

Local food consumption in a tourism destination: a proposal of a tourists' behavioral model

ABSTRACT

Even though local food in Ayutthaya represents a major tourist attraction due to cultural heritage food experiences, very few studies have reported tourists' behavioral components regarding local food consumption. The main objective of this study is to analyze the tourists' behavioral model and examines the influence of the tourists' attitudes, motivation, satisfaction on their loyalty towards local food consumption in Ayutthaya. A self-administered questionnaire was conducted to collect data with a total of 211 tourists responded. The data analyzed by using SPSS and Mplus software. A frequency analysis was firstly employed to examine the demographic and behavioral characteristics. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was then conducted to validate the data. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assure the suitable proposed factor, and structural equation modeling (SEM) is finally applied to test the hypothesized relationship between the constructs. The empirical results of this study revealed that (a) tourist motivations have a significant and direct influence on satisfaction; (b) tourist attitudes also directly and significantly affect satisfaction; (c) Tourist satisfaction directly and significantly affects their loyalty. Besides, motivation represented a stronger influence than attitude on the participants' satisfaction. Therefore, any study related to local food should take these factors into consideration.

Key Words: *Tourists' behavioral model, Local food, Structural Equation Modeling*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Tourism Industry is one of the major economic factors in Thailand, it is represented by a 7.65% of Thailand's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (CEIC Data, 2019; Division of Tourism and Sports Economy of Thailand, 2019). Tourism revenue earned from the tourism industry worth over 100 billion baht (2.94 billion €) every year, which is a very high income. Thailand is a well-known international travel destination because of its long history, cultural attractions, diverse natural resources, famous festivals, and gastronomy. Moreover, Thailand is introduced with unique local experiences to the world such as the street market, gorgeous beaches, and islands.

Dining out is found that it is the most important activity for international visitors (57%) in a destination (Mckercher, Okumus and Okumus, 2008). Thai food is part of the image to attract tourists from around the world to visit Thailand. One cannot deny that food is a major component of tourism. Thai food is listed in CNN travel world's 50 best food. According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand Action Plan for 2019, five main travel sectors are set out to promote tourism in Thailand under the campaign "Open to the New Shade", including Gastronomy, Arts and Crafts, Thai Culture, Nature and Thai Way of Life (TAT, 2018). Gastronomy plays a major role in the way tourists experience the destination and indicate that some travelers would return to the same destination to taste its unique gastronomy. In this direction, more and more tourism providers are now focusing on the food element as a central part of its destination tourism product. Besides, gastronomic tourism provides visitors with both authentic culinary education and a far greater understanding, appreciation and connection to a destination (Crotts, 2006).

Ayutthaya is a town that has unique historical significance, outstanding both physical history and civilization throughout 417 years. Ayutthaya was the capital of the Kingdom of Thailand. There are important tourist attractions linked to history, culture, and tradition. Moreover, Ayutthaya's local food has a unique identity. Local food is an element of cultural tourism. However, gastronomic products have not been known much among tourists. At the present, Ayutthaya has prospered into a major gastronomic tourism destination due to unique local products (Ladapha and Chiranut, 2013). To provide Ayutthaya with the opportunity to develop local food and to be known and accepted at the national level, it is necessary to understand certain factors affecting the improvement of local food. This is important to make more attractive to domestic and international tourists visiting Ayutthaya. In Ayutthaya, there is little research on gastronomic tourism and it is hard to find (Ladapha and Chiranut, 2013; Kamkaen, Weerakul and Damapong, 2016). Furthermore, to the moment, there are no studies that investigate the tourists' behavior in a local food tourism destination, such as Ayutthaya.

Therefore, this research aims to examine the tourists' behavioral components, including attitudes, motivations, satisfaction and loyalty towards local food in Ayutthaya. Hopefully, the results from this study can be a data source for the Government of Thailand to promote Thai local food in Ayutthaya as value added and tourism industry sustainability in the future, as well as a good source of information to improve the knowledge about local food in Ayutthaya from both locals and tourists. In addition, from a theoretical point of view, there is the hope that this research helps in understanding the behavior of tourists in a local food destination.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The main aim of this research is to analyze the tourists' behavioral components (i.e. attitudes, motivations, satisfaction, and loyalty) towards local food in Ayutthaya. In order to achieve it, the three following objectives are formulated:

- 1) To analyze the sociodemographic and behavioral characteristics of the visitors of a local food destination.
- 2) To explore each component of the tourists' behavior model in a food tourism destination (i.e. attitude, motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty).
- 3) To explain the relationships between the different components (i.e. attitude, motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty) of tourists' behavior in a local food destination.

According to the third objective, to identify the causal relationship between the constructs, the following hypothesis is proposed:

- H1.** Tourists' motivations toward local food have a direct and positive effect on tourist satisfaction.
- H2.** Tourists' attitudes toward local food have a direct and positive effect on tourist satisfaction.
- H3.** Tourist satisfaction regarding the consumption of local food has a direct and positive effect on loyalty based on behavioral intentions.

The proposed hypothetical model of this research adapted from previous studies is shown in Figure 1 below (Ragheb and Tate, 1993; Dimitriades, 2006; Gallarza and Gil, 2006; Lee, 2009; Ozdemir *et al.*, 2012; Wong *et al.*, 2017; Shukor *et al.*, 2017)

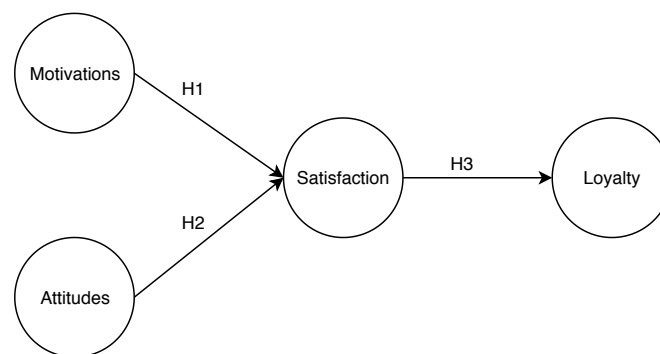


Figure 1: Proposed Model

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Survey Questionnaire

The survey instrument comprises six main parts: sociodemographic characteristics, tourist behavior profile, attitudes, motivations, satisfaction, and loyalty. The measurement indicators of constructs were selected and developed from relevant prior research (Gug and Eves, 2012; Chi *et al.*, 2013; Fard and Saberi, 2015; Hau, 2015; Pérez Gálvez *et al.*, 2017; Shukor *et al.*, 2017; Choe and Kim, 2018; Zhang *et al.*, 2018). In terms of measurement, the first two parts of the survey instrument included closed and open-ended questions purposed to understand the demographic information and tourist behavior. The four other components are measured on a five-point Likert-type scale to measure the importance score of each item. The pilot survey was tested by six participants to estimate a questionnaire length, collect format, as well as to test the clarity and the appropriateness of the questions.

3.2 Sample Selection

In order to analyze the influence of the attitudes, motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty of tourists regarding local food consumption, the target population was domestic and foreign tourists visiting Ayutthaya. From this population, since accurate statistics of the number of visitors in the city of Ayutthaya was unknown at the time of the survey, sample selection was based on nonprobability sampling by using the convenience sampling method. Based on the sample size table from Taherdoost (2018) with a confidence coefficient of 95% and an error of 5%, the sample size for this study was set at 384 national and international tourists visiting Ayutthaya. The survey was carried out between February and July 2019. However, the participants in this study were on a voluntary basis.

3.3 Data Collection

This study acquired the primary data collected through a questionnaire with three different approaches. Firstly, the data were collected using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). Questionnaires were carried out in front of Ayutthaya train station and at the entrances of major attractions, including Wat Mahathat temple and Wat Phra Si Sanphet whereas self-administered questionnaires were conducted using QR codes to access the questionnaires platform. QR code was distributed to tourists who do not have time to answer at the time as well as posted in tourist accommodations located in the city. Afterward, the questionnaires were distributed online via Facebook. The link to the survey was posted to Facebook pages and personal Facebook messages. All responses were submitted through the Google Forms separating English and Thai versions.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Data Analysis

This study is based on a quantitative research approach. The data were analyzed by using SPSS and Mplus software to obtain empirical results. The data analysis consists of four stages. Firstly, a frequency analysis was employed to examine the demographic characteristics and tourist behavior profile relating to consuming local food by frequency distribution and percentage. Secondly, the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to validate the reliability of the data by using IBM SPSS 23 software. The validity test of each factor was performed by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, varimax rotation, total variance explained. For the reliability test used Reliability Test-Cronbach's Alpha. Thirdly, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assure the validity of the measurement model. Lastly, structural equation modeling (SEM) is applied to test the hypothesized relationship between the constructs in the proposed model. The analysis variables in the proposed model comprise 4 constructs with 30 attributes from the survey: attitudes (3), motivations (16 items), satisfaction (11 items), and loyalty (3 items).

4.2 Results

First, the demographic information and behavioral profile regarding local food consumption of respondents are presented in tables 1 and 2, including a descriptive statistical analysis and frequency analysis of the questionnaire respondents. The total of received responses was 211 tourists visiting Ayutthaya, including national tourists (N=103) and international tourists (N=108). Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The descriptive statistics from the demographic profiles revealed that more than half of the sample (69.2%) were Asian, whereas respondents being domestic tourists, half of them (53.5%) came from the center of Thailand. From the total sample, female respondents (53.1%) outnumbered male respondents (46.9%). Half of the respondents accounted for being single (50%), followed by married (39.9%), and divorced (10.1%). The majority of respondents were well-educated (undergraduate 49.3% and Master and above 33.5%). In terms of occupation, over half of the respondents (54.3%) were employed. Table 2, with concerning tourist behavior characteristics of respondents, varied in their answers, 46.4% of them declared that they came to Ayutthaya for the first time. For those repeating the visit for the second time, third times and four times were about 12.8 %, 11.4%, 4.3%, respectively, while 25.1% of total respondents repeated to travel to Ayutthaya for 5 times or more. About the frequency of eating local food in Ayutthaya, about 29.7% of them were for the first time, 40.2 % for 2-3 times, 6.7% for 6-9 times, and 23.4% for more than 9 times. A majority of them, approximately 25.7% obtained the information about local food in Ayutthaya from the Internet and 24.8% from friends and relatives. In response to the question "How did you make the decision to try local food in Ayutthaya?", the most common reason is their own decision (39.3%). However, they agreed that their decisions are also influenced by friends and relatives (31.2 %). At last, the results show that 65.4% of tourists had eaten Thai food in other foreign countries.

Table 1: The demographic characteristics

Variable	Category	Distribution (N=211)	Variable	Category	Distribution (N=211)	
Continent	Asia	146 (69.2%)	Education Level	Secondary or below	36 (17.2%)	
	Europe	51 (24.2%)		Undergraduate	103 (49.3%)	
	South America	1 (0.5%)		Master's and above	70 (33.5%)	
	Region (For National tourist)	North America	11 (5.2%)	Employment Status	Student	29 (13.8%)
		Australia	2 (0.9%)		Employee	114 (54.3%)
Northern		10 (9.9%)	Business owner		24 (11.4%)	
Eastern		19 (18.8%)	House worker		10 (4.8%)	
Central	54 (53.5%)	Retired	21 (10.0%)			
Gender	Southern	18 (17.8%)	Unemployed	12 (5.7%)		
	Male	99 (46.9%)	Monthly Income	1000€ or less	97 (46.9%)	
Female	112 (53.1%)	1001 to 2000 €		55 (26.6%)		
Marital Status	Single	104 (50%)		2001-3000€	26 (12.6%)	
	Married	83 (39.9%)				
	Divorced	21 (10.1%)				

Table 2: Tourist behavior information on local food consumption

Variable	Category	Distribution (N=155)	Variable	Category	Distribution (N=155)
The number of times of visiting Ayutthaya	This is the first time.	98 (46.4%)	Reasons for tasting local food	It was my own decision.	116 (39.3%)
	2 times	27 (12.8%)		A friend/relative recommended it to me.	92 (31.2%)
	3 times	2 (11.4%)		A tour guide / a tourism professional recommended it to me.	18 (6.1%)
	4 times	9 (4.3%)		I read the information on a guide book, the media or the Internet.	69 (23.4%)
	5 times or more	53 (25.1%)			
The number of times of eating local food in Thailand (For foreigner)	This is the first time	4 (3.7%)	Used to eat local food in other cities	No	74 (35.4%)
	2-5 times	16 (15%)		Yes	135 (64.6%)
	6-9 times	33 (30.8%)			
	10 times or more	54 (50.5%)			
The number of times of eating local food in Ayutthaya	This is the first time.	62 (29.7%)			
	2-5 times	84 (40.2%)			
	6-9 times	14 (6.7%)			
	10 times or more	49 (23.4%)			
Information sources of local food in Ayutthaya	Internet	106 (25.7%)			
	Media	70 (17%)			
	Travel agency	21 (5.1%)			
	I already knew of it	51 (12.4%)			
	Friends/relatives	102 (24.8%)			
	Books/magazines	26 (6.3%)			
	Fairs/exhibitions	19 (4.6%)			
	Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT)	17 (4.1%)			

The behavioral patterns of respondents are analyzed with different factors related to: tourist attitudes, motivations, satisfaction, and loyalty. The average mean values of each item are given (Table 1). The mean values of attitude towards local food in Ayutthaya are, from the highest to the lowest: rate of interested in local food in Ayutthaya (mean = 3.80); rate of the level of influence of local food on the visit (mean = 3.64); and the rate of the knowledge about local food (mean = 3.44). Respondents perceived 'tasting local food in an original place is an authentic experience' was the most important among all motivation factors (mean = 4.23), followed by 'Experiencing local food gives me an opportunity to increase my knowledge about different cultures' (Mean = 4.10) while 'Having local food increases friendship or kinship' was considered as the least motivation (Mean = 3.63). In terms of satisfaction, all items obtained mean scores over 4 points, then it represents that respondents feel satisfied with local food consumption in Ayutthaya. The highest value of satisfaction item was 'Experience local culture' (Mean = 4.10). The highest value on the loyalty construct was 'encouraging other people to visit Ayutthaya' (mean = 4.36).

Second, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is carried out to test representing the four latent variables of the model (i.e. attitude, motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty), presented in Table 3-6. To determine the dimensions of variables, a principal component analysis using Varimax rotation was undertaken in EFA. The test results of the KMO and Bartlett's test found that the values of KMO are greater than a standardized cut-off value of 0.5, indicating the adequate sample and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (P) are less than 0.001, indicating the valid Factor Analysis (Gassiot, Prats and Coromina, 2016; Shukor *et al.*, 2017). The number of factors grouping items is based on factor analysis with an Eigenvalue higher than 1 extracted and variance explained. In order to verify the reliability of each factor, Cronbach's alpha was tested. The results of Cronbach's alpha value received sufficient more than the acceptable values of 0.6 (Taber, 2016).

Refer to Table 3, 16 items were grouped into three factors of motivations. The first identified group of motivations was named 'Culture and Escape', related to cultural experience and Escape from routine reasons. The second group of motivations was named 'Interpersonal Relationship', representing interpersonal relationships. The third group was named 'Health Concern', associated with concern for health. Finally, the last group was named 'Sensory Appeal', including the items about taste. Total variance explained for motivation factors indicates that more than 50 percent of the value (67.426%).

Table 3: The Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of Motivation Scale

Factor/Item	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach' Alpha	Mean
Factor 1: 'Culture and Escape'		6.595	41.219	0.880	
Tasting local food served by local people in its original place offers a unique opportunity to understand local cultures.	0.757				4.09
Experiencing local food allows me to discover something new.	0.775				4.00
Experiencing local food gives me an opportunity to increase my knowledge of different cultures.	0.779				4.10
Tasting local food in an original place is an authentic experience.	0.775				4.23
The experience of local food in its original place makes me excited.	0.605				3.99
Tasting local food on holiday helps me to relax.	0.551				3.87
Tasting local food makes me feel exhilarated.	0.572				3.84
Factor 2: Interpersonal Relationship		1.769	11.059	0.836	
I like to talk to everybody about my local food experiences.	0.735				3.68
Having local food increases friendship or kinship.	0.835				3.63
I want to advise on local food experiences for people who want to travel.	0.842				3.70
Tasting local food enables me to have an enjoyable time with friends and/or family.	0.697				3.82
Factor 3: Health concern		1.314	8.211	0.847	
Local food is nutritious.	0.762				4.09
Local food contains a lot of fresh ingredients produced in a local area.	0.799				3.77
Tasting local food keeps me healthy.	0.856				3.78
Factor 4: Sensory Appeal		1.110	6.937	0.611	
It is important to me that the local food I eat on holiday tastes good.	0.774				3.93
The taste of local food in its original countries is different from the taste of the same food in own my country.	0.799				3.73

1= Very Unimportant, 5=Very Important, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0.887, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $p < 0.000$

According to the EFA result of 'attitude' (Table 4), the whole items have high factor loadings exceed 0.8. It is clear that between the identified factors and their individual items, there are high correlations. In terms of eigenvalue, it is over 1 (2.055) and a single factor is extracted, and approximately 68.503% of the total variance is explained. From these results, 'Attitude' comprises a single factor with three items. The items are named 'the knowledge on Local food in Ayutthaya', 'the interesting rate in local food', and 'the influence of local food'.

Table 4: The Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of Attitude Scale

Factor/Item	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach' Alpha	Mean
Attitude		2.055	68.503	0.776	
The knowledge of Local food in Ayutthaya	0.820				3.44
The interesting rate in local food	0.800				3.80
The influence of local food	0.862				3.64

1= Completely disagree, 5= Completely agree, Kaiser-Meyer-Olin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0.685, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $p < 0.001$

Table 5 shows the EFA results of 'Satisfaction'. All eleven items loaded onto a factor with a factor loading greater than the acceptable 'cut-off' value. Thus, no items had to be removed. Based on the rotated component matrix generated with the Varimax rotation method, the identified factor was grouped into three main factors. The factors were named according to the satisfaction's items that they include. Factor 1 comprises six items and is named 'Restaurant atmosphere, Convenience, Local cultural experience, and Price', loaded with the satisfaction on restaurant atmosphere, convenience, local cultural experience, and Price of local food. Factor 2 includes three items related to both Food Quality and Variety of food and cooking methods, and can, therefore, be named 'Food Quality and Variety'. The last group of satisfaction with two items is named 'Service' as it is represented with Service Quality and Service Personnel. Concerning the total variance explanation table, it shows that 67.31% of the variance is explained by three factors

Table 5: The Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of Satisfaction Scale

Factor/Item	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach' Alpha	Mean
Factor 1: 'Restaurant atmosphere, Convenience, Local cultural experience, and Price'		5.401	49.097	0.874	
Attractive restaurant	0.712				4.01
Availability of ethnic restaurants	0.627				4.08
Locally produced food	0.731				4.08
Experience local culture	0.794				4.58
Meal experience	0.645				4.02
Price	0.763				4.19
Factor 2: 'Food Quality and Variety'		1.150	10.457	0.807	
Variety of cooking methods	0.620				3.96
Food quality	0.715				3.96
Food variety	0.765				3.98
Factor 3: 'Service'		0.853	7.756	0.829	
Service quality	0.846				3.79
Service personal	0.732				3.86

1= Very dissatisfied, 5= Very satisfied, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0.897, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $p < 0.001$

Based on the EFA results of 'Loyalty' (Table 6), three items for loyalty factor variables found that items were grouped into one cluster. One item named 'Intention to revisit in two years', was eliminated to ensure construct validity due to lower factor loadings than the standardized cut-off value of 0.5. Thus, three items were employed to measure the construct of loyalty. The remaining three items had factor loading above 0.5, including items named 'Intention to come back' (0.890), 'Intention to recommend' 0.932, 'Intention to encourage others to visit Ayutthaya' (0.891). The total variance explanation shows 81.27% of the variance is explained by these three items with an eigenvalue of 2.438.

Table 6: The Exploratory Factor Analysis Results of Loyalty Scale

Factor/Item	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach' Alpha	Mean
Loyalty		2.438	81.270	0.885	
Intention to come back	0.890				4.24
Intention to recommend	0.932				4.24
Intention to encourage others to visit Ayutthaya	0.891				4.36

1=Strongly disagree, 5= Strongly agree, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0.734, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $p < 0.001$

Third, after doing the test of EFA, then Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to first verify the fit of the proposed components. CFA was conducted using the software of Mplus version 6.12 and 7.4. To approach to Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the measurement models were employed to validate items used to measure talent variables. The obtained results proved that all dependent variables hypothesized are higher than the validity level. All research variables obtained by EFA were still retained in a measurement model. Besides, it is found that the result of CFA factor loadings obtained via Mplus tended to similar value with the output of EFA factor loading analysis through SPSS software. In addition, the Goodness-of-fit for the measurement model showed that they are good model fit indexes for each component. Clearly, all factor loadings between the latent construct and observed variables were significant.

Then, the structural model between constructs is measured. The structural model comprises four latent constructs: 'attitude', 'motivation', 'satisfaction', and 'loyalty'. To test the overall measurement model fit, a list of the goodness of fit measures are computed. The criteria for goodness of fit (GOF) is used by looking at the value of seven fit indices which consist of: the Chi-square test (χ^2), the Probability Level (P), the Chi-square test by degrees of freedom (χ^2/DF), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen (2008) suggest the acceptable cut-off points are: TLI and CFI >0.95, RMSEA <0.06 and SRMR <0.08. At first, the results of GOF test found that the overall fit indexes for the structural model appeared that the model is not suitable enough to accept because the model was not well fit. It is perhaps possible because of a result of its sensitivity sample size and the complexity of the model (Lee, 2009; Chi *et al.*, 2013). To achieve the acceptable goodness-of-fit, the model was analyzed and improved in order to have acceptable goodness of fit. Thus, the next SEM analysis has considered indicator modification indices and has been developed step by step. After adjustment, it was decided to consider only the main latent variables of motivation, which is the only type of motivation that has a significant effect on satisfaction, named 'Health Concerns'. Once the structural model is modified (see Figure 2), the goodness-of-fit indexes provided are satisfactory. The results of the overall goodness of fit for the structural model are summarized in the following criteria in Table 7.

Table 7: The overall goodness-of-fit indices for the estimated structural model

The Goodness of Fit Index								
	χ^2	DF	P	χ^2/DF	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Obtained Value	236.092	165	0.0002	1.430	0.959	0.952	0.045	0.065
Criteria				<2	>0.95	>0.95	<0.06	<0.08

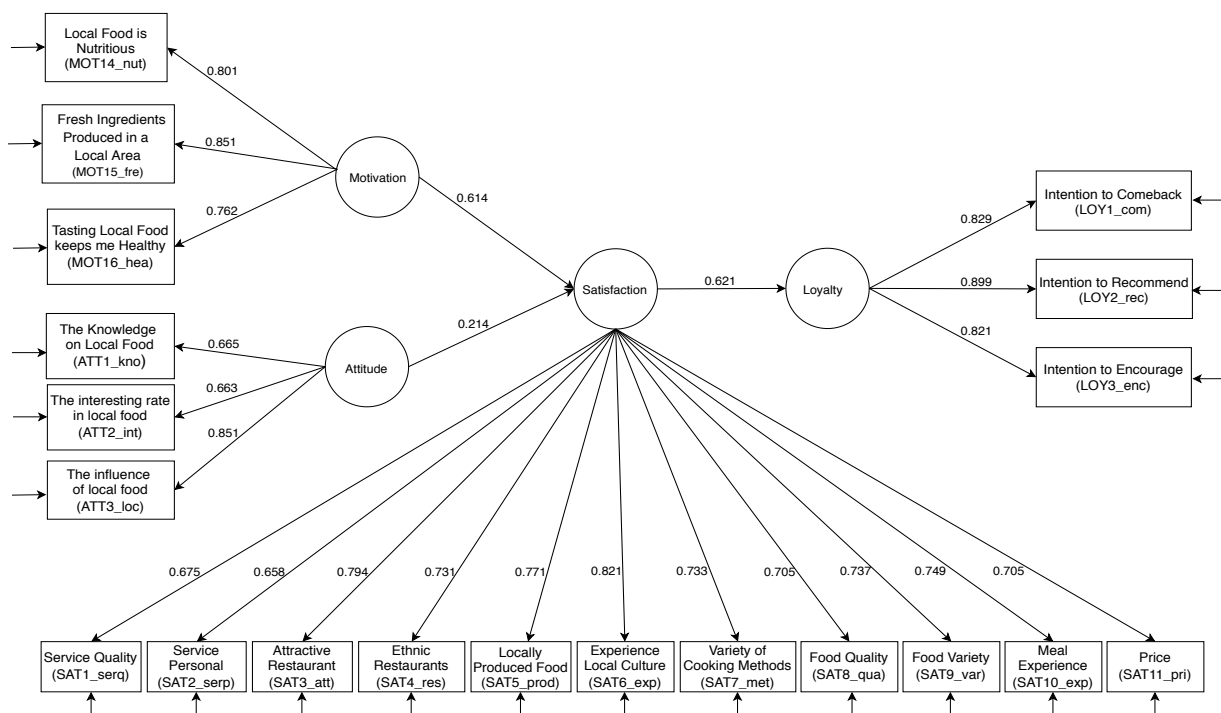


Figure 2: The result of Structural Equation Model (SEM)

As it can be observed in Table 7, p-value < 0.05 can explain that the model is a good data descriptor. The Chi-squared value (χ^2) is 236.092 with 165 degrees of freedom. Looking at the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), it equals 0.959. Likewise, to the value of Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), it is approximately 0.952. When considering Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), it equals 0.045, and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is 0.065. According to these results, the overall goodness-of-fit indexes of the structural model are quite good and reasonably acceptable. Thus, the theoretical model fits for testing the observed hypotheses. Figure 2 demonstrates the whole accepted structural model and standardized estimates for this analysis.

Finally, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to test the proposed hypotheses of the study. The critical ratio (CR) was included in this analysis to measure the significant level of a regression weight in SEM. If its value is higher than +1.96 or less than -1.96, the difference between the two regression weights is significant at $p < 0.05$ level. However, all critical ratios for this study were well above +1.96, indicating statistical significance. The test of hypotheses in this study is summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses		Path	Standardized Estimate (β)	Critical Ratio (C.R.)	P-Value ($p < 0.01$)
H1	Tourist motivation toward local food has a direct and positive effect on tourist satisfaction	Motivation ⇒ Satisfaction	0.614	8.607	0.000
H2	Tourists attitude toward local food has a direct and positive effect on tourist satisfaction	Attitude ⇒ Satisfaction	0.214	2.701	0.007
H3	Tourist satisfaction regarding the consumption of local food has a direct and positive effect on loyalty	Satisfaction ⇒ Loyalty	0.621	9.693	0.000

As presented in table 8, hypothesis H1 was firstly tested by examining the path coefficient between “motivation” and “satisfaction”. The path analysis reveals that the tourist motivation on local food consumption in Ayutthaya significantly and directly affects satisfaction (C.R.=8.607>1.96, β =0.614, $P=0.000 < 0.01$). Therefore, hypothesis 1 proposed in this case study is accepted. Concerning hypothesis H2, it is accepted that there is a significant and direct effect between tourist attitude toward Ayutthaya local food and satisfaction (C.R.=2.701>1.96, β =0.214, $P=0.007 < 0.01$). And this also leads us to confirm hypothesis H3 that confirms that tourist satisfaction toward consuming local food directly and significantly influences loyalty (C.R.=9.693>1.96, β =0.621, $P=0.000 < 0.01$), resulting in hypothesis H3 being confirmed. Thus, it clearly indicates that all relationships are significant ($p < 0.001$). Moreover, it can be observed that the effect of tourist motivation on satisfaction is high, while the influence of tourist attitude on satisfaction is quite low.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.

Tourist attitude, tourist motivation, and tourist satisfaction are significant elements for predicting future behavior. There are some studies assessing these important constructs in food tourism but no previous research has investigated the relationships among these variables and refer it in Ayutthaya, Thailand (Torres Chavarria and Phakdee-auksorn, 2017; Choe and Kim, 2018). Thus, the main aim of this study is to explore the tourists’ behavioral components based on local food consumption by exploring the case of tourists visiting Ayutthaya, Thailand. This research analyzes attitudes, motivations, satisfaction and loyalty to examine the behavioral model towards local food in Ayutthaya.

The findings show that although the view of tourist attitude did not have much knowledge of local food in Ayutthaya, they are extremely interested in local food. For the exploration of tourist motivation based on gastronomic tourism, it can suggest that the important factors of tourist motivation influencing to consume local food in Ayutthaya were ‘tasting local food in an original place is an authentic experience’, and ‘Experiencing local food gives me an opportunity to increase my knowledge about different cultures’. In the context of significant factors of tourist satisfaction, the satisfaction scores indicated that tourists visiting Ayutthaya have a high level of satisfaction. In addition, the findings show that tourists satisfied local food in Ayutthaya due to perceiving experience local culture. Another reason is that they are satisfied with food price. Thus, these factors should be considered primarily in order to address the level of satisfaction towards local food. Finally, looking at loyal tourists, it can be clarified that the influence of local food is important to future behavior because tourists tend to encourage others to visit Ayutthaya.

Uncovering these relationships is mainly based on the findings of the estimated structural equation model. A finding from this study reveals that tourist motivations directly and significantly affect tourist satisfaction. Similar to the result obtained by Lee (2009), motivation influences positively on satisfaction in Nature-based tourism. Many previous studies also support this finding (Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Pérez Gálvez *et al.*, 2017; Shukor *et al.*, 2017; Han and Hyup, 2018). Moreover, this result shows attitudes toward local food directly and significantly affect tourist satisfaction which is supported by Young (2018). Besides, the strength of the relationship between motivation and satisfaction is higher than with attitude. Tourists felt highly absorbed in 'Local food containing a lot of fresh ingredients produced in a local area' as well. Finally, this study proved that tourist satisfaction regarding the consumption of local food has a direct and positive effect on loyalty. The result is also in agreement with previous empirical works (Chi *et al.*, 2013; Meesala and Paul, 2016; Shukor *et al.*, 2017; Han and Hyup, 2018). Tourist satisfaction could be suggested as a significant mediating variable in the behavioral model of the study (Lee, 2009). In addition, it can recommend that a higher level of satisfaction is more related to willingness to recommend others to visit Ayutthaya

According to the examination of sociodemographic and behavioral characteristics of the tourists of a local food destination, it will have important marketing implications. For developing effective marketing strategies, it could suggest paying attention to the high loyal visitors' segment. It could be noted that different marketing strategies should be conducted grouping customers by demographic and behavioral characteristics. Especially the majority of tourists who are female adults with lower monthly incomes than 1000 euros who have well education. Besides, most of the tourists got the information from the Internet. Thus, it is better to promote marketing campaigns via online channels.

Although prior research has already examined a behavioral model using these variables, this study initially analyzes the tourists' behavioral model and examines the influence of the tourists' attitudes, motivation, satisfaction on their loyalty in term of gastronomy destination. Consequently, authorities and operators of Ayutthaya tourism can improve gastronomy based tourism experiences by taking the important factors into consideration. The present study is a beginning point for further research in the extent of behavioral models on local food and tourism. It is noted that this research focuses on a specific case study, which is Ayutthaya, Thailand. However, behavioral patterns found in this research should be tested and proved again in other gastronomic tourism destinations to verify it.

There are some limitations to this study that should be pointed out. Due to the small sample size, there are some problems of robustness that need to be addressed with further data collection. This is because of limited time in the study and low response rate of questionnaire answers. It needs a larger sample to confirm the findings of this study. Besides, using structured questionnaires to measure variables has a gap analysis because researchers might ignore some significant attributes or salient points. Therefore, future research would be a more efficient result if using both qualitative and quantitative approaches for analysis of tourist behavior patterns towards local food in order to understand deeply about it. Either focus group discussions or personal interviews are suggested to capture the important attributes before designing the survey. Another view regarding local food, the variables used in this study to explore the relationships of behavioral model on local food consumption was limited only the frameworks of attitude, motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty. Other variables affecting future behaviors could also be examined to improve the model in future research. Additionally, the proposed model tested in the study only investigates the relationship between the main constructs of the model, but it has not focused on analyzing the influence of observed variables on other latent variables. Hence, subsequent research recommends to test hypotheses between them in order to consider which indicators are a significant impact on behavioral intention. Finally, future research should investigate the role of tourist demographics and behavioral characteristics on the decision to consume local food. The result would have important implications of destination competitiveness and local food product development as well as marketing in accordance with the characteristics of the target markets.

6 REFERENCES

- Torres Chavarria, L. C. and Phakdee-auksorn, P. (2017), "Understanding international tourists' attitudes towards street food in", *Tourism Management Perspectives*, Vol. 21, pp. 66–73.
- CEIC Data (2019), "Thailand tourism revenue", Available at: <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/thailand/tourism-revenue/> (accessed 15 February 2019).
- Chi, C. G., Chua, B. L., Othman, M. and Karim, S. A. (2013), "Investigating the structural relationships between food image, food satisfaction, culinary quality, and behavioral intentions: the case of Malaysia", *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, Vol. 14 No. 2, pp. 99–120.
- Crotts, J. C. (2006), "Tourism and Gastronomy: Gastronomy's Influence on how tourists experience a destination", *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 354-377.

- Dimitriades, Z. S. (2006), "Customer satisfaction, loyalty and commitment in service organizations", *Management Research New*, Vol. 29 No. 12 pp. 782-800.
- Division of Tourism and Sports Economy of Thailand (2019), "Tourism Economics by MOTS", Available at: [https://secretary.mots.go.th/ewtadmin/ewt/policy/download/InfoTorismEconomicReport_Q1_2018\(TSA\).pdf/](https://secretary.mots.go.th/ewtadmin/ewt/policy/download/InfoTorismEconomicReport_Q1_2018(TSA).pdf/) (accessed 15 February 2019).
- Fard, M. M. and Saberi, H. (2015), "Studying the motivations of choosing foreign tourism destinations: case study of Thailand", *Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol. 8 No. 9, pp. 254-264.
- Gallarza, M. G. and Gil, I. (2006), "Value dimensions, perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty: an investigation of university students' travel behavior", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 27 No. 3 pp. 437-452.
- Gassiot, A., Prats, L. and Coromina, L. (2016), "The perceived value of accessibility in religious sites – do disabled and non-disabled travellers behave differently?", *Tourism Review*, Vol. 71 No.2, pp.105-117.
- Gug, Y. and Eves, A. (2012), "Construction and validation of a scale to measure tourist motivation to consume local food", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 33 No. 6, pp. 1458-1467.
- Han, H. and Hyup, S. S. (2018), "Role of motivations for luxury cruise traveling, satisfaction, and involvement in building traveler loyalty", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 70, pp. 75-84.
- Hau, T. C. (2015), "The impact of service quality on tourist satisfaction: the case study of Rantau Abang Beach as a turtle sanctuary destination", *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 5 No.23, pp.1827-1832.
- Kamkaen, N., Weerakul, K. and Damapong, B. (2016), "Strategic of Gastronomic Tourism", working paper, Suan Dusit Rajabhat University, September 2013.
- Wong, B. K. W., Musa, G. and Taha, A. Z. (2017), 'Malaysia my second home: The influence of push and pull motivations on satisfaction', *Tourism Management*, Vol. 61, pp. 394-410.
- Ladapha, P. and Chiranut, S. (2013), "Gastronomic tourism in Ayutthaya, Thailand", working paper, Suan Dusit Rajabhat University, 2013.
- Lee, T. H. (2009), "A structural model to examine how destination image, attitude, and motivation affect the future behavior of tourists", *Leisure Sciences*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 37-41.
- Mckercher, B., Okumus, F. and Okumus, B. (2008), "Food Tourism as a viable market segment: it's all how you cook the numbers", *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp.137-148.
- Meesala, A. and Paul, J. (2016), "Service quality, consumer satisfaction and loyalty in hospitals: Thinking for the future", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 40, pp. 1261-269.
- Ozdemir, B., Aksu, A., Ehtiyar, R. and Çizel, B. (2012), "Relationships among tourist profile, satisfaction and destination loyalty: examining empirical evidences in antalya region of Turkey", *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, Vol. 21 No. 5, pp. 206-540.
- Pérez Gálvez, J.C., López-Guzmán, T., Cordova Buiza, F., and Medina-Viruel, M.J. (2017), "Gastronomy as an element of attraction in a tourist destination: the case of Lima, Peru", *Journal of Ethnic Foods Journal*, Vol. 4, pp. 254-261.
- Ragheb, M. G. and Tate, R. L. (1993), "A behavioural model of leisure participation, based on leisure attitude, motivation and satisfaction", *Leisure Studies*, Vol.12, pp. 61-70.
- Shukor, M. S., Mohd Salleh, N. H., Mohd Idris S. H. (2017), "An evaluation of the effects of motivation, satisfaction on destination loyalty: case study tourism Malaysia", *International Journal of Sciences and Management*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 137-147.
- Taber, K. S. (2016), "The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education", *Research in Science Education*, Vol. 48, pp. 1273-1296.
- Taherdoost, H. (2018), "Determining Sample Size: How to Calculate Survey Sample Size", *International Journal of Economics and Management Systems*, Vol. 2, pp. 237-239.
- TAT (2018), "TAT launches Amazing Thailand's 'Open to the New Shades' book", Available at: <https://www.tatnews.org/2018/04/tat-launches-amazing-thailands-open-to-the-new-shades-book/> (Accessed: 1 August 2019).
- Yoon, Y. and Uysal, M. (2005), "An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 26, pp. 45-56.
- Choe, J. Y. J. and Kim, S. S. (2018), "Effects of tourists' local food consumption value on attitude, food destination image, and behavioral intention", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 71, pp. 1-10.
- Zhang, H., Li, L., Yang, Y. and Zhang, J. (2018), "Why do domestic tourists choose to consume local food? The differential and non-monotonic moderating effects of subjective knowledge", *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, Vol. 10, pp. 68-77.