variable that is influenced by independent variables.

4.3.1 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H1, H2 and H3

Statistical Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant influence of media factors (H1), content factors (H2) and connection motivation (H3) on ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.

H_a: There is a significant influence of media factors (H1), content factors (H2) and connection motivation (H3) on ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) in Yangon, Myanmar.

The results from the multiple linear regression analysis in table 5 are summarized as follows

For Hypothesis 1 (H1) concerning Media Factors, the unstandardized coefficient (B) is -0.1266 with a standard error (SE B) of 0.0681. The standardized coefficient (β) is -0.1309. The t-value is -1.861, corresponding to a p-value of 0.064. The variance inflation factor (VIF) is 3.70. Based on these results,

the null hypothesis (H₀) is not rejected for Media Factors.

For Hypothesis 2 (H2) regarding Content Factors, the unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.9274 with a standard error (SE B) of 0.0816. The standardized coefficient (β) is 0.7832. The t-value is 11.362, with a p-value of less than 0.001 (indicated by '*'). The variance inflation factor (VIF) is 3.55. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected for Content Factors.

For Hypothesis 3 (H3) related to Connection Motivation, the unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.0167 with a standard error (SE B) of 0.0822. The standardized coefficient (β) is 0.0150. The t-value is 0.203, corresponding to a p-value of 0.839. The variance inflation factor (VIF) is 4.07. Thus, the null hypothesis (H₀) is not rejected for Connection Motivation.

Additionally, the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.00608, and the adjusted R² is 0.004, indicating a very low proportion of variance explained by the model. The asterisk (*) indicates statistical significance at the conventional threshold of p < 0.05. The dependent variable in this analysis is Ad Clicks.

Table 5.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 1, 2 and 3

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H1: Media Factors	-0.1266	0.0681	-0.1309	-1.861	0.064	3.70	Fail to reject Ho
H2: Content Factors	0.9274	0.0816	0.7832	11.362	<0.001*	3.55	Rejected Ho
H3: Connection Motivation	0.0167	0.0822	0.0150	0.203	0.839	4.07	Fail to reject Ho

Note: R² = 0.483, Adjusted R² = 0.479, *p < 0.05. Dependent variable = Ad Clicks

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

4.3.2 Result of Simple Linear Regression of H4

Statistical Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant influence of ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) H4 on purchase intention in Yangon, Myanmar.

H_a: There is a significant influence of ad clicks (social media marketing advertising) H4 on purchase intention in Yangon, Myanmar.

The results from the simple linear regression analysis in Table 6 for Hypothesis 4 are as follows:

For Hypothesis 4 (H4) concerning Ad Clicks, the unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.134 with a standard error (SE B) of 0.0567. The standardized coefficient (β) is 0.119. The t-value is 2.37, corresponding to a p-value of 0.018 (indicated by '*'). The variance inflation factor (VIF) is 1.00. Based on these results, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected for Ad Clicks.

Additionally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.00608, and the adjusted R^2 is 0.004, indicating a very low proportion of variance explained by the model. The asterisk (*) indicates statistical significance at the conventional threshold of $p < 0.05$. The dependent variable in this analysis is purchases intention.

Table 6.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 4

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	p	VIF	Null Hypothesis
H4: Ad clicks	0.134	0.0567	0.119	2.37	0.018*	1.00	Rejected H ₀

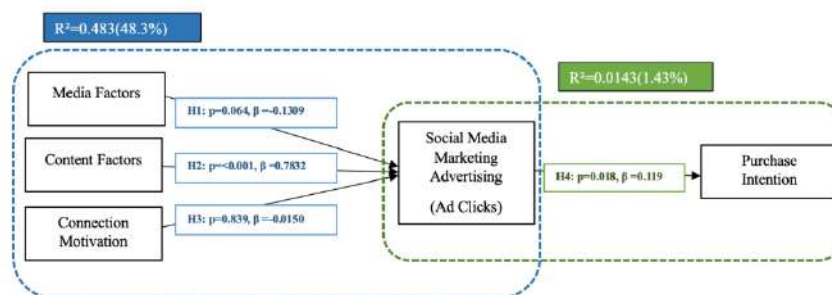
Note: $R^2 = 0.0143$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.0117$, * $p < 0.05$. Dependent variable = Purchase Intention

B = Unstandardized coefficients B | SE B = the standard error for the unstandardized beta | β = the standardized beta (β) |

t = t-value | p = p-value | VIF = Variance inflation Factor

Figure 4.

Summary of hypothesis testing results



5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The research findings with multiple linear regression shed light on several key aspects related to the hypotheses tested in the study. Here's a summary of the research intentions inferred from the findings:

Media Factors (H1): The analysis reveals a non-significant negative relationship between Media Factors and Ad Clicks ($B = -0.1266$, $p = 0.064$). While the p-value is marginally above the conventional significance threshold ($p < 0.05$), it suggests a trend toward rejecting the null hypothesis. Thus, there may

be a weak relationship between Media Factors and Ad Clicks, albeit not statistically significant.

Content Factors (H2): The results indicate a significant positive relationship between Content Factors and Ad Clicks ($B = 0.9274$, $p < 0.001$). The large standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.7832$) suggests a strong influence of Content Factors on Ad Clicks. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, affirming the importance of Content Factors in driving Ad Clicks.

Connection Motivation (H3): The analysis shows a non-significant relationship between Connection Motivation and Ad Clicks ($B = 0.0167$, $p = 0.839$). The



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p-value is substantially higher than 0.05, indicating a failure to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there is insufficient evidence to support a significant association between Connection Motivation and Ad Clicks.

Ad Clicks (H4): For Hypothesis 4, examining Ad Clicks as the predictor of Purchase Intention, the results reveal a significant positive relationship ($B = 0.134$, $p = 0.018$). With a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.119, the findings suggest that Ad Clicks positively influence Purchase Intention. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, highlighting the role of Ad Clicks in shaping Purchase Intention.

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of Content Factors in driving Ad Clicks and suggest a potential link between Ad Clicks and Purchase Intention. However, further research may be warranted to explore the nuanced relationships between Media Factors, Connection Motivation, and consumer behavior in social media advertising.

The outcomes of a simple linear regression analysis concerning Hypothesis 4, focusing on Ad Clicks as the predictor of Purchase Intention. The summary of research intentions inferred from the findings is as follows:

Hypothesis 4 (Ad Clicks): The analysis demonstrates a statistically significant positive relationship between Ad Clicks and Purchase Intention ($B = 0.134$, $p = 0.018$). The standardized coefficient (β) of 0.119 suggests that an increase in Ad Clicks is associated with a corresponding increase in Purchase Intention. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that Ad Clicks have a discernible impact on Purchase Intention.

These findings underscore the pivotal role of Ad Clicks in influencing consumers' intentions to make purchases based on social media advertising. By clicking on advertisements, individuals demonstrate an active interest in the promoted products or services, which subsequently enhances their inclination to make a purchase. This highlights the importance of effective advertising strategies in capturing users' attention and fostering engagement,

ultimately driving consumer behavior and purchase decisions.

5.2 Discussion based on Findings

The findings from the simple linear regression analysis presented in Table 6 shed light on the relationship between ad clicks and purchase intention in the context of social media advertising. The results reveal a statistically significant positive association between ad clicks and purchase intention, indicating that an increase in ad clicks corresponds to a higher likelihood of individuals intending to make a purchase. This discussion will delve into the implications of these findings and their significance in understanding consumer behavior in the digital marketing landscape. The positive relationship between ad clicks and purchase intention underscores the effectiveness of interactive advertising formats in influencing consumer decision-making processes.

Ad clicks serve as a proxy for consumer engagement with advertisements, indicating active interest and willingness to explore further information about the advertised products or services. When users click on ads, they signal a level of interest and engagement that can translate into heightened purchase intentions. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the importance of user engagement as a driver of purchase behavior in online advertising contexts. One possible explanation for the observed relationship is the role of relevance and personalization in shaping consumer responses to social media advertisements. Advertisements tailored to individual preferences and interests are more likely to capture users' attention and elicit clicks.

As users interact with ads that align with their needs and preferences, they perceive greater value in the promoted offerings, leading to increased purchase intentions. This underscores the importance of data-driven targeting strategies and personalized advertising content in maximizing the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns. Furthermore, the findings highlight the dynamic nature of consumer behavior in the digital age, where users actively seek out information and engage with brands



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on their own terms. Ad clicks represent a proactive step in the consumer journey, signaling an intent to explore and evaluate potential purchase options. In an increasingly competitive online marketplace, advertisers must prioritize user experience and deliver compelling content that resonates with target audiences to drive meaningful engagement and, ultimately, conversions.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of the study. The analysis focuses solely on the relationship between ad clicks and purchase intention, overlooking other potential factors that may influence consumer behavior in social media advertising contexts. Future research could explore additional variables, such as ad content, user demographics, and situational factors, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the drivers of purchase intentions in online advertising.

In conclusion, the findings underscore the significance of ad clicks as a predictor of purchase intention in social media advertising. By understanding the dynamics of user engagement and the factors that drive consumer behavior, marketers can optimize their advertising strategies to effectively target and engage with their audience, ultimately driving business success in the digital marketplace.

5.3 Recommendations based on Findings

The study's findings suggest several recommendations for guiding practitioners and marketers in optimizing their social media advertising strategies to improve purchase intentions and drive conversions.

First, enhancing relevance and personalization is crucial. Given the positive association between ad clicks and purchase intention, advertisers should prioritize relevance and personalization in their ad campaigns. By leveraging data analytics and consumer insights, marketers can tailor advertising content to align with the interests, preferences, and demographics of their target audience. Personalized ad experiences can increase user engagement and foster a deeper connection with potential customers, ultimately driving higher purchase intentions.

Secondly, focusing on interactive and engaging content is essential. Research demonstrates that interactive and visually appealing ad formats effectively capture users' attention and stimulate engagement. Marketers should leverage interactive elements such as videos, GIFs, and interactive polls to create immersive ad experiences that encourage users to interact with the content. Brands can enhance user engagement by incorporating interactive elements into their ads, which can prolong user engagement and increase the likelihood of driving purchase intentions.

Thirdly, implementing A/B testing and iterative optimization is critical. Continuous testing and optimization are essential for refining advertising strategies and maximizing their effectiveness. Marketers should conduct A/B tests to experiment with different ad creatives, messaging, and targeting parameters to identify the most impactful combinations. By analyzing the performance metrics of different ad variants, brands can iteratively refine their strategies to optimize for higher ad clicks and, ultimately, increased purchase intentions.

Fourth, offering incentives and exclusive deals can be effective. Discounts, promotions, and exclusive offers can serve as powerful motivators to encourage users to click on ads and explore the promoted offerings further. Marketers should consider incorporating incentive-based strategies into their ad campaigns, such as limited-time discounts, freebies, or loyalty rewards, to incentivize ad engagement and drive purchase intentions. Brands can create a sense of urgency and exclusivity by offering tangible benefits to users, prompting them to act and make purchases.

Fifthly, optimizing landing pages and conversion paths is crucial. The effectiveness of social media advertising extends beyond the ad itself; it also hinges on the user experience post-click. Marketers should optimize the landing pages linked to their ads for conversions, incorporating clear and compelling calls-to-action, intuitive navigation, and streamlined checkout processes. By providing a seamless



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transition from ad engagement to conversion, brands can capitalize on users' purchase intentions and facilitate the path to purchase, maximizing the ROI of their advertising efforts.

Lastly, continuous monitoring and analysis of performance metrics are essential. Marketers should leverage analytics tools to track metrics such as click-through rates, conversion rates, and return on ad spend (ROAS) to assess the impact of their ad campaigns on purchase intentions. By gaining insights into user behavior and campaign performance, brands can make data-driven decisions to optimize their advertising strategies and maximize their impact on purchase intentions.

By implementing these recommendations, marketers can leverage the findings of the study to enhance the effectiveness of their social media advertising efforts, driving higher ad clicks and, ultimately, increased purchase intentions. By prioritizing relevance, engagement, and optimization, brands can create compelling ad experiences that resonate with their target audience, fostering stronger connections and driving tangible business outcomes in the digital marketplace.

5.4 Implications based on findings and theories

The study conducted in Yangon, Myanmar, has significant implications for social media marketing. It reveals that content quality and relevance play a pivotal role in driving ad clicks. This underscores the importance for businesses to prioritize the creation of engaging and personalized content to captivate users and increase the likelihood of ad clicks.

Interestingly, factors such as the choice of social media platform and the motivations behind connecting with brands did not significantly impact ad clicks in Yangon. This suggests that focusing on content quality outweighs the importance of platform selection in advertising. By discerning the content types that resonate with their audience, businesses can craft ads that effectively capture users' attention and prompt them to click.

Moreover, the study indicates that ad clicks strongly influence individuals' purchase intentions. Consequently, businesses should design their ads strategically to encourage users to act, whether it be making a purchase or further engaging with the brand. Through optimizing ad performance and employing targeted messaging that prompts user interaction, businesses can enhance their chances of converting ad clicks into tangible purchases.

Hence, the study underscores the criticality of content strategy, personalized content creation, and leveraging ad clicks in social media marketing within Yangon, Myanmar. By understanding the drivers of user engagement and purchase intent, businesses can tailor their marketing approaches to establish meaningful connections with their target audience and achieve successful outcomes in their advertising endeavors.

5.5 Limitations of the study

While this study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing ad clicks and purchase intention in social media marketing advertising in Yangon, Myanmar, it is not without limitations. Sampling bias, limited generalizability, temporal constraints, and the selection of social media platforms are notable limitations that may affect the applicability of the findings beyond the study's specific context. However, despite these limitations, the study offers methodological insights for future research, practical guidance for marketers, policy implications for regulators, and educational opportunities for students and professionals interested in digital marketing. By acknowledging these limitations and embracing the implications of the research, stakeholders can leverage its insights to advance knowledge and inform decision-making in the realm of social media advertising.

5.6 Further Studies

Building upon the findings of this research, future studies could explore several avenues to expand our understanding of social media marketing dynamics. These include investigating comparative content



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strategies across different cultural contexts, conducting longitudinal analyses to track user engagement over time, delving into platform-specific investigations to understand the impact of content factors on ad clicks within popular social media platforms in Yangon, Myanmar, conducting qualitative research on user experiences and motivations, conducting experimental studies to test causal relationships between content factors, ad clicks, and purchase intention, and conducting ethnographic research to observe real-world interactions between users and social media advertising. By pursuing these avenues, researchers can deepen their understanding of social media marketing, optimize strategies for engaging users, and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in digital marketing.

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The Human factor: Enhancing Intelligence Capabilities with People-Centric Knowledge Management

Saleha Javed Abbas Syed

Abstract

The foundation of intelligence capabilities is crucial for understanding the development of gathering and analyzing intelligence. Intelligence activities include acquiring data, processing analysis, and spreading information to safeguard national interests and guide decision-making in the face of shifting dangers and global environments. This study aims to augment intelligence capabilities by prioritizing knowledge management tactics centred around individuals, focusing on how the adoption of knowledge governance approaches designed with personnel's proficiencies and requirements in mind might bolster espionage activities. Intelligence capabilities include the ability to grasp and utilize knowledge, including cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural intellects. Intelligence operations encompass Human Intelligence (HUMINT). Integrating technology with people-centric knowledge management is crucial for fostering effective dissemination of knowledge, enhancing collaboration, and addressing security and privacy concerns in knowledge management systems. Future trends and innovations in intelligence capabilities include artificial intelligence and machine learning, predictive analytics for intelligence forecasting, and ethical considerations in advancing intelligence capabilities. Policy and practice implications include recommendations for intelligence agencies, policy implications of people-centric knowledge management, and implementing best practices in intelligence operations. The study's contributions to the field include advancements in intelligence capabilities and limitations and future research directions. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of focusing on people-oriented strategies in knowledge management for improving an organization's intelligence functions.

Key Words: intelligence systems, Knowledge, human cognition, human-centred

JEL Classification Code: O1015

Introduction

Background of Intelligence Capabilities

Grasping the foundation of intelligence skills is crucial for appreciating the development of gathering and analysing intelligence. Activities involved in intelligence capabilities span across acquiring data, processing analysis, and spreading information, all pivotal for safeguarding national interests and guiding decision-making mechanisms. Lately, a trend has emerged favouring an approach centred around individuals within intelligence tasks, acknowledging the paramount role that humans play in extracting essential knowledge. By tapping into human intellect's potential, entities can improve their awareness of situations and uncover insights potentially overlooked by purely technological methods. Recognizing both the historical backdrop and technological progressions in intelligence skills is indispensable for crafting efficient approaches to employ people-focused knowledge administration in

espionage activities. Such transformation necessitates an enriched comprehension regarding how human resources might

enhance digital instruments to elevate outcomes tied to intelligence gathering while tackling novel security predicaments.

Importance of Knowledge Management in Intelligence

The administration of knowledge occupies a crucial position in boosting intelligence capabilities by aiding in the efficient gathering, structuring, sharing, and employment of information across intelligence entities. Its significance lies within its capacity to guarantee that analysts in the field of intelligence promptly procure pertinent and precise data, thus empowering them to undertake evidence-based decisions and forecasts. Through embracing systems for managing knowledge, these agencies are enabled to refine their procedures, enhance interaction amongst varying sectors, and utilize shared know-how to adeptly confront intricate issues. Furthermore,



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such management is instrumental in safeguarding institutional heritage and exemplary methodologies, which bolsters organizational acumen and flexibility amidst shifting dangers and mutable global scenes. In essence, as a catalyst for amplifying the intellectual resources at hand more resourcefully and potently among intelligence bodies; this contributes significantly toward fulfilling goals related to national defence (S. Lazovic, 2023).

Thesis Statement and Research Objectives

1. This investigation's chief pursuit is to augment intelligence faculties by giving precedence to knowledge management tactics centred around individuals.
2. The current study posits that pivoting to a more people-focused modality in managing knowledge amongst spy entities could markedly elevate the synergy, exchange of information, and procedural choices.
3. This exploration will delve into how the adoption of knowledge governance approaches designed with personnel's proficiencies and requirements in mind might bolster overarching espionage activities.
4. Through a scrutiny of current academic works on knowledge stewardship, the dynamics within organizations, and the analysis pertinent to spying, this study seeks to unearth deficiencies in prevalent methodologies and put forth novel remedies for enhancing human intellect's role in intricate decision-making landscapes.

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5. The culmination of this research intends upon crafting a schematic for weaving human-centric principles of knowledge administration into espionage operations, thus ameliorating strategic yields and bolstering efficiency against nascent menaces (M. López, 2010).

Literature Review

Rolf Pfeifer et al (2001) observes that people-centric knowledge management plays a critical role in this process, as it emphasizes the value of human expertise and collaboration in generating actionable intelligence. By harnessing the collective knowledge and skills of individuals within an organization, intelligence capabilities can be enhanced to facilitate more informed decision-making and strategic planning. Thus, understanding intelligence capabilities is the cornerstone of successful knowledge management practices that drive organizational success and competitiveness in today's dynamic environment. Roehling et al. (2002) focus on the study of alerting managers to the likelihood that they are unnecessarily contributing to the impact of legal considerations on the management of employees as a result of "legal-centric decision making" and by providing information and guidance that will assist them in formulating better informed, more strategic responses to employment issues that have potential legal implications. Keys to implementing the strategic approach are identified and discussed, and the approach is illustrated by applying it to a decision that American employers continue to confront: how to respond to the eroding employment-at-will doctrine. The analysis strongly

suggests that the extent of the law's negative influence on the management of employees can be moderated significantly if organizational decision-makers recognize their contribution to "the problem", focus on what is organizationally sensible rather than what is perceived to be legally defensible, and adopt a more strategic (less legal-centric) approach to the challenges posed by employment decisions that raise legal concerns.

Understanding Intelligence Capabilities

Definition and Scope of Intelligence

Capacity for intelligence is seen as the ability to grasp and utilize know-how, especially when resolving problems, which gets shaped by several elements such as genetic makeup and surrounding influences. The breadth of intelligence goes past mere cognitive skills to include aspects like emotional, social, and cultural intellects, showcasing human cognition's complex aspect. Grasping the concept and extent of intelligence plays a pivotal role in context to boosting intellectual abilities via focused management of people-derived knowledge. By acknowledging varied types of intelligence and cherishing the array of competences along with specializations that individuals contribute towards a unified system of intellect, firms can tap into a wider spectrum of informational assets for enlightened decision-making processes and fostering innovation trails. Henceforth entwining perceptions drawn from psychology realms alongside sociology factors plus management research insights stands paramount for examining intelligence from an extensive cross-disciplinary viewpoint (David Redpath, 2024).

Types of Intelligence Operations

Varieties of intelligence activities can differ greatly in terms of their approach and scale, each fulfilling a distinct role within the realm of intelligence. The acquisition of information via human contacts, such as informants or espionage agents, is termed Human Intelligence (HUMINT), offering crucial insights into the plans of foes (S. B. Goyal et al., 2024). Conversely, Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) zeroes in on the capture and dissection of electronic communications for intel gathering. Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) employs visual sources like satellite images to oversee



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movements and spotlight possible menaces. Moreover, Measurement and Signature Intelligence (MASINT) captures and scrutinizes diverse signatures - from chemical to biological to radiological indicators - furnishing distinctive intelligence. The amalgamation of these disparate intelligence-gathering strategies empowers agencies dedicated to security enforcement with an integrated view on looming threats and guides them towards making enlightened choices for safeguarding national interests.

Role of Technology in Intelligence Gathering

In the realm of intel acquisition's significance, tech plays a crucial role in bolstering intel gathering prowess. Employing cutting-edge tech machinery such as artificial cognition, algorithmic learning, extensive data examination, and earth observation tech has utterly transformed the mechanism of intelligence procurement, scrutiny, and employment. These technological advancements permit the processing of an immense volume of information instantaneously, facilitating the discovery of sequences, tendencies, and irregularities that were once invisible. Additionally, melding human intellect with technology leads to more streamlined and potent decision-making procedures in intricate intelligence manoeuvres. With continuous technological advancement, a necessity arises for spy agencies to adjust and harness these novelties to remain pre-emptive against novel menaces and hurdles within an incessantly fluctuating worldwide arena. Therefore, critical is the collaboration between technology and savvy human judgement in refining practices related to spying for national safeguarding and defence purposes.(Giampiero Lupo, 2023).

Knowledge Management in Intelligence

Concept of Knowledge Management

The concept of managing knowledge holds a pivotal role in operations concerning intelligence, especially when it comes to boosting the capabilities related to intelligence. It involves an organized methodology for the acquisition, arrangement, dissemination, and application of information that aids in decision-making processes and fosters innovation within a body or organization. Through the adoption of methodologies pertinent to managing knowledge,

agencies dedicated to intelligence can guarantee that significant insights and skills are preserved, further refined, and employed effectively. This strategy furthers a culture where learning continuously and adapting is encouraged, thus permitting professionals in intelligence fields to remain vigilant against new threats and hurdles successfully. Furthermore, managing knowledge assists in dismantling barriers around sharing information by promoting collaboration across various sectors or teams within organizations. By implementing strategies focused on individuals involved in managing knowledge efforts—intelligence bodies are capable of utilizing their collective expertise efficiently—in turn enhancing decisions made strategically with reliance upon shared wisdom along with skill sets (S. B. Goyal et al., 2024).

Knowledge Management Systems in Intelligence

In the realm of intelligence, Knowledge Management Systems (KMS) play an indispensable role in bolstering collaboration, information dissemination, and the decision-making process among intelligence entities. These systems are instrumental in capturing, preserving, and distributing vital knowledge to ensure that valuable insights remain accessible even as staff members change roles or leave. Through KMS usage, those in the intelligence field gain access to a centralized archive containing previous assessments, acquired wisdom from past experiences, and recognized effective methods, thereby enabling more calculated and insightful decision-making practices. Moreover, by facilitating the merger of human intellect with digital tools via KMS use results in a comprehensive method for gathering and analysing intelligence data. Nonetheless achieving optimal utilization of KMS within intelligence spheres necessitates meticulous attention towards security measures implementation/data accuracy maintenance/user proficiency enhancement -with these conditions met KMS utility has potential to significantly advance capabilities within realms concerning state protection (S. B. Goyal et al., 2024).

Challenges in Implementing Knowledge Management

Implementing knowledge management in intelligence agencies comes with a variety of difficulties. The need for a cultural transformation to



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facilitate the sharing and collaboration of knowledge across units that usually operate independently presents one major obstacle. Reluctance towards modifications, anxiety over potential unemployment, and the absence of rewards for distributing knowledge can obstruct the integration of knowledge management methods (Tereza Michalová et al., 2023). Additionally, dealing with technological intricacies related to gathering, maintaining, and accessing copious data amounts while protecting confidential information from illegitimate access represents another hurdle. Guaranteeing the protection, security, and adherence to legal standards further complicates implementing effective knowledge management practices. Moreover, owing to the evolving nature of intelligence assignments which necessitate regular updates on databases; there's a pressing need for consistent investment in tools and procedures that ensure information stays current and reliable. To surmount these barriers effectively requires adopting an organized method tackling organizational ethos alongside tech infrastructure plus managerial strategies comprehensively in order to significantly improve intelligence functions.

People-Centric Approach in Knowledge Management

Importance of People in Intelligence Operations

It cannot be emphasized enough how vital individuals are in conducting intelligence tasks. Although technological advancements play a crucial part in the gathering and analysis of modern intelligence, it remains the personal touch that imparts essential perspective, interpretation, and instinct for making well-informed choices. Individuals contribute distinct viewpoints, past experiences, and an understanding of diverse cultures, which enriches the process of intelligence with more detailed evaluations and reliable forecasts. Human intelligence (HUMINT) is irreplaceable for obtaining data unreachable by other methods like noting people's behaviours, forming connections, and grasping communal dynamics (Purnima Pal et al., 2024). Furthermore, human analysts possess the ability to swiftly adjust to new situations; they can spot trends invisible to machines while providing critical moral guidance to ensure operations stay within legal and ethical boundaries. Consequently, pouring resources into our capability development through educating personnel signify a

cornerstone strategy in boosting collective intel efficacy.

Human Factors in Knowledge Sharing

The importance of human aspects in the effective deployment of knowledge dissemination initiatives within espionage agencies cannot be overstated. It's vital to comprehend how personnel assess the significance of information exchange, their trust level inside the agency, and their accessibility to data repositories for encouraging an atmosphere of teamwork and knowledge transfer (E. Orange et al., 2019). Elements like the framework of the organization, backing from leadership, and personal incentives play a pivotal role in affecting an employee's readiness to divulge their skills and perspectives. Through embedding human elements into the architecture of knowledge-sharing mechanisms and methodologies, spy organizations can foster a setting that promotes active engagement and nurtures communal bonds among workers. Concentrating on this human component can amplify the efficiency of strategies for managing knowledge and thereby aid in enhancing intelligence operations within volatile and multifaceted scenarios.

Training and Development for Knowledge Management

Enhancement of knowledge management within firms is critically influenced by the role of training and development. By equipping staff members with essential competencies and instruments to efficiently harness, disseminate, and apply knowledge, educational initiatives can vastly bolster the process managing knowledge. These initiatives might vary from conventional workshops and seminars to cutting-edge strategies like digital learning platforms or practical on-site training. Studies indicate that entities dedicating resources to exhaustive educational schemes aimed at knowledge management observe elevated rates of worker contentment and work output (N. Lipskiy et al., 2017). Furthermore, nurturing an environment that prizes ongoing education and growth enables enterprises to establish a lasting ambiance conducive to sharing know-how, thereby spurring innovation and enhancing competitive edges. Hence, instituting custom-made training and enhancement plans focusing on knowledge management promises



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significant advantages for companies aiming to refine their intellectual capabilities.

Integrating Technology with People-Centric Knowledge Management

Tools and Technologies for Knowledge Sharing

In the realm of organizations, the utility of instruments and technological advancements is crucial for fostering effective dissemination of knowledge. Ranging from age-old email systems to sophisticated platforms for managing knowledge, a variety of instruments are employed to aid in spreading and exchanging data among staff members. These mechanisms not only make the distribution process more efficient but also improve teamwork and the ability to make decisions. For example, platforms for social networking within enterprises enable workers to connect, exchange ideas, and work together on solving issues instantly. Furthermore, software for analysing data can sift through enormous quantities of data to unearth insightful information that aids in developing a culture inclined towards sharing knowledge - a move essential for spurring innovation and elevating productivity levels. As firms increasingly recognize the importance of harnessing knowledge as a fundamental strategic resource, integrating state-of-the-art tools and technologies becomes crucial for advancing intellectual capabilities via an approach focused on human-centred management of knowledge (N. Lipskiy et al., 2017).

Enhancing Collaboration through Technology

The cooperation among intelligence entities is pivotal for efficient data dissemination and scrutiny, with technology serving as a cornerstone in augmenting these activities. By adopting cutting-edge channels of communication, mechanisms for the secure exchange of information, and shared digital environments, agencies are able to surmount classical hindrances like physical separation and compartmentalized knowledge bases. Moreover, technological advancements permit the instantaneous sharing of insights, facilitating an integrated approach amongst analysts tackling intricate assignments. The deployment of systems dedicated to the management of knowledge that emphasize human-centred strategies further boosts the capabilities of

intelligence operatives by linking them with pertinent specialists and assets both within their own organization and externally. Such improvements in technology do not merely simplify cooperative efforts but also nurture an ethos inclined towards communal learning and creative thinking, thereby enhancing the overall acuity in intelligence (Dhruv Galgotia et al., 2023). Leveraging technological solutions to foster interagency collaboration stands as a fundamental measure in counteracting modern-day security predicaments while promoting more efficacious decision-making methodologies.

Security and Privacy Concerns in Knowledge Management Systems

In the sphere of knowledge management systems (KMS) within intelligence activities, securing and maintaining the confidentiality of information is crucial, especially when dealing with sensitive data. The adoption of KMS focused on human aspects introduces distinct obstacles due to its association with private details and vital company insights. Risks including illicit entry, breach incidents, and unintended disclosure can undermine intelligence functions' efficiency. To protect data's integrity and secrecy in KMS effectively, it is imperative to implement stringent security strategies, cryptographic methods, permission restrictions, and frequent evaluations. Additionally, it is necessary to rigorously comply with legal norms like GDPR and HIPAA for ethical processing and safeguarding of information. Proactive measures toward addressing concerns about security and privacy enable enterprises to preserve their constituents' confidence while enhancing the worth gained from employing KMS in intelligence endeavours (S. B. Goyal et al., 2024).

Case Studies on Successful Implementation

Real-World Examples of People-Centric Knowledge Management

Examples from the real world on the subject of knowledge management focused on individuals are significant for understanding how this method is applied in diverse entities. For example, (Cade Fleaher et al., 2021) underlines the successful deployment of a knowledge management system centred around



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people by a global company that encourages a collaborative environment and sharing of insights among its staff. The adoption of platforms for social learning and groups dedicated to practice enabled workers to exchange implicit knowledge along with top strategies, enhancing organizational innovation and decision-making capabilities. This illustration points out how crucial it is to integrate practices concerning managing knowledge with interactions and connections between people, aiming to boost the use of shared intelligence effectively. Highlighting the significance attributed to personnel in devising and spreading wisdom fosters an organizational culture that's both more flexible and capable of evolving through learning.

Lessons Learned from Successful Cases

Insights gleaned from instances of triumph offer a treasure trove of knowledge on the effective deployment of strategies centred around human-centric knowledge management. Delving into such instances allows scholars to pinpoint essential elements that pave the way for triumphant execution, including robust backing by leaders, proficient channels for communication, and an ethos that champions sharing knowledge. For instance, research documented by (Bashar Haruna et al., 2023) illuminated how an expansive multinational enterprise augmented its intellectual prowess through nurturing a cooperative milieu wherein personnel felt at liberty to distribute their wisdom and perspectives. This instance emphasizes the critical need to foster an organizational ambiance that prizes and incentivizes the exchange of knowledge. Through scrutinizing victorious examples, academics are able to distill exemplary practices ripe for tailoring across different scenarios, thereby amping up the efficacy of endeavours aimed at managing knowledge in myriad entities. Such insights obtained can act as tangible roadmaps for unfolding strategies focused on people's centric management of knowledge in assorted environments.

Impact on Intelligence Capabilities

The significance of a human-focused approach to managing knowledge in enhancing intelligence functions cannot be overstated. By concentrating on tapping into the wealth and skills of individuals in an entity, spy organizations can greatly improve their analysing powers (S. B. Goyal et al., 2024). Managing

knowledge with a focus on people enables the effective exchange and spread of vital data, leading to a deeper grasp of intricate problems. Such strategy grants intelligence workers access to an expanded array of views, skill sets, and understandings, which altogether paves the way for more precise and prompt evaluations of intelligence. Moreover, through utilizing tools and methods for managing knowledge efficiently, spy bureaus are able to refine the processes involved in gathering, scrutinizing, and sharing insights regarding security matters thus boosting overall efficacy in operations. Thusly placing emphasis on human-centered management techniques within espionage outfits fosters not only an atmosphere conducive to joint effort and new ideas but also brings about noticeable enhancements in abilities pertaining to intelligence gathering

Evaluating the Effectiveness of People-Centric Knowledge Management

Metrics for Assessing Knowledge Management Success

Evaluating the triumphs of knowledge management within spy networks necessitates metrics that reflect successful knowledge-exchange endeavours. While traditional measures, such as staff contentment and the frequency of reusing knowledge, are insightful, they might not fully illustrate the array of outcomes from managing knowledge. Implementing measures concentrating on how managing this information affects the quality of intelligence scrutiny, decision-making pathways, and overall mission efficacy is vital for a thorough evaluation framework. Indicators like how promptly information is shared, the reliability of intelligence reports, and how well external data merges with internal repositories could provide a more rounded perspective on what constitutes success in knowledge management. Through tailoring these indicators to fit research goals that focus on advancing spying skills via people-oriented approaches to handling intel, institutions stand a better chance at identifying concrete advantages stemming from their strategies to share wisdom (E. Gavriliev et al., 2022).

Feedback Mechanisms for Continuous Improvement



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Continuous betterment within intelligence faculties is significantly fuelled by feedback systems. Such mechanisms permit entities to acquire insights from diverse origins, like the workforce, involved parties, and the functioning processes. Through actively requesting feedback and executing requisite alterations founded on this input, spy organizations are capable of adjusting to fluctuating conditions and amplifying their proficiency in managing information (Michele McGuire, 2004). For the triumph of feedback systems, it's vital to form definite pathways for dialogue, promote clearness, and nurture an ethos that prizes perpetual learning and advancement. Furthermore, employing technological solutions such as analytics of data helps in scrutinizing feedback statistics to pinpoint patterns, inclinations, and sectors needing improvement. By embedding feedback systems into their framework for managing knowledge, spy agencies can foster a milieu of novelty and flexibility—thereby boosting their spying skills.

Comparing Traditional Intelligence Methods with Enhanced Capabilities

To grasp the evolution towards more productive and accurate processes in intelligence collection, it is pivotal to evaluate enhanced skills against conventional intelligence techniques. Often, old-style methods hinge on collecting and analysing data by hand, which not only eats up a lot of time but also stands a good chance of slipping into error due to human mishandling. Conversely, improved abilities harness advancements like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and analysis of hefty datasets to sift through large quantities of data swiftly and spot trends invisible to the naked eye of human observers. Through such comparison, it's clear as day that technological upgrades bring forth notable improvements in quickness, precision, and extendibility. Nonetheless, pondering over the moral quandaries and inherent prejudices that might pop up with an overreliance on tech for gathering intel is critical. A blend of antiquated tactics' solid points with the raw power offered by modern technologies could usher us into an era marked by broader-reaching yet trustworthy intelligence insights (Yin Zhang et al., 2020).

Future Trends and Innovations in Intelligence Capabilities

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Intelligence

Machine Intelligence (MI) and Artificial Learning (AL) hold pivotal positions for boosting cognitive abilities by analysing a broad range of information to extract essential knowledge. Within the intelligence sphere, systems powered by artificial intelligence can carry out automated functions like analysing data, recognizing patterns, and making choices, thus supplementing human cognition and facilitating more streamlined and potent actions. Algorithms based on machine learning are capable of being educated using past data to forecast upcoming events, spot trends, and reveal concealed arrangements that might slip past analysts. By leveraging AI's and ML's capabilities, spy agencies can simplify their workflows, refine precision in evaluating dangers, and hasten reactions to new security threats. The incorporation of AL and MI technologies into the operations of espionage has the capacity to transform the methodologies employed in collecting, scrutinizing, and applying information for decision-making amid complicated defensive scenarios (C. Haug et al., 2023).

Predictive Analytics for Intelligence Forecasting

Utilizing historical information and sophisticated algorithms for forecasting future occurrences and tendencies is a critical function of predictive analytics in the realm of intelligence prediction. Intelligence entities can better their decision-making abilities, pinpoint prospective hazards, and more efficiently distribute assets by employing predictive analytics. By amalgamating machine learning techniques with extensive data examination, insights into trends and irregularities not immediately obvious via conventional methods of intelligence acquisition are achievable through predictive analytics. Such a pre-emptive strategy empowers analysts to foresee upcoming menaces, evaluate potential dangers, and craft strategic countermeasures accordingly. The adoption of predictive analytics equips intelligence organizations with the tools necessary to navigate evolving threats and fortify initiatives focused on national protection. As we proceed, ongoing investigations should prioritize honing predictive frameworks, improving procedures for gathering data, and tackling moral issues linked with applying



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predictive analytics within tactical operations (A. Nayyar et al., 2019).

Ethical Considerations in Advancing Intelligence Capabilities

In the progression of intelligence faculties, ethical matters hold significant importance, particularly in regards to knowledge management that centres around human elements. Exploring enhancements in intelligence methods necessitates a strong adherence to ethics, focusing on the protection of personal privacy, securing data, and upholding rights inherent to humans. This becomes even more critical when employing cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intellects, exploration of massive datasets (data mining), and monitoring devices (Vanshika Vats et al., 2024). Both scholars and field experts are tasked with carefully steering through ethical territories; making certain that processes involving gathering data, its analysis, and further sharing stay within boundaries defined by both law and moral standards. To achieve a balance between acquiring intelligence information and adhering to ethical obligations demands an approach filled with careful consideration for openness in operations, holding oneself answerable, and fostering due regard towards individuals' worthiness. Intertwining ethical considerations within both creation and application phases of intelligence tools enables building confidence amongst all concerned parties preventing undesired outcomes while maintaining informational systems' purity involved in espionage activities.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Recommendations for Intelligence Agencies

Agencies responsible for intelligence need to evolve with the changing dynamics of managing data to bolster their effectiveness. Accordingly, it is recommended that such agencies concentrate on building strong systems for managing knowledge which support flawless collaboration, sharing of data, and analytical tasks (M. López, 2010). The adoption of sophisticated technology like machine learning and artificial intelligence could make the procedures for handling data more efficient, thus allowing these organizations to decide quicker based on solid information. Moreover, endorsing an atmosphere where continuous education and skill enhancement

are encouraged among staff can keep teams versatile and prepared for new risks. By pouring resources into state-of-the-art technologies and promoting a culture where knowledge is freely exchanged, intelligence entities can develop a workforce that's both more adaptable and proficient in proactively tackling intricate issues related to national security.

Policy Implications of People-Centric Knowledge Management

Organizations striving to boost their knowledge prowess find it crucial to consider the policy ramifications of a people-focused approach to handling knowledge. Highlighting the significance of human involvement in generating, disseminating, and utilizing knowledge enables the drafting of policies that foster an atmosphere conducive to free dialogue, teamwork, and ongoing skill enhancement. These strategies must tackle the melding of technology for backing activities related to managing knowledge, setting transparent rules for distributing information, and acknowledging personal contributions toward growing such intellect. Additionally, ethical concerns linked with data confidentiality and safeguarding should be taken into account by corporations while enforcing policies centred around people in knowledge management tasks. Aligning these policies with goals aimed at equipping staff members with autonomy over applying their skills and past learnings empowers firms to tap into their collective smarts further propelling innovation and securing a competitive stance amidst the dynamic realm of managing intel (Sebastiaan Rietjens et al., 2017).

Implementing Best Practices in Intelligence Operations

For enhancing the efficiency of an organization and securing operational triumph, it is vital to adopt top strategies in intelligence endeavours. This requires that organizations concentrate on merging state-of-the-art technologies, promoting a culture where ongoing learning and modification are valued, and applying knowledge management systems focused on human elements. Through the exploitation of technological progress like artificial intelligence and machine learning, intel agencies can refine the procedures of gathering data, analysing it, and spreading findings to remain one step ahead of threats that continue to change. Moreover, fostering an ambiance where analysts in intelligence feel



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motivated to exchange ideas, work together with efficacy, and refresh their abilities is indispensable. The adoption of knowledge management approaches centred around individuals guarantees effective capture, sharing, and application of implicit knowledge throughout the community involved in intelligence. Combining innovations in technology with approaches oriented towards humans in conducting intel operations enables organizations to enhance their competencies and adjust swiftly to a threat environment that is constantly altering (Sebastiaan Rietjens et al., 2017).

Conclusion

Summary of Findings

An examination into the improvement of intelligence abilities by focusing on human-centred knowledge handling indicates a considerable uplifting influence on the performance within organizations. Through an exhaustive exploration of existing studies, it has been discovered that the exploitation of individual know-how and teamwork in intelligence activities results in better decision-making abilities and a stronger culture of sharing knowledge. The adoption of systems for managing knowledge, designed with a focus on human aspects, not only enhances how information is processed but also allows for quicker reactions to new threats. Furthermore, encouraging cooperative atmospheres among analysts specializing in intelligence leads to an active interchange of thoughts, which invariably brings about more precise and timely evaluations regarding intelligence matters (E. Curry et al., 2021).

Contributions to the Field

In the intelligence capability domain, advancements hinge on developing systems centered around human knowledge management. Such frameworks improve how critical intel from human operatives is gathered, sorted, shared, and applied. Concentrating on individuals allows these systems to aid in uncovering important insights, patterns of behaviour, and essential information that would be difficult to capture through solely technical methods. Furthermore, incorporating methodologies focused on people into established intelligence routines offers

a deeper and more nuanced comprehension of multifaceted scenarios. This strategy boosts strategic planning activities and aids analysts in spotting new threats or prospects with greater efficiency. Leveraging human intellect within these knowledge management structures bolsters the functionality and agility of intelligence establishments navigating swiftly changing settings marked by growing informational intricacy (David Gray, 2017).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several critical shortcomings are present within this investigation. To begin with, the cohort utilized for study purposes might be considered restricted in breadth, which could potentially affect how widely the research outcomes apply. Furthermore, the period during which observations were gathered may not adequately reflect the fluid characteristics of intelligence endeavours. It is imperative that subsequent inquiries aim to broaden participant diversity, thereby boosting the applicability of these studies beyond their current confines. In addition, adopting a longitudinal approach would shed light on the evolving nature of intelligence competences over prolonged periods. Moreover, incorporating methods rooted in qualitative analysis such as detailed conversations or group discussions could unearth deeper understanding into subtle aspects of managing information centred around human agents in spy agencies. Through tackling these observed gaps and embarking on suggested investigative paths, academicians will significantly contribute to unravelling effective strategies for making use of specialized knowledge to bolster spying capabilities (Z. Yaseen, 2023).

Final Thoughts and Recommendations

Concluding Remarks and Suggestions: To wrap up, the conducted study underscores the importance of focusing on people-oriented strategies in knowledge management for improving an organization's intelligence functions. It becomes clear from examining how knowledge is generated, disseminated, and leveraged by staff at various organizational tiers that adopting a strategy centred around individuals could significantly enhance decision-making mechanisms and boost overall productivity. As we look ahead, it's advisable for firms to invest in educational schemes encouraging employees to share insights and work collaboratively,



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set up effective means of communication for the free flow of concepts, and adopt technological solutions aimed at capturing and spreading unspoken know-how. Moreover, future investigations should consider how cultural variances affect practices of managing knowledge to forge more customized approaches suitable for assorted workplace settings. By adopting such person-focused tactics in managing knowledge, enterprises can unlock their maximum intelligence capabilities.

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Factors Influencing Church Membership Retention in Catholic Church: A Case Study of Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria.

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Abstract

This research proposed to investigate factors influencing Church Membership Retention within the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria. It provides a comprehensive review of literature on six key independent variables central to the study, including Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Evangelism, and Church Programs, with the dependent variable being Church Membership Retention. The research objectives were as follows: 1) to assess whether Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Program, and Church Evangelism serve as predictors for Church Membership Retention in the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri; 2) to examine the degree of impact among Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Program, Church Evangelism, and Church Membership Retention; 3) to provide valuable information about the model and variables to various stakeholders.

This research employs a quantitative approach and questionnaire was developed via google form and 400 valid respondents' answers were analyzed through JAMOWI software. This research applied Cronbach's Alpha, Descriptive and Inferential Statistics to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire, analyze demographic information and test the hypotheses. The research findings indicated that Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Church Programs, and Church Evangelism have significant effects on Church Membership Retention. However, Transformational Leadership and Culture show no significant effects on Church Membership Retention. Human capital is very vital for successful growth, sustainability and life of the Church. The study underscores the interconnectedness of factors influencing members' decisions to remain within the church community, providing insights for informed decision by church leaders and practitioners to enhance retention strategies.

KEYWORDS: Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Evangelism, Church Programs, Church Membership Retention, Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.

1. Introduction

The centrality of church membership/customer retention as a key marketing objective, strategically oriented towards averting the migration of clientele to competing services or denominations was underscored by Ramakrishnan (2006). This approach involves a deliberate focus on cultivating and sustaining existing relationships with customers or church members (Chapman, 2016). The metric employed in this practice assesses the number of customers or church members who maintain loyalty to a service provider over a specified timeframe, typically a year, as defined by Business Dictionary (2018). In the contemporary business landscape, the significance of customer or church member retention cannot be overstated, given the perpetual

efforts of competitors to entice with more appealing offerings (Fluss, 2010). The ability to retain church members/customers directly influences customer lifetime value for long-term, presenting a more lucrative avenue for companies seeking sustainability, growth, or resilience against market downturns resulting from economic contractions (Mornay, 2011). Furthermore, Mornay (2009) observes that the sluggish nature of customer or church member acquisition in current market dynamics heightens the imperative for companies to retain their existing base. Thus, maintaining that church member/customer retention has become a paramount objective for businesses dedicated to fostering productive relationships, not only for



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financial gain but also as a strategic imperative amid evolving market conditions.

According to Richter and Francis (1999), the issue of retaining members or customers has deep historical origins and has taken different forms since the early days of the Christian Church. Biblical records illustrate occasions when individuals withdrew from the faith, perceiving the Christian life as excessively demanding and prioritizing other interests (Mark 4:1-20). Drawing from Ferreira (2012), the term "church member retention" is not explicitly used in Scripture, the concern for retaining members in the universal church or family of the Lord and within specific religious organizations is significant, resonating with contemporary challenges faced by Christian groups.

Exploring member retention in the Old Testament, Harre (1977) highlights two interconnected aspects: retention in the universal church or family of the Lord and retention in a particular denomination/religious organization aligned with the Lord. Individuals are prone to drift away if they perceive a disconnection between a religious organization and the Lord. Keil (1988) points out another challenge in member retention that are related to the fulfillment of prophecy, where immediate and complete manifestation of prophetic predictions was expected, contributing to wavering faith among the Hebrews. Moses, in particular, faced lack of faith among the Jewish tribes regarding the fulfillment of God's promises.

Transitioning to the New Testament, member retention remains a focal concern for writers such as St. Paul and St. Peter. Emphasizing the difficulties of winning souls, they recognize the high cost paid - the blood of Jesus (1 Cor 14:2-3). The biblical principle of the whole body's growth, dependent on the proper functioning of each individual part, underscores the collective responsibility for member retention (Eph. 4:8). Jesus, in particular, highlights the importance of abiding in Him for fruitful outcomes (Jn. 15:16). Ferreira (2012) interprets this as an emphasis on trusting in Jesus and maintaining unity with Him for healthy spiritual growth.

In the same vein, in our own contemporary age, out of ten baptized Catholics more than 35% leave the Church, some to other denominations while the rest stop going to Church at all. Catholic Diocese of Aguleri is not an exception and this affects the Church's life and growth. Therefore, it becomes more expedient in our time that something be done urgently to forestall the situation before it becomes out of hand.

The elevated attrition rate among Church attendees annually within the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri poses a substantial challenge to the vitality and expansion of the Church. The exodus of members is comparable to a hemorrhage, demanding intervention before irreversible consequences ensue. Member retention assumes critical importance for denominational growth, necessitating the formulation of effective strategies to retain individuals who constitute the future of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Aguleri. This research endeavour seeks to assess the underlying problems and propose viable solutions to curb the prevalent trend of Church members disengaging from church activities.

Addressing the dropout predicament demands dedicated resources, rigorous effort, and effective leadership. Commitment from church leaders could potentially enhance retention rates, fostering a sense of satisfaction among Church members, thereby anchoring them more firmly to church participation (Hoge et al., 1981). It is imperative to acknowledge and confront this issue, striving consistently to achieve the laudable objective of member retention. The pertinence of this project is underscored by the observable impact of a significant number of members discontinuing their church attendance, detrimentally influencing the overall growth trajectory. To remedy this situation, insights into the factors influencing retention can guide the development of programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing religious practices and spiritual growth among church members. This could include tailored educational programs, worship experiences, and community outreach efforts. These programs aim to fortify the engagement of church members, transforming them from passive participants to



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active contributors, thereby mitigating the risk of their becoming church dropouts.

1.1 Objectives of the Research

1. To assess whether Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Program, and Church Evangelism serve as predictors for Church Membership Retention within the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.
2. To evaluate the degree of impact between Transformational Leadership, Church Commitment, Culture, Church Program, Church Evangelism, Church Spirituality and Church Membership Retention.
3. To provide valuable information about the model and variables to various stakeholders.

1.2 Research Questions

In this study, the research questions were generated to align with the objectives and variables in question as detailed below:

1. Does Church Commitment have a significant influence on Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri?
2. Does Church Spirituality have a significant influence on Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri?
3. Does Leadership have a significant influence on Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri?
4. Does Culture have a significant influence on Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri?
5. Does Church Program have a significant influence on Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri?
6. Does Church Evangelism have a significant influence on Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri?

1.3 Significance of the study

First ever known study to examine the problems and scopes of membership retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri need to be defined or qualified through explanation. The pronounced attrition rate within the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri is adversely impacting the Church's vitality and expansion. Merely attracting new members or customers is insufficient; organizations must focus on retention and growth to address member or customer defection effectively (Werner et al., 2005). The prevalence of high member defection can be likened to adding water to a leaking bucket when new members are acquired.

This research project is pertinent as it highlights the impact on the Church's member growth rate, emphasizing the adverse effects of a significant number of members discontinuing attendance, leading to unsustainable growth. Understanding the factors influencing church members' retention can provide valuable information to church administrators for effective pastoral guidance, pastoral care, development of programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing religious practices and spiritual growth among church members. This could include tailored educational programs, worship experiences, and community outreach efforts.

The study's findings may inform decision-making at the diocesan level, helping administrators develop policies, training programs for priests and church leaders to enhance their understanding of member needs and concerns, and strategies that address challenges related to member retention, ultimately contributing to more effective leadership.

The outcomes of this study hold significance for the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri, offering valuable insights for the broader Catholic Church and the larger Christendom community. The findings are poised to contribute essential knowledge on effective strategies to manage and retain members, ultimately preventing their departure from the Church.



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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Church Member Retention (CMR)

The progression of member or customer retention over recent years emphasizes the utmost significance of this concept. Retaining employees or clients poses a substantial challenge for many organizations and institutions, irrespective of their geographical location, size, focus, or business approach (Chitra, 2013). Existing literature underscores the shared difficulties encountered by both businesses and religious organizations in maintaining their memberships (Ravhengani, 2010; Gberevbie, 2008; Cascio, 2003; Smith, 1992; Alshurideh, 2016). Smith (1992) likens member dropout to a treadmill, where the faster one runs, the further behind they fall. Both profit and nonprofit organizations compete regularly to maintain existing members while attracting new ones from competitors. Human resources stand out as the most crucial asset for improving organizational performance (Osuoha, 2016). Effectively managing and retaining customers and members constitutes a fundamental strategy for gaining a competitive advantage over competitors (Walker, 2001).

The success of any organization or institution hinges on its ability to retain human resources, considered the lifeblood of the organization (Olivier, 2019; Das & Baruah, 2013). Cutler (2001) underscores that while attracting new members is important, the true measure lies in the ability to retain them. Retaining members within an organization yields numerous advantages, contributing to its long-term survival, enhancing productivity, and reducing marketing costs (Baldoni, 2013). Furthermore, member retention serves as a gauge of organizational stability, with a lower number of members leaving indicating the need for additional strategies to foster institutional comfort and achieve a favourable retention rate. Significantly, around 80% of an institution's profits usually come from the top 20% of its current members or customers, highlighting the crucial role that customers/members play in ensuring the institution's survival (Lerzan Aksoy et al., 2005).

2.2 Church Commitment (CC)

The Scriptural importance of commitment is apparent in numerous occurrences. Instances encompass God's dedication to His people, Jesus' steadfast commitment to His mission and ministry, the disciples' loyalty in following Christ, and the apostles' unwavering resolve in their mission to propagate the good news and nurture disciples - all emphasizing the significance of commitment (Mathis, 2018). Within these overarching commitments lie a series of smaller choices that, collectively, yield substantial impacts.

Fully committing to God is emphasized as crucial and meaningful in Scripture, as exemplified by the verse, "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act" (Psalm 37:5). The commitment to mentoring the youth in Christ is esteemed as immensely valuable, actively contributing to God's mission of sanctifying His people and advancing His kingdom through the dedicated endeavours of His followers (Mathis, 2018). Commitment is an action, not a mere word. It inspires a profound sense of purpose and concentration, representing a resolute strategy consistently paired with a declaration of intent (Sartre, 2012). Characterized as a compelling promise, commitment compels an individual to carry out a set of actions, encompassing devotion, diligent effort, and enduring resilience. Staying committed is recognized as a fundamental principle of success, applicable to diverse goals such as leading a healthier life, fostering better relationships, or achieving results in work. Remaining true to oneself is identified as a basic prerequisite of commitment. In the face of obstacles, staying true involves confronting challenges and persisting on the path toward life goals. Commitment necessitates alignment with one's values, ethics, and convictions. Furthermore, commitment entails establishing enduring objectives, along with a vision and a path to attain those objectives. This method aids in assessing advancement (Srivastava, 2018).

Finney (1978) integrates elements of conformity to group norms and consistency in behaviour and cognition, presenting a theory of religious



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commitment that encompasses five dimensions. These dimensions, structured within the theory, consist of (a) ritual practice, (b) knowledge, (c) experience, (d) belief, and (e) devotional practice. The initial dimension, ritual practice, involves outward and observable religious actions, where significant behaviours include attending church. Other examples of commitment in ritual practice encompass participation in church prayer groups or choir, engagement in church administration, financial contributions, and teaching catechism.

Commitment, in this context, is conceived at a level abstracted beyond religious or political orientation. In a general sense, commitment can be defined as a process in a second choice made and maintained with a certain level of firmness through relevant conditions until that choice is either ended or replaced by another alternative (Wimberley, 1978). In a study conducted by Dudley (2000) involving Wesleyan, United Methodist, and American Catholic youths, finding that withdrawal from the church was most precisely forecasted by negative church experiences, limited engagement, inadequate devotional life, unengaging homily and religious restrictions on lifestyle. Another study by Hoge and Petrillo (1978) among Catholics, Southern Baptists, and Methodists revealed that church participation and attendance were primarily effected by parental attendance, the type of youth leader, peer pressure, and the quality of religious education.

In an attempt to discern the factors influencing disengagement or sustained commitment among late adolescents within the Catholic Church, a thorough survey was conducted. The study found that people who are more committed to the church tend to have stronger relationships with Jesus Christ, feel like they are important to their church community and at the same time are influenced by their peers. The study also found that these factors can be used to predict whether or not a late adolescent will stop going to church. The study suggests that church leaders can help to keep late adolescents involved in the church by focusing on these factors (Dudley, 2000). The absence of genuine commitment to the church is a crucial factor influencing dropout rates,

underscoring the crucial role of church commitment and connection to God in retention efforts.

2.3 Church Spirituality (CS)

Spirituality is gaining recognition as a crucial source of strength in the realms of social work and positive youth development. Even though this recognition exists, innovations in the realm of social work linked to spirituality have primarily focused on adults. Cheon and Canda (2010) aim to bridge this gap by providing a conceptualization of spirituality concerning youth. They underscore the significance of spirituality in strengths-based social work, elucidating its role in augmenting the development of youth. This involvement includes addressing aspects like identity and meaning, managing risk factors, and leveraging both environmental and personal religious and spiritual resources.

In a highly competitive world, where practical utility often takes precedence, the modern education system tends to emphasize the values of modern sciences. However, Srivastava et al. (2019) argue for the importance of incorporating moral and spiritual teachings among students. Such teachings, they contend, instill inherent goodness and prove valuable in equipping individuals to navigate the conflicting instincts of violence and humanity throughout their lives.

In a research, Cohen (2002) explores the association between religion and happiness, investigating various facets of religiosity and their correlation with life satisfaction. The studies indicate that congregational support and public practice of religion have similar correlations with life satisfaction across individual religions. Yet, when it comes to predicting contentment, the quality of spirituality, religious beliefs, and religious coping is more effective for Catholics and Protestants than for Jews.

Spirituality, as Chickering (2006) notes, seeks authenticity within oneself, implying consistency in actions and words. It involves finding a sense of



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purpose in life and fostering connections within a community. Unlike spirituality, religiousness tends to focus more on traditions. Büssing (2006) identifies five dimensions in religiousness and spirituality, including asking for the meaning of life, prayer, the search for insight and wisdom, transcendence, and trust in God. In a world riddled with various challenges affecting the psychological well-being and happiness of the youth, Singh et al. (2017) highlight the prevalence of issues such as postmodernism, individualism, materialism, peer pressure, bullying, substance abuse, and more. These problems contribute to a state of spiritual disconnection among the youth. Religious beliefs and practices are identified as essential buffers against the psychological impact of stressful life events (Reese et al., 2012).

Dudley (2015) distinguishes between spirituality and religion, defining spirituality as the pursuit of meaning and purpose in life, a sense of connection with oneself, others, and the universe, and the ability to transcend immediate experiences towards a larger entity, often recognized as a higher power beyond human control. Practices rooted in the contemplative tradition provide young adults with awareness of the divine presence, depth, and a path to prayer. Regular engagement in contemplative practices within the congregation can empower individuals to: (a) witness the transformation of their perceptions, responsiveness, and overall ways of being in the world, (b) nurture their spiritual lives through practices, worship, and/or education, (c) interpret or simply be present to their lived experiences of the divine, (d) uncover and cultivate their untapped inherent strengths and spiritual resources, (e) recognize factors that hinder or support their awareness and responsiveness to the divine, and (f) discern and comprehend their unique relationship with the divine. Noel and Gaddis III (2013) argue that contemplative spirituality enhances the spiritual lives of young adults and their retention in the church.

Twenty years ago, Dudley (1999) emphasized the vital significance for Christian communities to integrate their children into the behaviours and

beliefs of those communities. A persistent theme in social philosophy, traced back to Plato's Republic, revolves around societies' concern about the potential failure of the young to embrace essential wisdom and values. The preoccupation with generational matters is readily understandable: "If society is to continue its existence beyond one generation, the members must transmit what they consider to be necessary knowledge and values. The continuity of a social system, by definition, requires transmission between generations" (Weiting, 1975).

2.4 Transformational Leadership

The biblical assertion that "where there is no vision, people perish" (Prov 29:18) underscores the critical importance of effective leadership. Organizations lacking sound leadership are destined for eventual extinction, as leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering growth and motivating followers to enhance productivity (Dunne et al., 2016). Startups, in particular, face an 85% failure rate due to leadership and management issues (Turner & Endres, 2016). Leadership is a key determinant of organizational survival, contributing significantly to improved performance and productivity. Existing literature underscores the role of leadership in enhancing organizational or institutional performance and influencing competition relative to other entities. The influence of leadership spans various organizational realms, encompassing religious institutions. According to Daft and Lane (2011) leadership plays a role in cultivating an environment of effectiveness and stability, motivating individuals toward shared objectives, and consequently improving organizational and institutional performance. Transformational leadership, identified by Levine (2000) as the most satisfactory style for educational institutions, plays a vital role in inspiring teams or organizations to rally around shared visions or goals. Although extensively explored, leadership remains a complex and contentious subject, with more than fifty distinct leadership theories classified into categories such as classical, contingency, situational, behavioural, and contemporary or emerging theories.



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Transformational leadership, as described by Ibraheem et al. (2011), involves a process that significantly impacts individuals' attitudes, behaviours, beliefs, and commitment to organizational tasks, aims, and strategies. The leadership approach, first introduced by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1996), has brought about a transformation in organizations, institutions, and industries, inspiring and reshaping them to achieve higher levels of productivity. Schieltz (2019) identifies three areas where the importance of transformational leadership is evident: organizational development and change, individual development and growth, and increased performance. Transformational leadership fosters individual development by transcending self-actualization and self-interest for the collective good. Leaders who adopt this style synchronize their values and principles with those of the organization, nurturing followers' moral development. It is acknowledged for its capacity to generate interest, establish clear goals, and broaden leadership theory by recognizing motivational, symbolic, and emotional behaviours (Robbins & Coulter, 2007; Ergeneli et al., 2007).

Transformational leadership inspires critical thinking among followers, encouraging them to contemplate diverse approaches to workplace problems and personal lives. Alfayad's (2016) study affirms the positive impact of transformational leadership on employees' performance, emphasizing its role in enhancing organizational effectiveness and employee retention.

Several studies have consistently shown that leadership is a strong predictor of retaining members. In a study by Kyndt et al. (2008) which focused on organizational member retention, they identified leadership as a pivotal factor in retaining both employees and other organizational members. Another investigation by Paul and Vincent (2018) delved into the determinants of members' decisions to remain with an organization, highlighted leadership as a key factor. According to other studies, leadership creates an atmosphere that motivates and inspires members to maintain their

commitment to the organization (Kumar & Mathimaran, 2017).

In a research conducted by Osuoha (2016) within the healthcare sector specifically on employee retention, revealed that the transformational leadership style significantly influences employee retention. A study by Mohammad et al. (2011) examined the influence of transformational leadership on the retention of nurses in private hospitals in Jordan. The results revealed a statistically significant positive association between the five dimensions of transformational leadership and the two dimensions of job satisfaction. Among the five dimensions of transformational leadership, intellectual stimulation showed the strongest correlation with internal job satisfaction. Weberg (2010) tackled the prevalent challenges of stress out and attenuation among nurses in healthcare settings. The findings indicated that transformational leadership played a significant role in boosting satisfaction, improving well-being of staff, reducing overall stress among nurses, lowering burnout, and minimizing attrition. Furthermore, Alatawi (2013) established a direct and significant link between transformational leadership style and managerial-induced turnover or attrition.

2.5 Culture

According to Mashal and Saima (2014), culture constitutes a blend of values, sets, beliefs, communications, and simplified behaviours that offer guidance to individuals. The foundational idea of culture arises from shared learning processes grounded in the fair distribution of resources. The cognitive capacity of humans, crucial for improved thinking and decision-making, is influenced by the culture of the organization. It is a compilation of diverse behaviours and values seen as a roadmap for success. Culture encompasses the beliefs, behaviours, and values inherent in a society. In essence, culture embodies the values, knowledge, beliefs, explanations, behaviours, and communication of numerous individuals at specific times and places. According to Li and Karakowsky (2001) culture is the aggregate of learned behaviours



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within a group, typically considered the tradition of that group and transmitted across generations. It forms a shared mental programming that distinguishes one group of people from another. Culture is also described as the acquired and shared patterns of behaviour and beliefs specific to a particular social, age, or ethnic group. It encapsulates the comprehensive entirety of collective human beliefs within a structured stage of civilization, often unique to a nation or time period. Humans utilize culture to adapt to and reshape the world around them. Culture includes norms, language, beliefs, values, and more, collectively shaping the way of life for a people. It is a blend of elements that influence individuals' thoughts, actions, and identity, encompassing architecture, history, accepted behaviour, and other facets (Long-Crowell, 2015). Schein (1990) further elaborates that culture comprises diverse values and behaviours functioning as a roadmap for success and embodying beliefs, behaviours, and values inherent in society. In the modern era, the application of the culture concept extends to organizational contexts (Kotter & Heskett, 1992).

Aluko (2003) asserts that culture is a universal phenomenon, present in every historical society, although it does vary across societies. Research on formal organizations, conducted in both Western and non-Western societies, has shown how diverse cultures affect organizational operations and performance. In various cultural contexts, multinational organizations are increasingly mindful of the potential influence of a host country's culture on organizational performance. Spencer-Oatey (2012) defines culture as a configuration of attributes that articulate an organization and set it apart from others, representing the collective mindset that differentiates one group's members from another. Gordana (2016) emphasizes that culture assists members of an organization in discerning the meaning of concepts, events, and things, thereby facilitating decision-making and actions. The behaviour of members within an organization corresponds with their interpretations of reality, guiding their decisions, actions, and interactions.

Zalami (2005) emphasizes that the impact of culture on institutional transformation depends on its compatibility with the objectives of proposed changes. This viewpoint is echoed by O'Donnell (2006), highlighting the role of culture in facilitating innovative initiatives and creating a conducive environment for nurturing enterprise leaders in the public sector.

In order to examine the connection between culture and retention, it is crucial to grasp the concept of culture as an independent variable. Culture encapsulates the shared mindset that distinguishes one group's members from another, encompassing behaviours guiding success and a collection of values. It embodies ingrained behaviours, beliefs, and values within society. Fakhar et al. (2012) cited various scholars, including Schein (1990) and Kotter and Heskett (1992), asserting that culture is a configuration of attributes that characterizes an organization, setting it apart from others. Aluko (2003) drew a comparison between culture and organizational performance. Zakaria (1997) and Tayeb (1994) and other scholars contended that organizations operate within distinct cultures, highlighted the vital but frequently neglected link between culture and organizations. The prevailing literature has progressively delved into the correlation between culture and organizational performance that leads to retention. According to Mashal and Saima (2014) the pivotal role of organizational culture in achieving objectives, asserted that higher uncertainty avoidance within an organization positively correlates with better performance. They underscored organizational culture as the most influential variable impacting organizational performance, success and retention of members/employees. The influence of organizational culture on employee behaviour and performance is rooted in three fundamental principles (Bulach et al., 2012). 1). Comprehending the organization's culture empowers employees to grasp its history and operational approach, providing insights into anticipated future behaviours. 2). It cultivates a commitment to the values, philosophy of the organization and fostering shared goals. 3).



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Through its norms and shared practices, organizational culture acts as a control mechanism, directing behaviours towards desired outcomes and away from undesirable ones. This control is reinforced by selecting, recruiting, and retaining employees whose values aligned with that of the organization. Adhering to such organizational culture principles can enhance efficiency and performance, which is crucial for retaining employees/members. Barney (1991) contends that organizational culture offers a sustainable competitive advantage, provided it meets the criteria of viability, rarity, and imperfect imitability.

2.6 Church Programs

The church, due to its inherent nature, stands as one of the most influential institutions within society, operating across physical, social, mental, and spiritual spheres. In its diverse role, the church acts as a setting for carrying out the great commission and the great commandment, enabling transformative and redemptive connections between individuals and their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Segler, 1960). To efficiently and effectively carry out its mission, the church employs various events, activities, and programs that equip and empower its members in living out their Christian faith. This involves embodying the principles of loving God and loving one's neighbor, ultimately fostering the development of disciples of Jesus Christ.

Church programs, encompassing preaching, teaching, and service, that serve as instrumental means through which the church impacts both its members and society at large. According to Harwento (2016), teaching from the Gospel and the book of Acts serves a twofold purpose within church programs. Initially, it uplifts believers, nurturing a robust connection between individuals and Jesus Christ. Additionally, to equip believers to actively participate in spreading the gospel to those who do not yet believe. An examination of the New Testament, particularly the book of Acts, unveils a dual approach to church programs within the apostolic church—namely, vertical and horizontal. The vertical approach involves activities such as worship, praise, and prayer, constituting believers'

responses to God's grace and mercy. The horizontal approach, represented by fellowship and breaking of bread, strengthens the bonds among believers, contributing to spiritual nurturing and fostering cohesive relationships among members (Harwento, 2016). Church programs play a pivotal role in guiding the church toward measurable goals based on its biblical nature. Additionally, they significantly impact church member retention by creating a platform that encourages active engagement in ministry, fostering a sense of belonging among members. This sense of belonging enhances the overall effectiveness of the church in fulfilling its functions and mission.

While opinions vary on the influence of church ministry programs on church membership retention, some scholars argued that these programs indeed have an impact. Wielhouwer's study (2004) examined religious commitment among African-Americans, encompassing church involvement, private devotions, and the significance of religion in their lives. The findings revealed that active participation in discipleship and ministry programs were strong indicators of church membership retention. Numerous researches have emphasized the notable correlation between personal devotion, worship, spirituality, and the retention of church membership. In an examination by Erwich (2012) the influence of spirituality on church membership retention was explored, uncovering that spirituality plays a pivotal role in assisting members in sustaining a connection to the faith community. This is achieved by augmenting their self-esteem and feeling a sense of worth, belonging and comfort from God within the Christian community. In a study conducted by Chaney (2008) focusing on the advantages of church engagement, the result suggested that the positive impacts of church involvement on the retention of members are not a universally applicable phenomenon. He argued that the retention of church members is contingent upon individual experiences and perspectives, emphasizing that the influence on retention is not an automatic outcome of involvement.

2.7 Church Evangelism



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In "Why the Church Exists," Mbui (2018) contends that the primary purpose of the church is to make disciples, a viewpoint supported by Petit-Homme (2018). Both authors align on the significance of evangelism as a key mechanism for fulfilling this mission. According to Charles et al. (2012) evangelism is characterized as a fervor for the lost and a method employed by the church to address the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of individuals. Westerhoff (1994) interprets evangelism as the church's proactive dissemination of the gospel of God's salvation through both spoken words and tangible actions to those beyond its existing community. Petit-Homme (2018) further elucidates evangelism as the process of leading people to Jesus Christ and facilitating their transformation into responsible disciples prepared to encounter Jesus. According to Reid (2009) evangelism encompasses consistently addressing people's needs, empowering well-trained volunteers, and involving significant organizational oversight. In simple terms, evangelism entails presenting the good news of Jesus' love, outlining His accomplishments for humanity, with the aim of drawing individuals toward Him. Petit-Homme (2018) provides additional clarity on evangelism, defining it as the journey of guiding individuals to Jesus Christ and enabling their transformation into responsible disciples who are prepared to encounter Jesus. Reid (2009) expands the concept of evangelism, encompassing, the consistent addressing of people's needs, and the involvement of significant organizational oversight. In essence, evangelism involves presenting the good news of Jesus' love, elucidating His accomplishments for humanity, with the objective of drawing individuals toward Him.

The significance of evangelism extends beyond mere church growth; it plays a crucial role in member retention. As emphasized by Mbui (2018) fervent witnessing establishes a connection among believers as they share their experiences with others, cultivating an atmosphere of interdependency and interconnectedness. This not only contributes to sustained growth but also enhances retention. Evangelism is significant not only because of its connection to the spiritual challenges inherent in

every Christian's journey but also as the primary means for fulfilling the mission of a spiritual community tasked with spiritually engaging to displace the dominions of darkness (Rankin and Stetzer, 2010). Additionally, according to Parks (2012) the significance of evangelism is underscored by six reasons: (a) it heightens the likelihood of encountering persecution for the gospel, thereby fostering church growth, (b) it prevents the assumption within the church that those around it are already saved, (c) evangelism, when properly motivated, nurtures love for God and neighbor, (d) it ensures that the gospel remains central in the life of the church, (e) it enhances the comprehension of fundamental truths in Scripture, and (f) it elicits unexpected questions and objections that can deepen faith. Eckenroth (1954) underscores the significance of evangelism from both individual and collective perspectives: (a) it maintains a close connection between the soul winner and God, and (b) the church flourishes when its members actively participate in evangelistic activities.

Many centuries in the past, Christians were entrusted with a significant mandate referred to as "The Great Commission." This directive is documented in Matthew 28:19-20 of the Holy Bible, where Jesus Christ instructed His disciples to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Carver, 2015; New Revised Standard Version Bible, Catholic Edition (NRSV), 1989).

In contrast to the aforementioned commission, numerous Christian denominations are not actively participating in proactive evangelical initiatives to enhance the retention of church members (Hunter, 2003). Building significant and personal connections is highlighted as a strategic method for church leaders to draw individuals into the Church (Kinneman & Lyons, 2007). Watson and Stepteau-Watson (2015) stress the importance of establishing outreach ministries that positively contribute to



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community life as a means to both attract and retain church members. Outreach ministry, as defined by Ford (2012) encompasses actions involving the dissemination of the gospel to communities. This includes purposeful initiatives such as community outreach services addressing wellness programs and healthcare support (Watson & Stepteau-Watson, 2015; Osinski, 2005; Ford, 2012). Certain denominations broaden their outreach endeavours to address housing needs, low-income housing, offering extended-stay motels, and flats for those who are displaced (Osinski, 2005).

Acknowledging the importance of building relationships with neighbors, Johnson et al. (2008) proposed that church leaders should take the initiative to reach out to people in their communities, utilizing outreach programs as a method for attracting new members (Osinski, 2005; Hunter, 2003). McGavran (1990) asserts that evangelism or outreach is an indispensable aspect of Christian organizations, emphasizing its role in

reaching the public. Therefore, Carver (2015) defines evangelism as a process. In line with Fasipe's (2010) mission, this initiative aims to engage unbelievers/non-churchgoers with the gospel message, encouraging them to make a personal decision to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Carver (2015) and Harney, (2011) emphasized the role of church members as conduits of outreach, expressing love for their community and making sacrifices to reach out to people and encourage them to join the church. While Hunter (2003) highlighted the potential of proactive outreach ministry to attract and retain church members, Kinneman and Lyons (2007) emphasized the importance of cultivating genuine connections, and Watson and Stepteau-Watson (2015)

Figure1. Conceptual framework

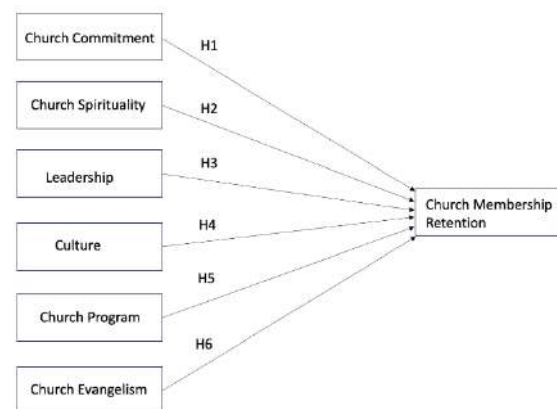
Additionally, the formulation of research hypotheses is grounded in the conceptual framework, aiming to ascertain the extent to which the factors outlined exert a notable impact on the retention of Church Membership within the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri. The hypotheses of this study are:

underscored the role of outreach ministries in enhancing community well-being and fostering church retention. In essence, outreach ministry entails actively sharing the gospel message with individuals across diverse communities (Ford, 2012).

3. Research Methodology and Materials

3.1 Research Framework

This study attempts to determine the factors influencing the conceptual framework, which was developed based on previous research, theoretical concepts and testing literatures. Included in the factors to assess, which also represent the independent variables, are Transformational Leadership, Church Commitment, Culture, Church Program, Church Evangelism, and Church Spirituality and their significant influence on the dependent variable Church Membership Retention. The conceptual framework showing the relationship between Transformational Leadership, Church Commitment, Culture, Church Program, Church Evangelism, Church Spirituality, and Church Membership Retention is shown in figure 1



Hypotheses H1o: There is no significant causal relationship between Church Commitment (CC) and Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.

Hypotheses H2o: There is no significant causal relationship between Church Spirituality (CS) and



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Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.

Hypotheses H3o: There is no significant causal relationship between Transformational Leadership (TL) and Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.

Hypotheses H4o: There is no significant causal relationship between Culture (C) and Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.

Hypotheses H5o: There is no significant causal relationship between Church Program (CP) and Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.

Hypotheses H6o: There is no significant causal relationship between Church Evangelism (CE) and Church Membership Retention in Catholic Diocese of Aguleri.

3.2 Research Methodology

The quantitative research was carried out through the creation of a survey questionnaire, comprising three sections with a total of 47 questions. The first section comprised 3 screening questions that ensured only Catholics who are 18 years and above and have been worshipping with Catholic Diocese of Aguleri for the past 6 months were included. The second section included 5 demographic questions composed of gender, age, marital status, occupation, and educational background, to gather background information about the respondents. Lastly, the third section Likert scale questions contained 39 questions. The Likert scale is employed for assessing the impact of each factor on Church Membership Retention, ranging from 5 denoting "Strongly Agree" to 1 representing "Strongly Disagree." The questionnaire utilizing the Likert scale encompasses a total of 39 questions. This includes five questions dedicated to gauging Church Commitment, adapted from Ernst Saint (2020), another five questions assessing Church Spirituality from the same source, seven questions evaluating Leadership based on William J. Jean-Charles (2020), and six questions appraising Culture, also derived from William J.

Jean-Charles (2020), five questions to determine Church Programs adapted from William J. Jean-Charles (2020), six questions to determine Church Evangelism adapted from William J. Jean-Charles (2020), and five questions to determine Church Membership Retention adapted from William J. Jean-Charles (2020). The questions were formulated using Google Forms and subsequently distributed to a subset of respondents for pilot testing, aimed at assessing the reliability of the questionnaire. This process was undertaken as a preliminary step before conducting the actual research.

3.2.1 Population and Target Sample

The Catholic Diocese of Aguleri is made up of four (4) Local Government Areas (L.G. A), with a population of 1,857,060 of which 357,965 are Catholics as of February 13, 2023, according to 2023 statistics (Jude Atemanke, 2023). For this research, the target population are Catholics who are 18 years and above, and have been worshipping with the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri for the past six months. Utilizing the specified target population, the appropriate sample size, with a 5% margin of error, is determined to be 400 respondents, as derived from the table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The study focuses on Catholics who are 18 years and above, and have been worshipping with the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria for the past six months, thus non-probability sampling Techniques were employed using quota, Convenience and snowball sampling methodologies to expedite the data collection process and also for their cost effectiveness. The data collection period was from the third week of September to the third week of October, 2023.

3.2.2 Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha, as asserted by Bardhoshi and Erford (2017), stands out as the most widely accepted and distinguished indicator for measuring and assessing the reliability of a research questionnaire prior to its distribution to the intended audience. A variable demonstrating $\alpha \geq 0.6$ at a 5%



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margin of error is deemed to exhibit acceptable and excellent internal consistency, and therefore, can be accepted as reliable (Cronbach, L J., 1951). Cronbach's Alpha values of the independent and dependent variables in the pilot testing of 40 respondents were recorded and all were in the acceptable range or above indicating that the questionnaire was reliable. The resulting Cronbach alpha for Church Commitment (CC) with five items assessed was $\alpha = 0.933$. The five items assessed for Church Spirituality (CS) resulted in $\alpha = 0.960$. The seven items assessed for Transformational Leadership (TL) resulted in $\alpha = 0.944$. The six items assessed for Culture (C) resulted in $\alpha = 0.898$. The five items assessed for Church Programs (CP) resulted in $\alpha = 0.852$. The six items assessed for Church Evangelism (CE) resulted in $\alpha = 0.881$. The 5 items assessed for Church Membership Retention (CMR) resulted in $\alpha = 0.786$.

3.2.3 Data Analysis

Table 1. Cronbach Alpha Reliability Analysis with pilot test (40)

No. of Items	Variables	Cronbach's α	Strength of Association
5	Church Commitment (CC)	0.933	Excellent
5	Church Spirituality (CS)	0.960	Excellent
7	Transformational Leadership (TL)	0.944	Excellent
6	Culture (C)	0.898	Good
5	Church Program (CP)	0.852	Good
6	Church Evangelism (CE)	0.881	Good
5	Church Membership Retention (CMR)	0.786	Acceptable

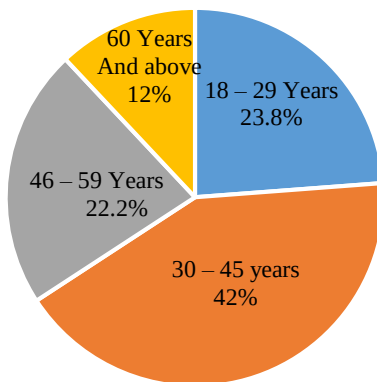
The quantitative methodology was employed for analyzing the research findings through the utilization of JAMOWI software. To ensure questionnaire reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was applied, aiming to identify any perplexing items, inconsistencies, or errors within the variables. The outcomes of this assessment are presented in Table 1. Descriptive data analysis was conducted to examine the demographic information and background of the respondents. Additionally, statistical analyses, using Multiple Linear Regression, were conducted to ascertain the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Multiple Linear Regression was specifically employed to evaluate the significance and nature of the relationship among the independent variables such as Transformational Leadership, Church Commitment, Culture, Church Program, Church Evangelism, and Church Spirituality towards the dependent variable, Church Membership Retention.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Profile Summary

Following the collection of respondents' demographic information, descriptive statistics were applied to analyze these data, providing a detailed overview of the general characteristics of each individual respondent. This research has 400 respondents 137 of which were male with a percentage of 34.3 and 232 female respondents accounting for a percentage of 58.0 and prefer not to say 31 respondents accounting for a percentage of 7.7. It is important to note that the number of females were more than half of the population in the sample; 231 amounting to 57.8% as shown in figure 2.

Figure 2: Sample Population Gender



The predominant proportion of the 400 sampled respondents fell within the age bracket of 30 to 45 years old with 42.0% which equals 168 respondents, while the 18 to 29 years old consisted 23.8% which equals 95 respondents, followed by 46 to 59 years with 89 respondents at 22.2% and 60 years and above with 48 respondents made up the remaining 12.0% as shown in figure 3.

Figure 3: Sample Population Age

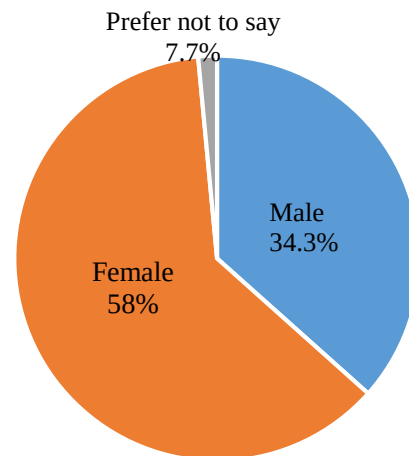
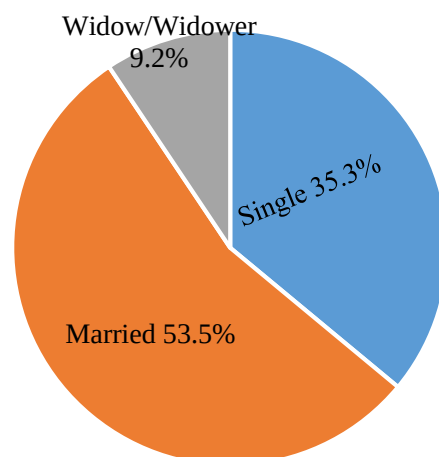


Figure 4 shows that among the 400 sample respondents, 53.5% were married which equals 214 respondents, while 37.3% were single which equals 149, and the remaining 9.4% which equals 37 of the respondents were Widows/Widowers. The married respondents were more than half of the sample population; 214 accounting for 53.5%.

Figure 5 shows that 26.0% of the 400 sample respondents were Civil Servant with 104 respondents, followed by 24.5% of Business owner with 98 respondents, 17.2% of Student with 69 respondents,

Figure 4: Sample Population Marital status



14.8% of private employee with 59 respondents, while Others had 10.5% with respondents, while Others had 10.5% with 42 respondents and the remaining 7.0% are Farmers with 28 respondents.

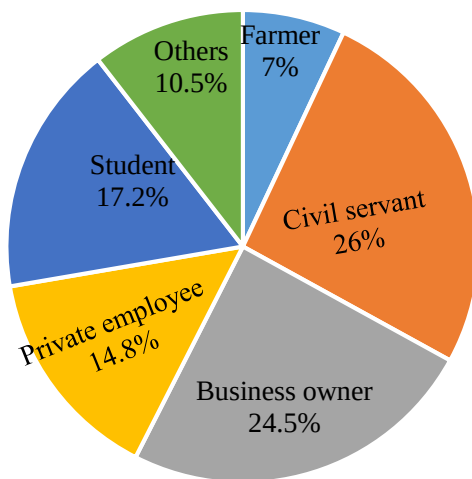


Figure 5: Sample Population occupation

As illustrated in Figure 6, derived from a sample of 400 respondents, Bachelor's degree had the highest number of respondents of 210 with 52.5%, followed by Secondary having 79 respondents with 19.7%, Master's degree/ Doctorate degree had 69 respondents with 17.2%, while Others had 35 respondents with 8.8% and Primary had the remaining 1.8% with 7 respondents.

4.2 Hypotheses Testing

Multiple Linear Regression serves as a statistical analysis technique employed to ascertain the relationship and correlation existing between independent and

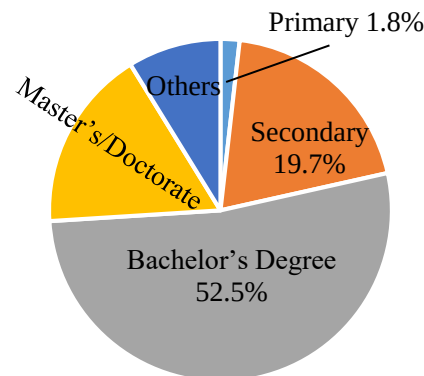


Figure 6: Sample Population Educational Background

dependent variables. Additionally, it was utilized to evaluate the level of significance exhibited by the independent variables in relation to the dependent variable. Furthermore, the same analytical method was applied to determine the coefficient of determination, denoted as R square (R^2), representing the statistical measure indicating the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variable.

In the current study, Multiple Linear Regression is employed as a statistical analysis approach to investigate the relationship, correlation, and significance levels of independent variables, including Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Programs, and Church Evangelism, in relation to the dependent variable, Church Membership Retention.



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Table 2: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary

Hypotheses	Variables/Predictor	B	t-stat	Sig./ p-value	VIF	Result
H1o	Church Commitment	0.234	5.050	< .001*	1.51	Rejected
H2o	Church Spirituality	0.192	2.821	= 0.005*	2.23	Rejected
H3o	Transformational Leadership	-0.043	-0.569	= 0.570*	3.52	Fail to reject
H4o	Culture	0.051	0.808	= 0.419*	2.80	Fail to reject
H5o	Church Programs	0.209	4.225	< .001*	1.78	Rejected
H6o	Church Evangelism	0.332	6.832	< .001*	2.14	Rejected

Note: $R^2 = 0.518$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.511$, $p < 0.01$, $t > 1.96$, Dependent Variable = Church Membership Retention



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Table 2 shows that the predictors composed of Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Programs, and Church Evangelism have an R^2 value of 0.518 (51.8%) at a 99% confidence level which implied that Church Membership Retention could be explained by the said predictors by 51.8%. It also shows a standard coefficient of 0.234 (23.4%) for Church Commitment, 0.192 (19.2%) for Church Spirituality, -0.043 (-4.3%) for Transformational Leadership, 0.051 (5.1%) for Culture, 0.209

(20.9%) for Church Programs, and 0.332 (33.2%) for Church Evangelism which suggests that an increase of 1% in the independent variables would correspondingly lead to an increase in Church Membership Retention. Notably, the highest Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) recorded was 3.52, associated with Transformational Leadership, while the lowest was observed for Church Commitment at 1.51. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) test assesses multicollinearity among factors, indicating the level of collinearity. A VIF value equal to or exceeding 5.0 signifies problematic high correlation, making values less than or equal to 5.0 preferable, ensuring no overlapping variables (Akinwande et al., 2015). Consequently, no evidence of multicollinearity was found among the variables. The outcomes of the multiple linear regression, as presented in Table 2, were subsequently utilized to identify the significant variables influencing Church Membership Retention in the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria, discussed in the following section.

Hypothesis 1

H1o: Church Commitment (CC) has no significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).
H1a: Church Commitment (CC) has a significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).
As indicated in Table 2, the significance level for Church Commitment is < 0.001 , which is below the threshold p-value of 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the conclusion that Church Commitment

significantly influences Church Membership Retention.

Hypothesis 2

H2o: Church Spirituality (CS) has no significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

H2a: Church Spirituality (CS) has a significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

As per the findings in Table 2, the significance level for Church Spirituality is 0.005, falling below the designated p-value of 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the conclusion that Church Spirituality significantly influences Church Membership Retention.

Hypothesis 3

H3o: Transformational Leadership (TL) has no significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

H3a Transformational Leadership (TL) has a significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

Based on the data presented in Table 2, the significance level for Transformational Leadership is 0.570, exceeding the predetermined p-value of 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. This indicates a failure to reject the null hypothesis, leading to the conclusion that Transformational Leadership does not exert a significant influence on Church Membership Retention.

Hypothesis 4

H4o: Culture (C) has no significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

H4a: Culture (C) has a significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

Based on the data presented in Table 2, the significance level for Culture is 0.419, surpassing the predetermined p-value of 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. Consequently, there is a failure to reject the null hypothesis, leading to the conclusion that Culture does not possess a significant influence on Church Membership Retention.



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Hypothesis 5

H5o: Church Programs (CP) has no significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

H5a: Church Programs (CP) has a significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

Examining Table 2, the significance level for Church Programs is < 0.001 , falling below the designated p-value of 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the conclusion that Church Programs significantly influences Church Membership Retention.

Hypothesis 6

H6o: Church Evangelism (CE) has no significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

H6a: Church Evangelism (CE) has a significant influence on Church Membership Retention (CMR).

Analyzing the data presented in Table 2, the significance level for Church Evangelism is < 0.001 , indicating a value below the specified p-value of 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the conclusion that Church Evangelism significantly influences Church Membership Retention. Notably, four factors—Church Evangelism, Church Commitment, Church Programs, and Church Spirituality—have been identified as significantly influencing Church Membership Retention in the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria, based on the results of their respective p-values.

4.3 Discussions

The examined factors in this study encompassed Church Commitment, Church Spirituality, Transformational Leadership, Culture, Church Programs, and Church Evangelism. The reliability of the research questionnaire was affirmed through the pilot testing, as indicated by the Cronbach's alpha results. A VIF value of 1 indicates that there is no correlation between the independent variables, while values greater than 1 indicate some degree of correlation. In general, a VIF value of 5 or higher indicates a high degree of multi-collinearity, which

can affect the accuracy and stability of the regression coefficients. The Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) obtained were below 5.0, indicating the absence of multicollinearity among the variables. The R-squared value provides an estimate of how well the independent variables can predict the dependent variable. Higher values of R-squared indicate a better fit of the model to the data, while lower values indicate a poorer fit. R-squared only measures the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables and does not provide information about the causal relationships between the variables or the accuracy of fit of the model. Hence, the R-value stands at 51.8%, suggesting that, at a 99% confidence level, the predictors can explain Church Membership Retention. However, through hypothesis testing, it was revealed that only Church Evangelism, Church Commitment, Church Programs, and Church Spirituality exerted a significant influence on Church Membership Retention in the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria, as indicated by the results of their respective p-values. The independent variable factor that has strongest relationship with Church Membership Retention was Church Evangelism ($\beta = 0.332$) followed by Church Commitment ($\beta = 0.234$), Church Program ($\beta = 0.209$), and then finally Church Spirituality ($\beta = 0.192$).

These findings are consistent with earlier research conducted by Buzzell and Gale, (1987); Reinartz et al., (2005); CMO Council, (2009); Wielhouwer, (2004); Erwich (2012), and Chaney (2008) for Church Programs; Noel and Gaddis III (2013) and De Souza, (2009) for Church Spirituality; Pierre-Antoine (2019); Hunter, (2003); Watson and Steptean-Watson (2015); and Osinski, (2005) for Church Evangelism, and Stevens et al. (2008); Dudley (2000); and the principles outlined in Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:8 for Church Commitment.

On the other hand, the result of Transformational Leadership ($\beta = -0.043$) and Culture ($\beta = 0.051$) from the outcome of this study did not receive support and were incongruent with the results of prior researches



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by Paul and Vincent (2018); Osooha, (2016); and Olivier, (2019) for Transformational Leadership, and Mashal and Saima, (2014) and Bulach et al., (2012) for Culture. The non – significant influence of transformational leadership on membership retention might be as a result of unaccounted-for confounding variables or that the respondents are biased, while that of culture might be as a result of high variability or important factors or interactions might be missing in the model.

5. Conclusions

Understanding the factors influencing church members' retention can provide valuable information to church leaders for effective pastoral guidance and pastoral care. This knowledge can contribute to strategies that foster a sense of belonging and commitment among members, potentially leading to church growth. A thriving church community can have positive effects on the broader community. The study's findings may help identify practices that contribute to a strong sense of community and engagement, potentially influencing the broader social fabric of the area. Insights into the factors influencing retention can guide Church leaders to develop programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing religious practices and spiritual growth among church members. This could include tailored educational programs, worship experiences, and community outreach efforts. It may inform decision-making at the diocesan level, helping leaders develop policies and strategies that address challenges related to member retention. This can contribute to the overall effectiveness of the Catholic Church not only in the Aguleri Diocese but also in the region. Training programs for church leaders and pastoral staff to enhance their understanding of member needs and concerns, ultimately contributing to more effective leadership.

The study emphasizes the vital role of skilled human capital in achieving successful business objectives (Maamari & Alameh, 2016). Maintaining an excellent pool of skilled human capital requires intentional efforts to provide products that ensure high customer satisfaction. The prevailing belief that "satisfied

employees or members are more likely to continue their association with an organization than dissatisfied ones" (Locke & Latham, 1990) is supported by this study's findings, as demonstrated by the participants' responses. The findings of this research underscore the crucial role of proactive measures aimed at enhancing member satisfaction within the church, as reflected in their readiness to make personal sacrifices for the success of the church's ministry and mission in the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria.

The Church leaders should Plan evangelical programs strategically and recognize their role as "fishers of men" and avoid being critical of those joining the church from diverse backgrounds, understanding that God is the one who transforms lives. Actively, they should seek opportunities to build relationships and befriend newly baptized individuals, new converts, those in need and sick, facilitating their integration into the church's communal life. Intentionally create a welcoming and loving environment where everyone feels accepted, valued and sense of belonging, to ensure that church programs are inclusive, reaching beyond seasoned members to actively involve newcomers.

This study is limited to Catholics who are 18 years and above in the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria who have been actively participating in the church activities for at least six months Hence, it is essential not to interpret the findings as indicative of the Catholic Church in a broader or general context. The primary aim of this research was to explore the factors influencing Church Membership Retention specifically within the Catholic Diocese of Aguleri in Nigeria. Therefore, this study can be replicated in different settings, using diverse populations and samples to test the validity of the research findings or Construct a fresh model by integrating supplementary variables like fellowship, spiritual gifts assessment, and the involvement of local leaders. Future research within the same context could replicate the study from the viewpoint of former members, delving into their experiences of satisfaction and dissatisfaction influencing their decisions to depart from the church. Such investigations might yield distinct conclusions



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and offer unique insights into Church Membership Retention.

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Characteristics and Contents of SMI (Social Media Influencer) that influences customer to buy online product: A Case of Gen Y in Bangkok

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the main purpose of this research is to determine the factors affecting purchase intention of Generation Y customers in online platforms that got influenced by social media influencer recommendation or promoted in Bangkok. The researcher built a new conceptual framework by using three frameworks from previous studies. In this study, the researcher will look at seven major factors: similarity, information quality, expertise, and attractiveness which are independent variables. The dependent variables are trustworthiness, credibility, and purchase intention. This is quantitative research. And the data of 435 respondents were collected through online self-administrator questionnaires which's Google form. This study uses Cronbach's Alpha, descriptive statistics, multiple linear regression, and single linear analysis to analyze the data and test the research hypothesis. The result of this study shows that similarity has affected trustworthiness, while trustworthiness has the strongest influence on credibility followed by information quality and expertise. Furthermore, credibility has the strongest influence on purchase intention followed by attractiveness. But trustworthiness has no significant relationship with purchase intention.

Keywords: *social media influencer, similarity, information quality, expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness, credibility, purchase intention.*

1. Introduction

Social Media Influencer (SMI) are people who have built a reputation for their knowledge and expertise in a certain field. They make regular posts about that topic on their preferred social media channels and generate large followings of enthusiastic, engaged people who pay close attention to their views. This gives them an opportunity for business to do marketing through them (West, 2024). They're rising because during the pandemic consumers have shifted towards spending more time on social media during their detention,

which made businesses and content creators collaborate together to do marketing in order to access to those consumers through the online platform ((Taslaud, 2024) & (Thanlap, 2021)).

This study concerns how similarity, information quality, expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness and credibility influence purchase intention. This research will determine which factors have the most significant relationship with purchase intention in order to benefit the firm or the influencer that wants to find to improve their profit or their contents.



2. Literature Review and Research

Hypotheses

2.1 Variables Literature Reviews

2.1.1 Similarity

The concept of similarity revolves around the perceived likeness between the experiences of shopping online and offline. Sensory similarity specifically pertains to the extent to which an indirect sensory encounter imitates a direct one. This paper delves into the impact of the perceived resemblance between offline and online shopping experiences on the outcomes of online shopping. (Racat et al., 2022) and the impact of product network similarity on customer buying behavior in an e-commerce platform, investigating how the degree of resemblance between products influences online product demand. (Huang et al., 2019). Furthermore, Similarity pertains to how closely two entities resemble or are alike. Cultural and socioeconomic factors can be employed to gauge this likeness. In the realm of online commerce, similarity plays a crucial role, as buyers tend to perceive greater trustworthiness when there is a socio-cultural resemblance. (Elfenbein et al., 2019) and Similarity involves utilizing customers' social network interests to anticipate their future preferences and identify groups of customers sharing common interests in specific product categories. However, it does not explicitly specify the particular type of similarity that motivates customers to make online purchases. (Buaklee & Sinthupinyo, 2018) and according to (Fu et al., 2020). Similarity in users pertains to the extent of resemblance among online individuals, encompassing both external factors like demographic characteristics and internal factors such as psychological traits.

2.1.2 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is recognized as a key determinant affecting purchasing decisions in both e-commerce and social media. Its impact on purchase choices is mediated indirectly through the cultivation of customer loyalty. (Nofrizal et al., 2023) and Trustworthiness pertains to the dependability and credibility of the information provided. In the context of purchasing green agricultural products, it is crucial for consumers to have confidence in the reliability of online sellers. (Fu et al., 2023). Furthermore, Trustworthiness holds paramount importance in the realm of e-commerce. to construct a model that establishes a connection between website quality and the cultivation of customer trustworthiness. (Gashema & Alain, 2023) and Trustworthiness in online shopping plays a pivotal role in the establishment of consumer trust. The quality of information and interaction emerges as influential factors contributing to the development of this trust. (Elida et al., 2023) and according to (Patnaik, 2022) The role of trustworthiness in online product recommendation systems is highly influential, with trust being identified as the most significant element in the realm of online shopping. Elevated trustworthiness in online product recommenders correlates positively with heightened purchase intention.

2.1.3 Credibility

Credibility serves as the pivotal determinant for the adoption of online reviews. It is shaped by various factors, including the source of information, the quality of content, and the trustworthiness of the platform hosting these reviews. (Yang & Gong, 2023) and according to (Zaman et al., 2023). The influence of an influencer's credibility, customer reviews, and customer interaction on the purchasing intentions of consumers is examined in the context of viewing endorsements from influencers. Furthermore, the impact of the credibility of online sources, particularly influencers, on brand equity and the intention to make a purchase is explored within the realm of social media marketing. (Güven & Köken, 2022) and



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The positive traits associated with influencer credibility have a direct impact on customer purchase intention. Influencer credibility, characterized by trustworthiness and expertise, exerts a positive influence on customers' inclination to make a purchase. (Sesar et al., 2022), also according to (Ao et al., 2023). The impact of influencers on purchase intention is predominantly driven by their credibility, surpassing the influence of other attributes. Credibility, encompassing trustworthiness and believability, emerges as the foremost factor shaping purchase intention in the realm of social media influencers.

2.1.4 Information quality

The significance of the quality of product information cannot be overstated for individuals shopping online, measurable criteria for information quality and demonstrates that inadequate information negatively influences the outcomes of consumers engaged in online shopping. (Amsl et al., 2023) and Information quality plays a pivotal role in shaping online purchasing decisions within the realm of E-Commerce. Enhancing the quality of information can contribute positively to improving decision-making processes for online purchases in E-Commerce. (Putri et al., 2022) also according to (Budiarani & Nugroho, 2022) Positive customer purchase intentions are directly influenced by the information quality of online reviews. Prior to making a purchase, customers prioritize evaluating the information quality present in online reviews as a crucial factor in their decision-making process and the quality of information in digital advertising is determined by factors like accuracy, integrity, timeliness, and validity. These elements exert a considerable influence on the intention to make a purchase online. (Surjandy & Cassandra, 2022) also

according to (WEI & ZHANG, 2018) Information quality is paramount when considering online agricultural product consumers' initial trust. It stands out as the foremost influencing factor, playing a pivotal role in shaping the level of trust consumers place in the information presented during their online interactions with agricultural products.

2.1.5 Expertise

Expertise pertains to the depth of knowledge and hands-on familiarity within a specific domain. In consumer behavior studies, it serves as a crucial factor for segmentation analysis. (Ketelaar et al., 2015) Expertise encompasses the author's background, reputation, experience, and demographic details. It significantly shapes consumers' decisions when making purchases and affects their sensitivity to prices. (Meiseberg, 2015) Expertise of internet celebrities influence fans' intention to purchase energy-saving products. Internet celebrities' expertise refers to their knowledge and skills in a specific area. (Luo et al., 2023) and according to (Hmoud et al., 2022) Expertise is defined as the knowledge and skills possessed by social media influencers, and it plays a constructive role in influencing both consumers' brand perceptions and their likelihood to make a purchase and Expertise, defined as the knowledge and skills possessed by an individual, emerges as a significant predictor of purchase intention, particularly in the context of social media influencers. The impact of perceived expertise on purchase intention underscores the crucial role that the proficiency of social media influencers plays in shaping consumers' likelihood to make a purchase. (Magano et al., 2022)

2.1.6 Attractiveness

Attractiveness in the context of digital influencers encompasses various factors that make them appealing to consumers. Elements such as reputation, trustworthiness, audience engagement, brand association, reviews, and



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personality collectively contribute to their attractiveness. (Sethi & Khan, 2023). Assessing the elements of product photography, including lighting, backdrop, and product type, affect the perceived level of attractiveness. (Szulc et al., 2023). One component of personal fame characteristics is the attractiveness of a celebrity. The attractiveness of a celebrity plays a role in influencing digital brand awareness and the intention to make online purchases. (Pennata et al., 2022). Attractiveness, in the context of advertising, pertains to the appeal or desirability of the promotional content. The level of attractiveness in advertising significantly shapes customers' purchasing decisions. (Anggoro & Purba, 2020) and according to (Sufian, 2021) The effectiveness of celebrity endorsement is closely tied to attractiveness, as it serves as a crucial factor in determining the impact of such endorsements. Attractiveness contributes significantly to ensuring the overall effectiveness of a celebrity endorsement.

2.1.7 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the inclination or likelihood of consumers to acquire a particular brand, indicating their intention to buy products associated with that specific brand. It represents a premeditated plan to make purchases from a particular brand. (Rohani et al., 2023) Purchase intention is the readiness of customers to engage in online purchases, influenced by various factors including social impact, website quality, product information, perceived value, and trust. These elements collectively shape customers' willingness to make transactions in the online environment. (Srivastava, 2023) Purchase intention is the probability or expressed intention of a consumer to acquire a product, typically measured through factors such as willingness, desire, and the explicit intention to make a purchase. (Lopes et al., 2023) Purchase intention is an individual's willingness to

engage in a particular action, reflecting the subjective likelihood or probability of taking a specific course of action, particularly related to making a purchase. (Jiang et al., 2023) Purchase intention holds considerable significance in the business realm, as it is rooted in the interest and motivation of individuals to acquire goods or services at some point in the future. It serves as a valuable indicator of potential consumer behavior and influences strategic decisions within the business environment. (Silitonga et al., 2023)

2.2 Research Hypothesis Literature Reviews

2.2.1 Similarity and Trustworthiness

Similarity influences online trade, suggesting that buyers associate socio-cultural similarity with greater trustworthiness. (Elfenbein et al., 2023) The trustworthiness and success of online transactions are influenced by the similarity between buyers and sellers, particularly when sellers lack substantial reputations or certifications. Cultural similarity serves as a predictor for both trade and trustworthiness in online transactions, with consumers drawing inferences about seller trustworthiness based on cultural alignment. (Elfenbein et al., 2019) Trustworthiness in consumer behavior can be augmented by the presence of similarity between individuals. The perceived similarity between individuals has the potential to influence trustworthiness significantly. (Zimu, 2023)

H1o: *There's no relationship between Similarity and Trustworthiness that influences customer to buy online product.*

H1a: *There's a significant relationship between Similarity and Trustworthiness that influences customer to buy online product.*

2.2.2 Trustworthiness and Credibility



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Trustworthiness and credibility play crucial roles in shaping consumer involvement. The level of credibility possessed by influencers significantly affects consumer engagement. (Zaman et al., 2023) The impact of trustworthiness and credibility information on consumer trust is instrumental in shaping purchasing behavior. There exists a positive and moderate correlation between trustworthiness and credibility. Credible information plays a pivotal role in influencing and enhancing shopper trust. (Etrata, Jr. et al., 2022) The notions of trustworthiness and credibility exert a significant influence on customer online transactions. Establishing trust with consumers hinges on the pivotal factors of trustworthiness and credibility. (Elida et al., 2023)

H2o: *There's no relationship between Trustworthiness and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.*

H2a: *There's a significant relationship between Trustworthiness and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.*

2.2.3 Information quality and Credibility

Information quality and platform trust have the largest impact on online purchase intention, and perceived credibility plays a mediating role in the influencing mechanism. (Yang & Gong, 2023) The decisions of customers in online purchases are significantly influenced by the quality of information and the credibility associated with it. (Elida et al., 2023) The credibility of digital advertising is influenced by factors such as accuracy, integrity, timeliness, and validity, which contribute to the overall information quality. The study reveals that the information quality factor of

digital advertising significantly affects the intention to make a purchase. (Surjandy & Cassandra, 2022)

H3o: *There's no relationship between Information Quality and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.*

H3a: *There's a significant relationship between Information Quality and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.*

2.2.4 Expertise and Credibility

The purchasing behavior of customers for online products is notably influenced by both expertise and credibility factors. The perceived expertise of a source and the credibility associated with it play crucial roles in shaping customer decisions when it comes to online product purchases. (Sedela et al., 2022). The credibility of online influencers and peers in influencing purchase intentions is strongly tied to the perceived expertise and trustworthiness of these individuals. The level of expertise and the trustworthiness associated with online influencers and peers significantly impact their credibility in shaping consumer purchase decisions. (Rajaraman et al., 2020). Consumers' attitudes toward advertisements can be positively influenced by the credibility of social media influencers, which includes factors such as their expertise. When influencers are perceived as credible and knowledgeable in their respective fields, it enhances the effectiveness of advertisements and fosters a positive reception from consumers. (Ata et al., 2022)

H4o: *There's no relationship between Expertise and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.*

H4a: *There's a significant relationship between Expertise and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.*

2.2.5 Attractiveness and Purchase Intention



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Various factors contribute to the attractiveness of digital influencers, and these elements significantly impact consumer purchase intention. The appeal of digital influencers can be influenced by factors such as relatability, authenticity, expertise, likability, and perceived credibility. When influencers possess these qualities, they tend to positively impact consumers' perceptions and intentions to make a purchase based on their recommendations. (Sethi & Khan, 2023). Product photography plays a crucial role in influencing perceived attractiveness and purchase decisions in the realm of e-commerce. The use of effective lighting techniques in product photos can particularly sway consumers, encouraging them to choose products based on their visual appeal. A well-lit and visually appealing product presentation can significantly enhance the perceived attractiveness of the items, thereby positively influencing consumers' decisions to make a purchase. (Szulc et al., 2023) The attractiveness of celebrities has a direct impact on the intention to make online purchases, suggesting that the appeal of celebrities can play a crucial role in influencing customers to engage in online product transactions. (Pennata et al., 2022)

H5o: *There's no relationship between Attractiveness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.*

H5a: *There's a significant relationship between Attractiveness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.*

2.2.6 Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention

Trustworthiness plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' inclination to engage in online purchases. The intentions of consumers to make online purchases are notably influenced by the level of trust they have in the brand. (Srivastava, 2023). The purchase intention of products is significantly

influenced by the trustworthiness of a brand and the perceived value it offers to customers. (Gu & Encio, 2023). Trustworthiness, along with factors like social media marketing and website quality, significantly influences consumer purchase intentions for local shoe brands, demonstrating its pivotal role in shaping the decision-making process. (Silitonga et al., 2023)

H6o: *There's no relationship between Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.*

H6a: *There's a significant relationship between Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.*

2.2.7 Credibility and Purchase Intention

The impact of influencer credibility on consumer purchase intentions is emphasized in this study, highlighting that the credibility of influencers plays a crucial role in influencing consumer engagement and their inclination to purchase premium products. (Zaman et al., 2023). Consumer purchase intentions are influenced by the perceived credibility of online reviews, with information quality and platform trust having the most significant impact on the decision to purchase. (Yang & Gong, 2023). The intention of consumers to make online purchases is notably influenced by the credibility factor, with brand reputation playing a substantial role in shaping consumers' purchase intentions. (Srivastava, 2023).

H7o: *There's no relationship between Credibility and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.*

H7a: *There's a significant relationship between Credibility and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.*



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2.3 Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses

The conceptual framework in this research is constructed from previous related studies, which used three theoretical models to develop. First is The impact of online influencers on consumers' purchase intention of Japanese food in Bangkok (Laohasukkasem, 2021). This research provides the relationship of Expertise, Trust, Credibility and Attractiveness that influence toward Consumer's Purchase Intention. Second is Effect of Social Media Influencer Characteristics on Purchase Intentions – Evidence from Pakistan (Azhar et al, 2022). This study shares information about how Expertise, Trustworthiness, Likability, Information Quality, Entertainment value influence toward Purchase Intentions with Credibility mediated between them. Last is Bridging the Trust Gap in Influencer Marketing: Ways to Sustain Consumers' Trust and Assuage Their Distrust in the Social Media Influencer Landscape (Ki et al, 2022). As a result, the conceptual framework and hypotheses are proposed in Figure 2.1.

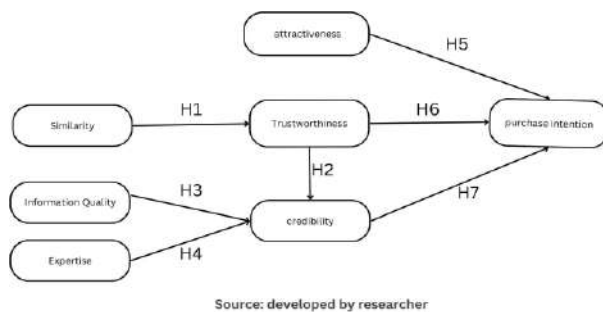


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

H1o: There's no relationship between Similarity and Trustworthiness that influences customer to buy online product.

H1a: There's a significant relationship between Similarity and Trustworthiness that influences customer to buy online product.

H2o: There's no relationship between Trustworthiness and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

H2a: There's a significant relationship between Trustworthiness and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

H3o: There's no relationship between Information Quality and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

H3a: There's a significant relationship between Information Quality and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

H4o: There's no relationship between Expertise and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

H4a: There's a significant relationship between Expertise and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

H5o: There's no relationship between Attractiveness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.

H5a: There's a significant relationship between Attractiveness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.

H6o: There's no relationship between Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.

H6a: There's a significant relationship between Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.



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H7o: There's no relationship between Credibility and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.

H7a: There's a significant relationship between Credibility and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1 Research Design

The goal of this study is to determine the factors that affect purchase intention of Generation Y customers in online platforms that got influenced by social media influencer recommendation or promotion. This research study is quantitative research, which uses Cronbach's alpha, Multiple Linear Regression, Simple Linear Regression, and Descriptive Statistics to analyze data collected through online questionnaire Google form. This research used secondary data from other reliable sources including previous studies, articles, thesis, etc.

The questionnaire is organized into three parts, first is the screening part, which has three items and uses Ordinal scale. Second is the demographic part, which has five items and uses Nominal scale. And 33 items for the measurement of variables part which use Likert scale. In total, this research has 41 questions.

3.2 Sampling Procedures

This study used a non-probability sampling method to collect information by using convenience sampling and snowball sampling method because the respondents were pre-screened based on the research purpose and have some

connection with the researcher. And due to the limited time available, these two methods are the most appropriate method because the researcher can easily obtain data depending on their convenience and can obtain data faster than other methods.

3.3 Population and Sample Size

This study focuses on those people who currently live in Bangkok and have been born in the range of 1981 – 1996 (Gen Y), and have thought of ordering or using product/service from social influencers. Therefore, the number of populations of Gen Y consumers that want to purchase online in Bangkok is unknown. So, the researcher decided to determine the sample size by applying the population proportion gained through online searching. According to statista, (2023), Bangkok is estimated to have around 11.07 million people.

Thus, this research sample size is based on Krejcie & Morgan (1970) to use 384 samples to conduct the research but this study can collect more than 384 samples, ending with a total of 435 respondents.

3.4 Questionnaire Design

In this research, online questionnaires were used to examine the factors and the relationships between the variables. The researcher distributed the questionnaire online to target respondents. The questionnaire is divided into three parts. The first part consists of screening questions that will only be answered by Gen Y people who're living in Bangkok and have thought of purchasing a product/service from a social influencer. The second section is the questions on the demographic information of respondents. The last section is the questions for dependent and independent variables (Appendix A).

3.5 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability with pilot test



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The pilot test of 30 respondents was decided to conduct to find errors or inconsistencies in each variable in the questionnaire by using Cronbach's Alpha test to evaluate the reliability and consistency of given measurement variables.

Table 3.2. Results from Pilot Test –Cronbach's Alpha ($n = 30$)

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength associated
Similarity (SM)	5	0.759	Acceptable
Information Quality (IQ)	5	0.770	Acceptable
Expertise (EP)	5	0.917	Excellent
Attractiveness (AT)	5	0.723	Acceptable
Credibility (CD)	5	0.833	Good
Trustworthiness (TW)	4	0.893	Good
Purchase Intention (PI)	4	0.820	Good

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Information

Gender: From the total of 435 respondents, female respondents accounted for 71% percent, male respondents accounted for 27.6%, while only

1.4% for other gender respondents. The results of respondents for female, male and other are 309, 120 and 6 respectively

Occupation: From the total of 435 respondents, the majority is 188 people's work as private employees, constituting 43.2%, which is very close to 187 individuals who work as government employees, making up 43%. Follow up is business owner, with 43 individuals which representing 9.9%. Next is 13 individuals identified as students, accounting for 3%. The least is Others with the number of 4 respondents, representing 0.9% of the total.

Income per month: Among all 435 respondents, 192 individuals, consisting 44.1%, reported a monthly income of 20,001-30,000 Baht, taking the majority. Followed by the 30,001-80,000-Baht range, 118 respondents, making up 27.1%. Next are those with incomes less than 20,000 Baht with the number of 86 individuals, representing 19.8%. The least one is those who've more than 80,000 Baht with 39 individuals reported, making up 9%.

Main type of product that you plan to buy from social media influencers: For a total number of 435 respondents, among them, the health category takes the majority with a number of 130 respondents, constituting 29.9%. Second is the lifestyle category, with the number of 122 respondents, representing 28%. Third is the beauty category, consisting of 81 respondents, making up 18.6%. Fourth is the fashion category, with the number of 55 individuals, accounting for 12.6%. Fifth is the food category, with 36 respondents which represents 8.3%. Sixth is gaming category, consisting of 10 people which accounted for 2.3%. Last one is others category, only one respondent is planning to buy in this category, representing 0.2%.

Purchasing frequency based on a recommendation from an influencer on social media: Among 435 respondents, the majority is those who've purchased 4-7



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times/month with the number of 219 respondents, consisting 50.3%. Followed by those who've purchased less than 3 times/month with the number of 140 individuals, making up 32.2%. Next is those who've purchased 7-10 times/month, consisting of 48 respondents which represents 11%. Last is those who've purchased more than 10 times/month, with the number of 28 people constituting 6.4%.

Table 4: Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	120	27.6
Female	309	71
Other	6	1.4
Total	435	100
Occupation		
Students	13	3
Government Employee	187	43
Private Employee	188	43.2
Business Owner	43	9.9
Others	4	0.9
Total	435	100
Income Per Month		
Less than 20,000 Baht	86	19.8
20,001 - 30,000 Baht	192	44.1
30,001 - 80,000 Baht	118	27.1
More than 80,000 Baht	39	9
Total	435	100
Main type of product		
Fashion	55	12.6
Beauty	81	18.6
Health	130	29.9
Lifestyle	122	28
Food	36	8.3
Gaming	10	2.3
Others	1	0.2

Total	435	100
Purchasing Frequency		
less than 3 times per month	140	32.2
4 - 7 times per month	219	50.3
7 - 10 times per month	48	11
more than 10 times per month	28	6.4
Total	435	100

Source: develop by author

4.2 Research Hypothesis Testing Result

4.2.1 Result of Simple Linear Regression of H1 Statistical Hypothesis

Ho: There's no relationship between Similarity and Trustworthiness that influences customer to buy online product.

Ha: There's a significant relationship between Similarity and Trustworthiness that influences customer to buy online product.

Table 4.1 Simple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 1

Variable	B	SE	t	Sig.	VIF
Similarity	0.468	0.0401	11.7	<.001*	1.00

Note. $R^2=0.239$, $Adjusted\ R^2=0.237$, * refer to significant at 5% level, *Dependent variable = Trustworthiness*

Table 4.1 shows that simple linear regression was conducted to examine whether Similarity (H1) has a significant relationship with trustworthiness that influences customers to buy online products. The result from hypothesis 1 indicated that the highly significant level was less than 0.001, which was less than 0.05. The null hypothesis was rejected and an alternative hypothesis



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was supported. Thus, the result can be concluded that influencer trustworthiness got affected by similarity between customer and influencer. The result of regression showed that the model explained 23.9% of the variance and that model was highly significant, $p < 0.001$. The R-square was 0.239 at 95% confidence level, which indicated that Similarity has $B = 0.468$, $p < 0.001^*$, which highly has a significant relationship with Trustworthiness that influences customers to buy online products. The result for VIF value of similarity is 1.00 indicating that there is no issue regarding multicollinearity due to the VIF being less than 10.

4.2.2 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H2, 3 and 4

Statistical Hypothesis

Ho: There's no relationship between Trustworthiness (H2), Information Quality (H3), Expertise (H4) and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

Ha: There's a significant relationship between Trustworthiness (H2), Information Quality (H3), Expertise (H4) and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.

Table 4.2 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Hypothesis 2, 3 and 4

Variable	B	SE	t	Sig.	VIF
Trustworthiness	0.275	0.0370	7.44	<.001*	1.55
Information Quality	0.271	0.0417	8.50	<.001*	1.76

Expertise	0.271	0.0376	7.22	<.001*	1.72

Note: $R^2 = 0.550$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.547$, * refer to significant at 5% level, Dependent variable = Credibility

Table 4.2 shows that a multiple linear regression was used to analyze trustworthiness (H2), information quality (H3), expertise (H4) had a significant relationship with credibility or not. The results in Table 4.2 show that the significance level of Hypothesis 2,3 and 4 were less than 0.001, which makes the null hypotheses of Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 were rejected and alternative hypotheses got supported. Thus, the result can be concluded that credibility is highly related with and got affected by trustworthiness, information quality and expertise. The result of regression showed that the model explained 55% of the variance and that model was highly significant, $p < 0.001$. The R-square was 0.550 at 95% confidence level, which implied that Trustworthiness had $B = 0.275$, $p < 0.001^*$, highly significant relationship with Credibility. Information quality had $B = 0.271$, $p < 0.001^*$, highly significant relationship with Credibility and Expertise also had $B = 0.271$, $p < 0.001^*$, which has a highly significant relationship with Credibility. The result of hypotheses 2, 3 and 4 show that trustworthiness, information quality and expertise used to identify influences on credibility are not overlapped, and there is no issue regarding multicollinearity due to the VIF being less than 10. The VIF value of trustworthiness is 1.55, information quality is 1.76 and expertise has 1.72 respectively.

4.2.3 Result of Multiple Linear Regression of H5, 6 and 7

Statistical Hypothesis



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H₀: There's no relationship between Attractiveness (H5), Trustworthiness (H6), Credibility (H7) and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.

H_a: There's a significant relationship between Attractiveness (H5), Trustworthiness (H6), Credibility (H7) and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.

Table 4.3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis
Summary for Hypothesis 5, 6 and 7

Variable	B	SE	t	Sig.	VIF
Attractiveness	-0.00858	0.0280	-3.06	.002*	1.29
Trustworthiness	0.0661	0.0377	1.76	0.080	1.68
Credibility	0.2088	0.0412	5.07	<.001*	1.70

Note. $R^2 = 0.109$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.103$, * refer to significant at 5% level, Dependent variable = Purchase Intention

Table 4.3 shows that a multiple linear regression was used to investigate whether attractiveness (H5), trustworthiness (H6), credibility (H7) had a significant relationship with purchase intention or not. The results in Table 4.3 show that the significance level of Hypothesis 5 was 0.002, less than 0.05, which successfully rejected the null hypothesis and made alternative hypotheses get supported. While the significance levels of Hypothesis 6 are more than 0.05, this makes the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 6 fail to be rejected and make alternative hypotheses fail to be supported. As for the significance levels of hypothesis 7 is less than 0.001, which successfully rejected the null hypothesis and made alternative hypotheses get supported. In conclusion, the result can be

concluded that purchase intention has a significant relationship and is affected by attractiveness and credibility. But purchase intention doesn't have a relationship and gets affected by trustworthiness. The result of regression showed that the model explained 10.9% of the variance and that model was moderately significant, $p < 0.05$ except for hypothesis 6. The R-square was 0.109 at 95% confidence level, which indicated that attractiveness has $B = -0.00858$, $p = 0.002$ and has a significant relationship with purchase intention. For credibility, it has $B = 0.2088$, $p < 0.001^*$, which highly has a significant relationship with purchase intention. but trustworthiness has $B = 0.0661$, $p = 0.080$, which indicates that trustworthiness doesn't have any relationship with purchase intention. The result of hypotheses 5, 6 and 7 show that attractiveness, trustworthiness and credibility used to identify relationships with purchase intention are not overlapped, and there is no issue regarding multicollinearity due to the VIF being less than 10. The VIF value of attractiveness equals 1.29, while trustworthiness equals 1.68 and credibility has 1.70 VIF value.

4.4 Summary of Research Hypotheses Testing

The significance of each variable in the research model is assessed from regression weights by simple linear regression, multiple linear regression and r-squared variance coefficient. The result from Table 4.4 claimed that all hypotheses were supported with significance values less than 0.05 except for trustworthiness has been failed to supported the alternative hypothesis (H6a) as shown on Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Hypothesis Results



Hypotheses	Significant Value	Results
H1a: There's a significant relationship between Similarity and Trustworthiness that influences customer to buy online product.	<.001	supported
H2a: There's a significant relationship between Trustworthiness and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.	<.001	supported
H3a: There's a significant relationship between Information Quality and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.	<.001	supported
H4a: There's a significant relationship between Expertise and Credibility that influences customer to buy online product.	<.001	supported
H5a: There's a significant relationship between Attractiveness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.	0.002	supported
H6a: There's a significant relationship between Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.	0.08	Not supported
H7a: There's a significant relationship between Credibility and Purchase Intention that influences customer to buy online product.	<.001	supported

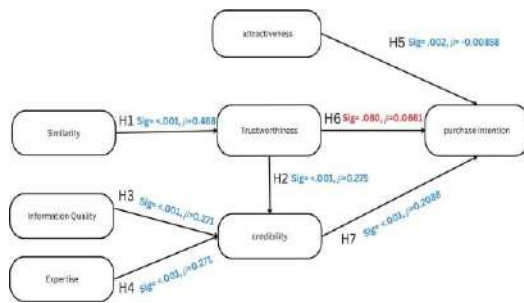
4.5 The Independent Beta Ranking

After using simple linear regression (SLR) and multiple linear regression (MLR) for testing the hypothesis of significant influence of the variables such as similarity, information quality, trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, and credibility to purchase intention of Gen Y customer in Bangkok. Therefore, the level of the strengths of influence was ranked and summarized in Table 4.5, which represents the ranking of the variable from the most substantial influence to less substantial influence of independent variables toward purchase intention of GenY customer in Bangkok. The Beta was applied to the level of the influence from the variable. This shows that, the highest substantial influence is similarity with the value of 0.468, following by trustworthiness (H2) at 0.275, then following by information quality and expertise with the same value at 0.271, credibility with value of 0.2088, Trustworthiness (H6) at 0.0661, and attractiveness at -0.00858.

Table 4.5 The Independent Beta Ranking

Rank	Independent Variable	B
1	Similarity	0.468
2	Trustworthiness (H2)	0.275
3	Information Quality	0.271
	Expertise	0.271
4	Trustworthiness (H6)	0.0661
5	Attractiveness	-0.00858

Figure 4.1 The results of structural model



Source: constructed by researcher

5. Conclusions and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

The factors that affect and have significant relationship with purchase intention of Gen Y customers in Bangkok, Thailand has been analyzed to study in this research. The hypotheses were developed as the conceptual framework to examine which factors have been influencing purchase intention of Gen Y customers. The research explicated the following outcomes.

5.1.2 Similarity and Trustworthiness

The results from this research show that Similarity has a significant impact on Trustworthiness. The significant value of similarity and trustworthiness was less than 0.001, As consumers find that an SMI has taste, preferences, and a lifestyle similar to theirs, the more they develop trust in the SMI. These were supported by the previous studies by Chen et al. (2022) state that the customer will trust in SMI when they having similar lifestyle and thinking, Ki et al. (2022) also state that when consumers find that the SMI that they're follow has similar taste,

preferences, and a lifestyle to them, they likely to develop trust in the SMI. and Naderer et al. (2021) state that when followers feel similar to the influencers, they will likely to develop trust in them.

5.1.3 Trustworthiness, Information Quality, Expertise and Credibility

Trustworthiness: Trustworthiness has a significant relationship and impact on Credibility. The significant value of trustworthiness and credibility was less than 0.001. Consumers want to trust in SMI who're honest and sincere, as they'll perceive them as reliable person. These were supported by the previous studies by Saima and Khan (2020) that credibility got significantly affected by trustworthiness and Azhar et al. (2022) state that trustworthiness has the greatest impact on credibility.

Information Quality: Information Quality has a significant impact on Credibility. The significant value of information quality and credibility was less than 0.001. SMI social posts or promoting, when properly presented, will raise the credibility of their contents. These were supported by the previous studies by Mabkhot et al. (2022) state that information quality is one of the traits of SMI that can affected credibility, Saima and Khan (2020) state that information quality has significantly affected credibility and Alrwashdeh et al. (2022) also state that information quality has beneficial influence on credibility.

Expertise: Expertise has a significant impact on Credibility. The significant value of expertise and credibility was less than 0.001. The expertise of SMI makes the followers accept that their influencers are knowledgeable experts in their field, thus raising their credibility. These were supported by the previous studies by Faisal and Dhusia (2022) state that expertise of influencer is significant for their credibility, Dam et al. (2023) state that credibility significantly got effect by



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influencer expertise, Mabkhot et al. (2022) state that expertise is one of the traits of SMI that can affected credibility and Xiao et al. (2018) state that expertise is one of criteria when customer check information quality.

5.1.4 Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Credibility and Purchase Intention

Credibility: Credibility has a significant impact on Purchase Intention. The significant value of credibility and purchase intention was less than 0.001. When consumers perceived SMI as credible, they were more likely to buy the product, because consumers form an overall evaluation of an influencer's credibility to evaluate the value of the endorsement during their decision-making process. These were supported by the previous studies by Weismueller et al. (2020) state that credibility has positive impact on purchase intention, Giri and Alfuruqi (2023) state that endorser credibility is essential to build up customer purchase intention and Djafarova & Rushworth (2017) state that credibility has a significant relationship with purchase intention.

Attractiveness: Attractiveness has a significant negative impact on Purchase Intention. The significant value of attractiveness and purchase intention was less than 0.05, but Beta value is negative value (-0.00858) which makes the relationship end in a negative way. Consumers nowadays don't focus on physical attractiveness anymore, but focus on other factors instead. These were supported by the previous studies by AlFarraj et al. (2021) state that attractiveness is not the main factor that make customer intend to purchase product, Rungruangjit (2022) state that attractiveness doesn't always affect customer purchase intention, Yudha (2023) state that

attractiveness isn't a primary criterion for decision making to purchase product. and Fitriani et al. (2023) state that attractiveness alone doesn't affect purchase intention directly but affect it through brand awareness instead.

Trustworthiness: Trustworthiness doesn't have a significant impact on purchase intention. The significant value of trustworthiness and purchase intention was more than 0.05, which does not support the alternative hypothesis. Rungruangjit (2022) and Yudha (2023) both state that other factors such as customer perception can affect trustworthiness in the influencer, for example, customer may perceive influencer as they're being hired to promoted certain product/service, which reducing their trust and lead to decline in purchase intention.

5.2 Recommendation

From the result, there're relationships and impact between each variable that affect purchase intention. Starting with Similarity, SMI should have at least one area of their expert field to prevent followers becoming unconvinced to buy the product/service that they're promoted because they've too much varied content. Next is for Information Quality, SMI should provide information that gives accurate, good value and cover all points that customers may need. For Expertise, SMI should not have only knowledge in their field only, but they also need to adapt their knowledge in real use as well to convince the audience that they're expert in their field. Next is Trustworthiness, SMI should be honest and sincere to their followers and not provide any information that may harm them. Last is Attractiveness, SMI should not focus on the physical attractiveness when promoting too much. as customers will focus on the uniqueness or charismatic more than their physical appearance.

5.3 Limitation and Further Study



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This research has some limitations, first is we focus on Gen Y respondents that currently live in Bangkok only. This study also limits to seven variables only, which are: similarity, trustworthiness, information quality, expertise, credibility, attractiveness and purchase intention. And due to limited time, the researcher can't collect the name of the influencer that each respondent follows to, this can affect the accuracy of result and data that can potentially make trustworthiness and attractiveness have negative and doesn't have relationship with purchase intention. And this study doesn't focus on a certain type of product, which can affect the result and end in being too vast and general.

For further studies, we should focus on a certain type of product or service and should collect the list of influencers. Next is we should dive into other factors that can affect purchase intention than these six variables in this study to see which factors have a good relationship that can boost customer purchase intention more. Lastly, we can increase the scope to cover all in Thailand, not just focus only on Bangkok.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

Part I: Screening Question

In this section, the respondents are screened according to the need of this study and those who do not meet the criteria are rejected.

1. Do you live in Bangkok?

- Yes
- No, thank you for your time and please stop doing the questionnaire.

2. Which birth range were you born?

- Born between 1981 - 1996
- Born after 1997, thank you for your time and please stop doing the questionnaire.

3. Have you ever planned to purchase an online product from a social media influencer during the last 1 year or not?

- Yes, please continue to the next section
- No, thank you for your time and please stop doing the questionnaire.

In the first section of the questionnaire, if the respondents responded "Yes" they will be directed to the next question. Alternatively, if the respondents responded "No" they will be directed to the end of the survey.

Part II: Demographic Information

In this section, the questions are mostly concerned about the demographic information of

the respondents. To determine demographic characteristics of respondents, it uses basic personal information such as gender, age, employment status, and monthly income.

1) Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other

2) Occupation

- Students
- Government Employee
- Private Employee
- Business Owner
- Others

3) Income per month

- Less than 20,000 Baht
- 20,001-30,000 Baht
- 30,001-80,000 Baht
- More than 80,000 Baht

4) Main type of product that you plan to buy from social media influencer

- Fashion
 - Beauty
- Health
- Lifestyle
- Food
- Gaming
- Others

5) Purchasing frequency based on a recommendation from an influencer on social media

- Less than 3 times per month
- 4-7 times per month
- 7-10 times per month
- More than 10 times per month



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Part III: Measurement of Variables

In this section, the purpose is to examine the factors that influence consumer brand engagement and purchase intention toward micro-influencer promoted product brands. The researchers use five-point Likert scale to assess respondents' attitudes and their level of agreement toward each variable. The statistical level has been set as follows:

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Table 3.1: Variables and factors to be considered

Item s	Factors to be considered	Level of Opinion				
		Strongly Disagree □ Strongly Agree				
Similarity						
SM1	I have a lot in common with the social media influencer that I plan to buy products from.	1	2	3	4	5
SM2	I and the social media influencer that I plan to purchase products from them have the same style.	1	2	3	4	5
SM3	Social media influencers that I plan to buy product from have similar tastes and preferences.	1	2	3	4	5
SM4	I and the social media influencer that I plan to buy	1	2	3	4	5
	product from have the same or similar hobby.					
SM5	I and the social media influencer that I plan to buy from use the same product (we have the same taste in products).	1	2	3	4	5
Information Quality						
IQ1	I feel that social media influencers that I plan to buy products from provide trustworthy information.	1	2	3	4	5
IQ2	I feel that social influencers that I plan to buy product from provides accurate information.	1	2	3	4	5
IQ3	The information of social media influencers that I plan to buy product from is comprehensive.	1	2	3	4	5
IQ4	I feel that social media influencers that I plan to buy product from provide valuable information.	1	2	3	4	5
IQ5	The information from social media influencers that I plan to buy product from is up to date.	1	2	3	4	5



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Expertise							AT3	I plan to buy products from sexy social media influencers.	1	2	3	4	5
EP1	I feel that social media influencers that I plan to buy products from have experience in their field.	1	2	3	4	5	AT4	I plan to buy product from that social media influencer because they're charismatic person.	1	2	3	4	5
EP2	I feel that the social media influencers that I plan to buy products from are very knowledgeable.	1	2	3	4	5	AT5	I plan to buy products from that social media influencer because they're stylish.	1	2	3	4	5
EP3	I feel that social media influencers that I plan to buy products from are very skilled.	1	2	3	4	5	Credibility						
EP4	I feel that social media influencers that I plan to buy products from are expert in their field.	1	2	3	4	5	CD1	I feel that the social media influencer that I plan to buy products from has credibility.	1	2	3	4	5
EP5	I feel that social media influencers that I plan to buy products from are competent enough to make assertions about things that they're good at.	1	2	3	4	5	CD2	Social media influencers that I plan to buy products from personally think that his/her posts on social media are valid.	1	2	3	4	5
Attractiveness							CD3	As for the social media influencer that I plan to buy product from personally, I think that he/she is competent to make claims about the product/service.	1	2	3	4	5
AT1	I plan to buy products from handsome or beautiful social media influencers.	1	2	3	4	5	CD4	I perceive that the social media	1	2	3	4	5
AT2	I plan to buy products from elegant social media influencers.	1	2	3	4	5							



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	influencer that I plan to buy a product from is credible when he/she messages in his/her post on social media are clear and not vague.					
CD5	Reviews of product/service from social media influencer that I plan to buy product from are positive,	1	2	3	4	5
Trustworthiness						
TW1	The Influencer that I plan to buy products from is dependable.	1	2	3	4	5
TW2	The Influencer that I plan to buy products from is honest.	1	2	3	4	5
TW3	The Influencers that I plan to buy products from are sincere.	1	2	3	4	5
TW4	I believe a social media influencer that I plan to buy products from will convey information that does not harm his/her followers.	1	2	3	4	5
Purchase Intention						
PI1	Influencer posts on social media make me plan to buy and try a recommended product/service.	1	2	3	4	5
PI2	I plan to buy products/services used and recommended by social media influencers.	1	2	3	4	5
PI3	I plan to buy a product/service recommended by an influencer in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
PI4	I am interested in purchasing products/services advertised by social media influencers.	1	2	3	4	5



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