

# MARKETING MIX FACTORS AFFECTING THE PURCHASE OF CULTURAL SOUVENIRS BY THAI CONSUMERS IN PHAYAO PROVINCE, THAILAND

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## ABSTRACT

*The study of marketing mix factors affecting the purchase of cultural souvenirs in Phayao Province is twofold. Firstly, to study the decision-making behavior of purchasing cultural souvenir products in Phayao Province. Secondly, to compare the differences of marketing mix factors affecting the purchase of cultural souvenirs in Phayao Province. The data was collected through a questionnaire from a sample group of 400 Thai consumers who traveled to Phayao Province. The collected data was analyzed by employing descriptive statistics, t-tests, and ANOVA in order to test the research hypotheses.*

*The results showed that the marketing mix factors with the highest effect on purchasing cultural souvenirs in Phayao province were the proposition ( $\bar{X}=4.23$ ), followed by the product ( $\bar{X}=3.98$ ), package ( $\bar{X}=3.88$ ), price ( $\bar{X}=3.85$ ), physical evidence ( $\bar{X}=3.84$ ), people ( $\bar{X}=3.83$ ), place ( $\bar{X}=3.82$ ), process ( $\bar{X}=3.75$ ), and promotion ( $\bar{X}=4.23$ ). The marketing mix factors of various personal factors of the respondents on gender, age, and average monthly income showed significant difference ( $p<0.05$ ).*

**Keywords:** Marketing Mix Factors, Cultural Souvenirs, Thai Consumers, Phayao Province

## INTRODUCTION

Thailand's tourism industry is a top priority because it energizes the economy by generating substantial income for the country. Likitsarun (2019) revealed the development of a provincial cluster in Thailand's upper north region to become a hub of land tourism by focusing on marketing, public relations, and brand creation to attract more tourists. The Structure of Thai tourism system (Madhyamapurush, 2019) have 3 dimension as demand side (tourism behavior), supply side (such as accommodations, souvenirs, tourism business and tourism resource ) and support side (such as local government, Tourism Council of Thailand and Ministry of Tourism and Sports: Policy design). And concept of tourism marketing used marketing mix (Kotler et al., (2006); Madhyamapurush (2013); Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Package, Physical evidence, People and Process.

Looking at the Phayao Province tourism situation since 2017, it shows an increase in the number of tourists who have brought income to the province. Factors affecting the rise of tourism in Phayao, include charming scenery, a peaceful setting at Phayao Lake (Kwan Phayao), unique culture, beautiful ancient temples, and an outstanding way of life (Phayao Province Development Plan, 2020). Additionally, there is the potential of linking a tourism route to other major tourism destinations, for example, Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Nan, and the connected routes along the borders to Laos PDR, Vietnam, and the Republic of China.

The above mentioned demonstrates the potential of Phayao Province to create opportunities for large numbers of tourists in Phayao, which in turn would generate a significant amount of income from tourism activities. Vanaprak & Boontheingtham (2019) discussed the importance of souvenirs as a major component in Thailand's tourism industry. Souvenirs are objects that help preserve memories of travel experiences for tourists to remember later, as well as a marketing tool for promoting tourism destinations and creating perception through souvenirs as symbols. Therefore, it is important to study the marketing mix that affects the purchase of souvenirs in Phayao Province, which are products of local wisdom and local identity. Development of any local products can contribute to the preservation of culture reflecting the identity of the tourist destination, while simultaneously generating income for local people and creating new careers. In other words, creating and improving upgrade souvenirs can help publicize Phayao province and stimulate travel demand.

### Research Objectives

- 1) To study decision-making behavior through the purchasing of cultural souvenir products in Phayao Province.
- 2) To compare the difference in marketing mixes affecting the purchase of cultural souvenirs in Phayao Province.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Population and Samples

The population used in this study was 596,754 Thai tourists who traveled to Phayao Province in 2017. The sample size was 395 respondents, calculated at a 95% confidence level (Taro Yamane, 1973). Data was collected on 400 respondents in total.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The research instrument was a questionnaire on the study of marketing mixes affecting the purchase of cultural souvenirs in Phayao Province, which was separated into three parts: the personal information of respondents, the factors affecting souvenir purchases, and additional recommendations. A Likert-scale response with five scales was adapted to assess the effect of each marketing mix. Likert-scale questions were interpreted on five levels: highest effect on purchasing decisions ( $\bar{x}=4.21-5.00$ ), high effect on purchasing decisions ( $\bar{x}=3.41-4.20$ ), moderate effect on purchasing decisions ( $\bar{x}=2.61-3.40$ ), low effect on purchasing decisions ( $\bar{x}=1.81-2.60$ ), and the lowest effect on purchasing decisions ( $\bar{x}=1.00-1.80$ ). Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics: percentage, mean, and standard deviation, with statistical hypothesis testing done by t-testing and ANOVA.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### Analysis on the Behavior of Decision-Making to Purchase Cultural Souvenirs in Phayao Province

The majority of the respondents were female 78.80 %, with males making up only 21.20 %. The largest number of respondents were 21-30 years old, at 47.50%, while the smallest number

were those 41-50 years old, at 1.5%. Married respondents represented 75%, education level showed that 33% held a bachelor's degree, 59% of respondents had their own business 59%, and monthly income was 20,001-25,000 for 56% of those who responded to the questionnaire.

Tourism patterns showed that 42.20% of tourists traveled to Phayao Province for vacation, followed by 38.80% whose purpose for traveling was an education and study trip. Duration of their stay one day during the weekend which for 54.20% of tourists, with December being the month the highest number of people traveled to Phayao Province, at 18.80%. Tourists were less likely travel to the area in June and July, at only 1.20%. Tourists mainly searched for information about their tourist destination in Phayao Province on the internet (69%), and they stayed in hotels at a rate of 31.5%, followed by staying at relatives' or friends' houses (22.80%), with 3% of tourists choosing to camp.

Regarding the shopping behavior of tourists in Phayao Province, 65% purchased consumer products such as food, beverages, and herbal medicines, more than the 35.00% who purchased non-consumer products, which included accessories, clothes, bags, and apparel. 17.00% of tourists purchased traditional confectionary (Kalamare Chiangkham), while 15.00% bought Tai Lue woven fabrics.

Looking at the purchasing behaviors of tourists who bought souvenirs in Phayao Province, we see that 42% of tourists chose to buy unique products, followed by 23.50% looking for value for their money, 19.50% wanting utilization benefits, 8.20% buying by reputation, and 6.00% choosing details and neatness. The amount of money spent on souvenirs was typically (55.20 %) less than 1,000 THB, while 62.50% of people used the internet to search for information about the products. The provincial souvenir center was the number one location, where 38.80% of customers purchased local products, while overall, 57.20% of tourists chose to buy souvenirs while travelling in Phayao Province. The top-selling souvenir was the well-known, traditional fermented fish (Plasom), purchased by 32.00% of tourists, with the top three reasons to buy this product being as a souvenir (49.00%), for self-consumption (22.50%), and because it was a good price (15.50%).

### **A Comparison of the Differences in Marketing Mix Factors Affecting Purchasing Of Cultural Souvenirs in Phayao Province**

The overall factors of the marketing mix affecting the purchase of cultural souvenirs in Phayao Province had a high effect. Considering each marketing mix, ordered from the highest to the lowest, the proposition with the highest effect ( $\bar{X}=4.23$ ) on the product contributing income to locals were those that preserve and promote local wisdom. This was followed by products that use famous local resources ( $\bar{X}=3.98$ ), then package design helping to protect local products ( $\bar{X}=3.88$ ), price ( $\bar{X}=3.85$ ) on the various channels of payment, physical evidence ( $\bar{X}=3.84$ ) being products that can be seen thoroughly and are displayed in an orderly and beautiful manner, salespeople who are eager to facilitate services ( $\bar{X}=3.83$ ), location ( $\bar{X}=3.82$ ), process of delivery of sample products ( $\bar{X}=3.75$ ), and finally promotion during special festivals ( $\bar{X}=3.59$ ).

**Table 1**  
**THE MARKETING MIX AFFECTING THE PURCHASE OF CULTURAL SOUVENIRS IN PHAYAO PROVINCE**

Details	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	The effect level
Proposition	4.23	0.69	high
Product reflects the uniqueness of destination and culture	4.22	0.67	high
Product sustains traditional values	4.11	0.68	high
Product contributes income to the community	4.30	0.68	high
Product preserves, protects, promotes local wisdom	4.30	0.71	high
Product looks impressive during tourism activities	4.24	0.73	high

<b>Product</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>0.79</b>	high
Product certified by standards on safety, or certification paper provided	3.97	0.78	high
Product uses famous local resources	4.21	0.75	high
Variety of products	3.99	0.81	high
Reputation/brand of product	3.92	0.79	high
Storytelling about product to add value and create perception of product	3.92	0.84	high
Collaboration with government to evaluate product quality	3.89	0.81	high
<b>Package</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>0.85</b>	high
Use of provincial symbols in product design	3.86	0.87	high
Packaging shows detail, instructions for consumer in outstanding manner	3.93	0.86	high
Packaging is new and trendy	3.71	0.91	high
Packaging adds value to the product	3.91	0.86	high
Packaging helps to protect and cover the product	3.95	0.87	high
Packaging can be reused	3.93	0.77	high
<b>Price</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>0.87</b>	high
Price is appropriate to product quality	3.87	0.83	high
Price is variety defined	3.86	0.83	high
Price tag is visibly displayed	3.77	0.92	high
Various channels of payment	3.91	0.90	high
<b>Place</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>0.89</b>	high
Multiple channels to search for product details	3.99	0.82	high
Location is easily accessed	3.73	0.92	high
Customer can make purchases through online channels	3.75	0.97	high
Convenient public transportation provided to access the product store	3.76	0.85	high
Parking is adequately provided	3.87	0.94	high
Parking is safe	3.84	0.85	high
<b>Promotion</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>1.01</b>	high
Product is publicized through the tourism website, tourism guidebook, provincial events	3.53	1.08	high
A premium is provided with product	3.52	1.00	high
Special discount	3.61	0.99	high
Promotion during special festivals	3.70	0.99	high
<b>Process</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>0.91</b>	high
Shipping products by post	3.76	0.94	high
Product is exhibited in the events at the national, regional, and provincial level to attract tourists to the site	3.66	0.95	high
Celebrities employed to publicize products	3.59	1.00	high
Sample products available for tourists	4.01	0.75	high
<b>People</b>	<b>3.83</b>	<b>0.87</b>	high
Salespeople are kind and friendly	3.88	0.83	high
Salespeople are eager to assist customers	3.93	0.80	high
Salespeople are knowledgeable and recommend the product with details	3.72	0.93	high
Salespeople can communicate in foreign languages	3.78	0.94	high
Salespeople understand the technology of service	3.84	0.86	high
<b>Physical Evidence</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>0.82</b>	high
Location design of store provides an atmosphere of northern identity (Lanna)	3.84	0.86	high
Convenient to shop with wide shopping lanes	3.86	0.81	high
All products are visibly displayed	3.85	0.78	high
Display of products is orderly and attractive	3.87	0.83	high
Product display is set in proper category	3.87	0.80	high
A good atmosphere at the store is created	3.77	0.88	high
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>0.85</b>	high

Concerning the hypotheses testing the comparison average of marketing mix factors between male and female respondents, there was a significant difference, at  $p=0.05$  in the proposition aspect. This is shown in several ways: 1) the products reflect the uniqueness of local identity and culture; 2) the products contribute income to the community; and 3) the products can preserve, conserve, and exhibit local wisdom. In terms of product aspect, the significant difference was  $p=0.05$ , as shown in: 1) the product is certified by the standards on safety or certification is provided; 2) there is a variety of products; and 3) the reputation of the products. For packaging aspects, the significant difference was  $p=0.05$ , only in the subjects of: 1) use of the provincial symbol to design the product; 2) packaging showing the details and instructions for consumers in an outstanding manner; 3) packaging is new and trendy; 4) packaging helps to protect and cover the product; and 5) packaging can be reused. Additionally, there was no significant difference at  $p=0.05$  in the aspects of price, place, promotion, process, people, and physical evidence.

The hypotheses testing the comparison between the averages in marketing mix factors of respondents from different age groups by employing a one-way ANOVA showed there was a difference at a significance level of 0.05. The corresponding confidence level is 95% in the product aspect at  $p<0.05$ , as shown in: 1) product is certified by the standards on safety or certification is provided; 2) product uses famous local resources; 3) there is a variety of products; 4) reputation of the brand of product; 5) storytelling about the product adds value and creates perception of the product; and 6) collaboration with the government to evaluate the product quality for purchase is assured.

The difference in the significance level of the package aspect was 0.05 as it relates to: 1) using the provincial symbol to design the product; 2) packaging showing details and instructions for consumers in an outstanding manner; 3) packaging is new and trendy; 4) packaging adds value to the product; 5) packaging helps to protect and cover the product; and 6) packaging can be reused.

For pricing, there was a difference of significance at the level of 0.05 in: 1) price is appropriate to product quality; 2) price variety is defined; 3) price tag is visibly displayed; and 4) there are various payment channels. Place aspects showed a difference at the significance level of 0.05 in the subjects of: 1) multichannel search for product details; 2) location is easily accessed; 3) customers can make purchases through online channels; 4) convenient public transportation is provided to access the product store; 5) adequate parking is provided; and 6) parking is safe.

Promotion aspects demonstrated a difference at a significance level of 0.05, with: 1) product publicized through the tourism website, tourism guidebook, and provincial events; 2) premiums are provided with the product; 3) there is a special discount; and 4) there is promotion during special festivals. For the process aspect, there was a difference at a significance level of 0.05 for: 1) shipping products by post; 2) products are exhibited in events at the national, regional, and provincial levels to attract tourists to travel to the region; 3) celebrities are employed to publicize the product; and 4) delivery of sample products for tourists.

In terms of people, the significance level showed a difference of 0.05 in only the subjects of: 1) ability of salespeople to communicate in a foreign language; and 2) salespeople understand the technology of the service. The physical evidence aspect had a difference at a significance level of 0.05 in the subjects of: 1) location design of the store provides an atmosphere of northern identity (Lanna); 2) convenient of the shop with wide shopping lanes; and 3) good atmosphere in the store.

Regarding the comparison of average marketing mix factors among respondents from various income groups, there was a significant difference of  $p<0.05$  in the proposition aspect, as shown in the subjects of: 1) product reflects the uniqueness of the destination and culture; 2) product can sustain traditional values; 3) product can preserve, protect, and exhibit local wisdom; and 4) product looks impressive in tourism activities. From a product aspect, there was a difference at a significance level of 0.05 in the subjects of: 1) product is certified by the standards on safety or

certification is provided; 2) there is a variety of products; 3) the reputation and brand of the product; and 4) storytelling about the product adds value and creates a positive perception of the product.

There was a difference at a significance level of 0.05 for package aspects of: 1) using the provincial symbol to design the product, 2) packaging showing details and instructions for consumer use in a clear manner; 3) packaging that is new and trendy, 4) packaging that adds value to the product; 5) packaging that helps to protect and cover the product; and 6) packaging that can be reused. As regards price, the difference was significant a level of 0.05 for: 1) pricing appropriate to the product quality; 2) pricing variety is defined; 3) price tags are visibly displayed; and 4) there are various payment channels.

In terms of place, there was a difference at a significance level of 0.05 for: 1) multiple channels in which to search for product details; 2) easily accessible locations; 3) public transportation providing access to product stores 4) adequate parking; and 5) safe parking. For promotion, there was a difference at a significance level of 0.05 for the subjects of: 1) product is publicized through the tourism website, tourism guidebook, and provincial events; 2) premiums provided with the product 3) special discounts; and 4) promotion during special festivals.

For the process, there was a difference at significance level of 0.05 for: 1) shipping products by post; 2) products exhibited in events at the national, regional, and provincial levels to attract tourists to travel to the region; 3) employing celebrities to publicize products; and 4) providing sample products for tourists. The people aspect showed a difference at a significance level of 0.05 in the subjects of: 1) salespeople are kind and friendly; 2) salespeople are eager to facilitate service; 3) salespeople are knowledgeable and able to recommend products; 4) salespeople can communicate in a foreign language; and 5) salespeople understand service technology.

The physical evidence showed a difference of significance level at 0.05 for subjects of: 1) location and design of store providing an atmosphere of northern identity (Lanna); 2) shopping convenience with wide shopping lanes; 3) all products are visibly displayed; 4) displaying of products is orderly and attractive; 5) products are displayed in proper categories; and 6) stores have good atmosphere.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the study of how marketing mix affects the purchase of cultural souvenirs in Phayao Province, the hypothesis was tested to compare the difference in marketing factors across each aspect, including proposition, product, packaging, price, physical evidence, people, place, process, and promotion to respondents using various personal information. The findings of the current study also supported the same hypothesis in the study of behavior in purchasing souvenirs by Thai and Chinese tourists in Phuket that showed there was a difference at a significance level of 0.05 when compared to the average of marketing mix factors in price and place aspects of male and female respondents. This was also true for respondents of different age groups.

The findings of this study revealed that the top three on average were proposition, product, and packaging. Proposition reflects the uniqueness of the destination and its culture, which contributes income to the community, and that the product can preserve, protect, exhibit local wisdom. A study by Lamomsai & Boonyasarit (2018) emphasized the creation of cultural identity through Praewa fabric, the valuable legacy it provides as a cultural product by define meaning, its status as the queen of Thai silk, the way in which storytelling reflects artistic values and local identity, and how memorable souvenirs, create a feeling of being part of the people and places visited by tourists.

Product is qualified by standards on safety and certification, the variety of products available, the reputation or branding of the products, as stated by Vanapruk & Boontheingtham (2019), in their study on the marketing mix and satisfaction in purchasing souvenirs by Japanese

tourists. The most important factors were that products contained authentic value, had a strong reputation and were well-known to the public, were of good quality that was safe to consume, was easy to carry, and contained benefits.

When studying packaging, it was found that effective packaging can add value to products, which is consistent with the findings of Buakhao (2019), who explored the opportunity in developing the potential of souvenirs by supporting the marketing, packaging design, and product design through the establishment of a training program as a means to increase the opportunity product sales, including focusing on expanding distribution channels to neighboring countries and expanding market share abroad. Phayao Province, which has a border crossing into Laos PDR at Ban Huak, as well as being a link to foreign tourists from China and Vietnam, is able to export provincial cultural souvenir products for economic and tourism benefits. Therefore, it can be said that souvenirs products serve as a form of public media to promote tourist destinations and stimulate the demand for travel.

### RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The community should give importance to the study of tourist groups by developing demonstration points to disseminate the body of knowledge, which in turn can be used to expand business opportunities.
- 2) The community should develop famous souvenirs, such as traditional fermented fish (plasom) products, as well as focusing on extending the storage period, including improving product designs that can help protect the product during delivery, both domestic and international.

### RECOMMENDATION TOPICS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- 1) A study on the marketing mix factors suitable for changing tourists' behavior in terms of experience, exchange, location, and promotion.
- 2) A study on the processing of souvenir products to promote tourism in Phayao Province.
- 3) A study on the potential of souvenir products that affect the economic value added to Phayao Province.

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