

THE CONNECTION OF SLOW FOOD PRINCIPLE WITH COMMUNITY- BASED TOURISM IN THAILAND: INVESTIGATING GENERATION Y PERCEPTION

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Abstract: The slow food movement, a new gastronomic trend, arisen as a striking response to negative impacts of globalization with three principles of “Good, Fair and Clean. Community-based tourism covers a variety of local culture, especially local food products, services, and experiences. As the generation Y cohort represents a significant market for tourists, this article aims to explore the connection between slow food principle and community-based tourism, and evaluate slow food attributes that need to be improved related to Gen Y perspective. A questionnaire was used to collect data with 385 respondents. Five steps of the importance-performance analysis were evaluated to acquire reliability and validity issues. The findings imply the slow food principle associated with CBT food-related activities with high level of perceived importance and performance. The results of IPA reveal that the quality of food in CBT destination needs to be urgently managed to establish a memorable experience. A collaboration among CBT enterprises, government, private sector, and marketers to strengthen public awareness about slow food could be one of steppingstone toward sustainable development and healthy food culture.

Key words: slow food, Community-Based Tourism (CBT), Generation Y, Thailand

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INTRODUCTION

Food plays a critical role in human life as one of the necessities of life and exemplified as a medium that indicates the history of society and local cultures of different countries. Thai food is regarded as an important intangible cultural heritage both in socio-cultural and economic dimensions which related to local wisdom with three main values: nutritional, cultural, and medical value. The connection of food and tourism has been identified in several studies as national identity, regional cultural heritage with food-related products, services, and experiences of a traveler's destination (Giampiccoli et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2015; Lewis et al., 2021; Prasongthan and Silpsrikul, 2022). In the past 30 years, food consumption culture has changed according to globalization reflecting to consumers' food behavior change such as buying nutritional products in supermarkets, fast food consumption, restaurant visit, online shopping with delivery at home or pick-up, which become more important for them than material possessions (Hanus, 2018). The mass production of food is increasing, and human health problems have destructive effects, for instance obesity, heart related problems (Celebi and Genc, 2021).

In 1986 the slow food movement, a new gastronomic trend, arisen as a striking response to these negative impacts of globalization. Starting from a simple local protest fast food consumption in high speed, impact area of slow food has grown up exponentially as a social movement worldwide and as a transition process to eating slowly and healthfully culture (Celebi and Genc, 2021). Slow food concept gives importance to the art of cooking from the selection of raw materials, preparation of ingredients from natural farming, cooking with care and delicacy, reminiscing back to the traditional way of living, connecting to the local or community food culture. The principle of “Good, Fair and Clean” were introduced regarded to the underlined purpose of slow food that food on the plate must associated with the planet, the pleasantness of taste, preserve traditional dish and it should be produced in socially sustainable way, with an emphasis on social justice, inequities, respectful and fair conditions (Lee et al., 2015; Payandeh et al., 2020; Schneider, 2008).

In the context of tourism, travel destinations can incorporate food-related activities to enhance the tourist experience's connection with local heritage (Giampiccoli et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2015). Community-based tourism (CBT) is an alternative form of tourism that requires active participation of the local community and considers the sustainability of the environment, society, and culture of the community. CBT is present in many different geographical areas of the world, in particular developing countries and considered as a strategic to reduce negative effects of mass tourism and attain better living conditions (Lopez-Guzman et al., 2011). CBT covers a variety of local culture: natural environment, people, culture, superstructure, food, products, accommodations, products, food festival and entertainment (Han et al., 2019). Local food is one of the outstanding identities that the community often chooses to present as a tourism activity that tourists can participate including local food consumption, cooking class, food demonstration, and food products. In Thailand, CBT has

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emerged in 1994 as a community development strategy, along with a prominent part of the domestic travel market (Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2014). The survey by ministry of Tourism and Sport (2018) stated 303 CBT enterprises throughout Thailand located in rural areas where travelers can experience local way of life with beautiful natural environment. Several studies pointed out demand for this form of tourism in both domestic and international CBT travelers (Bunmajarinon and Kaewnuch, 2022; Giampiccoli et al., 2020; Han et al., 2019). Generation Y cohort (Gen Y), also known as Millennials are people who were born from 1982 to 2004 and representing a significant market for tourists (Okulicz-Kozaryn and Valente, 2019). The major traits of Gen Y include putting travel as their top priority, greater use of internet, motivate to explore new places, tend to seek out authentic local culinary experience, and spend a lot of money on good food while traveling (Ketter, 2021; Kim et al., 2018). This generation has based their travel decisions on culinary interests more than any other generations and was the dominant segment with most of the culinary tourism market share (Travel Weekly, 2016). In Thailand, Gen Y tourist has also become one of the main target groups with 40.79 percent market size and the survey indicated their travel behavior as FIT who tend to travel to beautiful attraction and spend the most expenditure on food and drink while traveling (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2022).

In accordance with The Third National Tourism Development Plan (2023-2027) that highlight gastronomic tourism and slow tourism as main target for Gen Y (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2022). Since domestic tourists are the core market for CBT in Thailand and acknowledging that Gen Y has become main target group of Thailand tourism industry. The study aims to shed light on Thai domestic Gen Y tourist in the connection between slow food principle and community-based tourism, and evaluate slow food attributes that need to be improved related to Gen Y perspective. It is the interest of this research to compare the importance level of slow food principle applying in CBT and the performance of slow food principle applying in CBT perceived by Gen Y tourists. One of the approaches that has been widely used is the importance-performance analysis (IPA). In-depth understanding of the existing of slow food principle in the community-based tourism, will lead to an assessment of tourists' perceptions and policy formulation to promote local food based on the concept of slow food to attract tourism to various localities. Consequently, tourism continues to expand and benefits both directly and indirectly the country's economy. It is also a dissemination and continuation of cultural heritage to be known further.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community based tourism (CBT)

Tourism has become one of the important industries in terms of economic contribution to the national economy for many developed and developing countries (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018). However, the structure of the tourism industry has changed dramatically over the years with a greater interest in issues including sustainable development. Community-based tourism (CBT) has developed as an alternative form of tourism as well as a means of strengthening the community as managed and owned by the community, for community (Goodwin and Santilli, 2009).

Generally, CBT projects have been promoted based upon conservation initiative and collective benefits through the offering of tourism products, services and experiences which related to local culture and daily lives. CBT covers a variety of local culture: natural environment, people, culture, superstructure, food, products, accommodations, products, festival, and entertainment (Han et al., 2019). According to the international trade center (2022), different level of CBT products, services and experiences can be implemented starting from a short CBT visits that tourist support a local products / souvenir, eat a meal at a local home, and participate with CBT activities, to overnight village stays in homestays with exploration of local life. In Thailand, CBT has emerged in 1994 as a community development strategy with 303 CBT enterprises throughout Thailand located in rural areas where travelers can experience local way of life with beautiful natural environment (Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2018). Local food is considered as one of CBT activities that the community often chooses to present as a tourism activity in which tourists can participate including local food consumption, cooking class, food demonstration, and food products. The value of authenticity of food within a local context is interesting to CBT travelers, hence the CBT-food related activities existed as part of the tourist experience (Giampiccoli et al., 2020). Various elements of CBT activities related with local food were studies including the production and marketing of traditional food and drink, farm visit, the use of indigenous foods, the use of indigenous medicine plant as products for the tourist, food festival, cooking lessons, food demonstration, food processing, food preservation, culinary trails etc. (Bhoophala and Daengbuppha, 2022; Giampiccoli and Kalis, 2012).

Slow Food Movement

In relation to the pressure of the socio-economic environment, stress, lack of real contact human relationship, the speed of the modern life, slow movement emerged in respond to the need to reconnect with people, the need to communicate, rediscover places, food, and drink (Moirá et al., 2017). Slowness is at the core of activities by doing things in the right speed. The slow food movement, a new gastronomic trend, arisen as a striking response to these negative impacts of globalization in 1986. Starting from a simple local protest fast food consumption in high speed, impact area of slow food has grown up exponentially as a social movement worldwide and as a transition process to eating slowly and healthfully culture (Celebi and Genc, 2021). Over the years, slow food movement has become an important part of a transition process to eat healthy, safe and protect the producer and biodiversity. Slow food endorses the primacy of five sensory experiences: eyesight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste (Petroni, 2001).

As such slow food concept gives importance to the art of cooking from the selection of raw materials, preparation of ingredients from natural farming, cooking with care and delicacy, uniqueness of regional culinary heritage, reminiscing back to the traditional way of living, connecting to the local or community food culture, as well as achievement of long-

term changes in biodiversity, and sustainability of production (Buiatti, 2011). In terms of food producers, the slow food movement supports and promotes small-scale production, rediscovering the value of local environment and its culture, and supporting rural communities' enterprises (Payandeh et al., 2020; West and Domingos, 2012).

The principle of "Good, Fair and Clean" were introduced regarded to the underlined purpose of slow food that food on the plate must associate with the planet, the pleasantness of taste, preserve traditional dish and it should be produced in socially sustainable way, with an emphasis on social justice, inequities, respectful and fair conditions (Lee et al., 2015; Payandeh et al., 2020; Schneider, 2008). According to Philippon (2015), the principle of "Good" refer as a fresh and appetizing seasonal food that satisfies the five senses and is part of local culture, "Fair" mean food with accessible prices for consumer and fair conditions for small-scale producers, while "Clean" represents food production and consumption that does not harm environment, animal welfare or consumer health. The slow food movement has not been considered only within the food market, but also in tourism context where food consumption is one of the main activities that influence tourist experience that involves rest, escapism, learning, thrill, status, and lifestyle (Santich, 2004). In addition, Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity reports the connection between slow food and sustainable development in three directions: social, environmental, and economic sustainability. Several studies have investigated the relationship between slow food, sustainable development, and local food (Jung et al., 2014; Philippon, 2015). The study of Ahlawat et al (2019) presented the potential of developing slow food tourism in India with several suggestions to relevant stakeholders such as government support, marketing and promotion, public awareness, quality control etc. Nonetheless the study about the association between slow food principle and community-based tourism has not yet been discovered.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Measurement

A quantitative approach was applied with a self-administered survey. The questionnaire comprised of four parts. The first part included demographic questions; respondents' gender, marital status, education, travel purpose, travel destination, type of accommodation and frequency of traveling.

The following sections measured the importance and performance of slow food attributes. Fourteen items adapted from the previous research study on slow food principles carried out by Payandeh et al (2020) comprised of good (five items), fair (five items), and clean (four items). The respondents were inquired to assess the level of importance when engaging with slow food activities during their visit on community-based tourism, and to assess the performance of the community toward slow food principles based on their experience on a five-point rating scale. The slow food attributes were translated into Thai language and adapted to comply with cultural context.

Data collection and analysis

An online questionnaire was employed from October to December 2022 to collect the data from generation Y domestic tourists who had travel experience with community-based tourism at least three times and have experience on local food related activities during their CBT visit. Totally, 385 respondents participated in this questionnaire survey.

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the overall characteristics of the 385 GenY respondents. According to Bacon (2003) the importance performance analysis (IPA) has been successfully employed to understand customer satisfaction and prioritized service quality improvement, thus this study was employed IPA to measure how GenY tourists perceived certain attributes of slow food principle connecting with their CBT experience. Five steps of IPA were adapted from the study of Lai and Hitchcock (2015) that suggested as a framework for Tourism researcher using IPA to acquire reliability and validity issues. Starting with descriptive analysis of attributes with the mean, standard deviation as well as multivariate normality test with skewness and kurtosis value to confirm the normality of the distribution of variable.

Step 2 with reliability and validity test, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is conducted in this study to assess the quality of the three factors structure (Good, Fair, and Clean) which were theoretically developed and represent the constructs. The fit indices and cut off value include $Cmin/df (<3)$, $CFI (>0.90)$, $NFI (>0.90)$, $RMSEA (<0.05)$, and $TLI (>0.90)$ (Hair et al., 2010). Convergent validity was conducted with several tests including the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) are included to assess convergent validity with the value exceed 0.5 and 0.7 respectively (Hair et al., 2010). Cronbach's alpha is performed to test internal consistency reliability with the value greater than 0.70 suggested by Hair et al. (2010). Lastly, a discriminant validity test was measured to verify the extent of difference among concepts with the AVE value for each construct greater than squared correlation (Hair et al., 2014).

Next, the measure the levels of importance by univariate test is suggested before perform IPA. The fourth step is to determine the gaps between importance and performance with paired-sample t-test to show the significance difference ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$). Thus, the attributes with $p\text{-value}$ higher than 0.05 should be eliminated and not be plotted in I-P mapping (Lai and Hitchcock, 2015). The last step is interpreting the results of IPA with the most common direct measurement method with the data-centered quadrants approach. This can be done by scoring the importance and performance of specific service or product attributes based on the perception of tourists. This data is plotted on a 2x2 matrix that recommends four improvement strategies: (1) concentrate here; (2) keep up the good work; (3) low priority; and (4) possible overkill. Because it is simple and easy to use, the IPA has been used in many industries including tourism and hospitality (Chang et al., 2012). As seen in Fig.3, the vertical axis measures the performance of the slow food attributes whereas the horizontal axis measures the importance of attributes. In this study, the overall importance mean was calculated and used as a point to locate the position of gridline dividing data into high and low importance. Similarly, the overall mean of performance was calculated to divide the high and low performance area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the data collected of 385 Gen Y respondents, 67% of the respondents were female (n=258), 26.8% were male (n=103) and 6.2% were LGBTQ+ (n=24). Most of the survey respondents were single (n=366 or 95.1%). Some 64.4% of respondents had bachelor's degree (n=248) and 28.1% (n=108) attained educational background below bachelor's degree. The majority of Gen Y respondents travel for leisure purposes (89.3% or n=344) to natural attractions including beach destinations (46.5%) and mountain (27.8%). Most of respondents prefer to stay in hotel and resort accommodation (67.5%). Within one year, 61.3% of respondents travel 1-3 times, 24.2% travel 4-6 times, and only 14.5% of respondents travel more than 6 times a year (see Table 1). In terms of length of stay and number of travel companions, the average duration of each trip is 2.8 days with 3.7 travel companions respectively.

Importance-Performance Analysis Results

As guideline for Tourism researcher, the study of Lai and Hitchcock (2015) was applied for the importance performance analysis (IPA) to measure how GenY tourists perceived about certain attributes of slow food principle connecting with their CBT experience. Five steps of IPA were followed including descriptive analysis, reliability, and validity test with Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), testing the univariate of importance attributes, gap analysis with paired-sample t-test, and I-P mapping and interpreting the results of IPA. Firstly, A multivariate normality test was also performed with the result of skewness and kurtosis values below 3 and 10 respectively (Kline, 2011), resulting in all items are normally distributed and appropriate for further analysis. The mean and standard deviation of all fourteen slow food attributes were calculated both importance and performance aspects (see Table 2). The mean score of important attributes ranged from 4.405-4.078. Gen Y perceived ecstatic natural landscapes as the highest importance attributes followed by fair priced and protecting biodiversity. The results indicated that native and local dish menu, and reminisce and promote healthy food culture were lesser importance to GenY travelers. In terms of the mean performance, the mean score ranged from 4.342-4.174. Reasonable price with its natural landscapes was identified as the attribute that performed the best, followed by ecstatic natural landscapes and fair prices. The lowest score in performance in GenY perception was native and local dish menu, followed by confidence in the quality of food. Figure 1 indicates the mean score of performance and importance by three dimensions of slow food principle. In terms of importance analysis, the results signify clean principle as the highest mean score followed by fair and good principle, besides clean principle demonstrate the highest performance mean score comparing to fair and good principles. In comparison between importance and performance by dimension, the results determine fair and clean dimensions has performed less than the tourists' expectation. On the other hand, the good principal dimension has achieved their performance more than the tourists' expectation (Figure 1).

Based on the results on both importance and performance of slow food principle toward CBT, it implied that there are connections between these two concepts with high level of perceived importance and performance. Hence, CBT food related activities can be promoted toward slow food principle including local food products, services, and experiences place importance to the art of cooking from the selection of raw materials, preparation of ingredients from natural, cooking with care and delicacy, reminiscing back to the traditional way of living, connecting to the local or community food culture. In accordance with the study by Mnguni and Giampiccoli (2016) that local/indigenous food can promote authenticity and tourists' experience follow by the CBT food and beverage standard in which cover with several key indicators that complied with slow food principle such as special cuisine, local ingredients from local farming, hygiene in food preparation, use natural bio-degradable packaging, opportunities for tourists and host to participate in food learning, etc. Secondly, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is performed in this study to measure the quality of the

Table 1. Generation Y respondent profile

Variables	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	103	26.8
Female	258	67.0
LGBTQ+	24	6.2
Highest level of education		
Below bachelor's degree	108	28.1
Bachelor's degree	248	64.4
Master's degree or above	29	7.5
Marital status		
Single	366	95.1
Marriage	17	4.4
Divorce/Separated	2	0.5
Travel purposes		
Leisure	344	89.3
Visit friends or relatives	16	4.2
Historical and cultural visit	6	1.6
Natural and environmental purposes	19	4.9
Travel destination		
Beach	179	46.5
Mountain	107	27.8
Rural	78	20.3
Urban	21	5.4
Accommodation		
Hotel/resort	260	67.5
Homestay/guesthouse	54	14.0
Friends and relative	29	7.5
One day trip (Not stay overnight)	40	10.3
Other e.g., Camping	2	0.5
Frequency of traveling/year		
1-3 times	236	61.3
4-6 times	93	24.2
More than 6 times	56	14.5

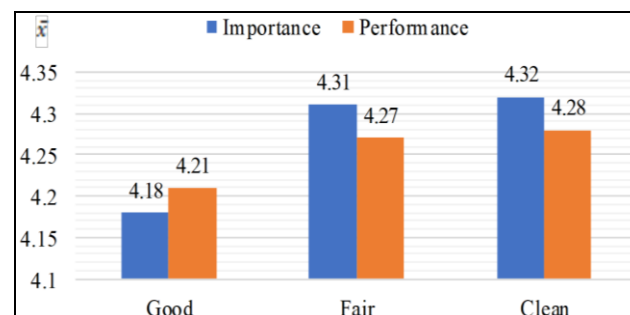


Figure 1. The mean score of importance and performance by slow food dimensions

factors. In this study fourteen observed variables were analyzed with three latent variables (Good, Fair, and Clean). Reliability and validity analysis of attributes were performed (see table 3). Cronbach’s Alpha value ranging from 0.84-0.86 which is greater than the acceptable threshold values of 0.70 reflecting internal consistency reliability. Convergent validity was investigated including factor loading, the average variance extracted (AVE) and construct reliability (CR).

The results indicate a high convergent validity was established to all constructs with factor loading values of items ranging from 0.636-0.830 with above thread hold value 0.60 (Hair et al., 2011). CR and AVE values were measured with CR value between 0.74-0.76 and AVE value between 0.86-0.87 at the acceptance rate of 0.6 and 0.5 respectively (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al, 2011). The evaluation of discriminant validity is also measured to verify the free from redundant items. Table 3 illustrates the square root of AVE value with bold value of each construct which significantly larger than the inter-factor correlation values of the constructs thus demonstrating good discriminant validity, each construct assessed distinct and different concepts (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Gefen & Straub, 2005). Furthermore, the model was tested with the goodness of fit statistic, the results proof of the construct validity of the new attributes (CMIN/DF = 1.87, RMSEA = 0.048, CFI = 0.983, TLI = 0.976) (Figure 2). Thus, the CFA model of the latent variables revealed internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Table 2. Results of mean, standard deviation, multivariate normality test and paired-sample t-test of importance and performance in slow food principle – as perceived by GenY travelers

Slow food attributes	Importance				Performance				Difference		
	\bar{X}	SD	SK	KR	\bar{X}	SD	SK	KR	\bar{X}	t-Value	Sig.
Q1 Taste of local and traditional cuisine	4.236	.731	-0.520	-0.562	4.231	.693	-0.438	-0.498	0.005	.153	.878
Q2 Feel happy and content with food	4.195	.771	-0.658	0.059	4.265	.709	-0.474	-0.748	-0.070	-2.099*	.037
Q3 Confident in the quality of food	4.299	.744	-0.659	-0.521	4.182	.720	-0.329	-0.880	0.117	3.164**	.002
Q4 Native and local dish menu	4.078	.844	-0.671	0.237	4.174	.710	-0.395	-0.487	-0.096	-2.617**	.009
Q5 Reminisce about healthy food	4.078	.850	-0.584	-0.167	4.184	.746	-0.389	-0.871	-0.106	-2.782**	.006
Q6 Fairer prices for food.	4.200	.777	-0.531	-0.647	4.195	.804	-0.730	0.206	0.005	.140	.889
Q7 Reasonable price with its natural landscapes	4.333	.717	-0.632	-0.674	4.342	.727	-0.751	-0.304	-0.010	-.284	.777
Q8 Fair priced for quiet and relaxed atmosphere	4.392	.692	-0.889	0.588	4.327	.693	-0.587	-0.591	0.065	2.071*	.039
Q9 Enough money to buy food	4.363	.694	-0.676	-0.517	4.255	.724	-0.593	-0.306	0.109	3.185**	.002
Q10 Simple packaging and fair price	4.262	.715	-0.476	-0.782	4.229	.750	-0.513	-0.690	0.034	1.006	.315
Q11 Ecstatic Natural landscapes	4.405	.709	-0.809	-0.443	4.335	.699	-0.568	-0.821	0.070	2.223*	.027
Q12 Wild ingredients carvings	4.177	.753	-0.377	-0.919	4.218	.717	-0.563	0.090	-0.042	-1.308	.192
Q13 Protecting biodiversity	4.387	.710	-0.804	-0.284	4.309	.704	-0.561	-0.664	0.078	2.652**	.008
Q14 Production of recyclable waste	4.301	.738	-0.740	0.080	4.262	.726	-0.529	-0.658	0.039	1.247	1.247

Note: SK = Skewness, KR = Kurtosis, *p>= 0.01, **p>=0.001, ***p<0.001

Table 3. Measurement model, the reliability for convergent validity

Constructs and Items	Loading	Convergent validity			Discriminant validity		
		α	CR	AVE	Good	Fair	Clean
Good		0.86	0.74	0.86	0.93		
IMP1	.749						
IMP2	.825						
IMP3	.793						
IMP4	.692						
IMP5	.636						
Fair		0.87	0.75	0.87	0.77	0.93	
IMP6	.698						
IMP7	.711						
IMP8	.788						
IMP9	.756						
IMP10	.797						
Clean		0.84	0.76	0.87	0.72	0.81	0.93
IMP11	.769						
IMP12	.734						
IMP13	.830						
IMP14	.704						

Note: α = Cronbach’s alpha; AVE = Average variance extracted; CR = construct reliability; Bold values represent square root of AVE

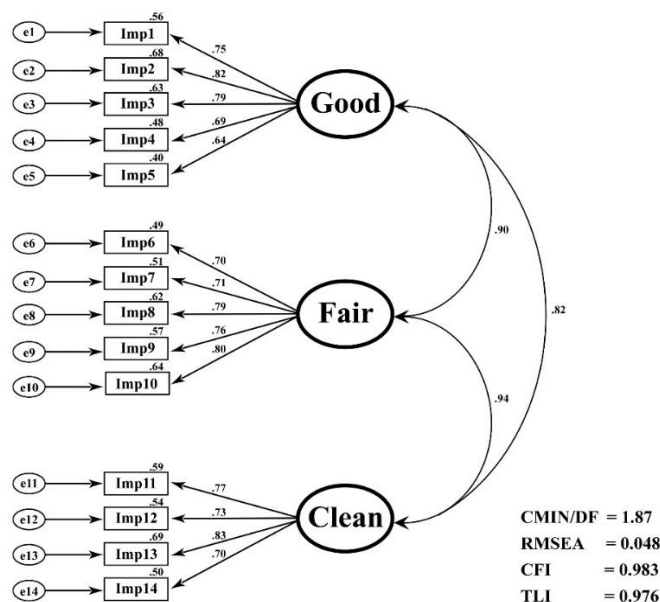


Figure 2. Results of CFA

Next, the measure the levels of importance by univariate test is conducted. The study of Lai and Hitchcock (2015) suggested that the levels of importance of attributes should be significantly difference for the reliability for the IPA. The Mauchly’s test of sphericity and Test of Within-Subject effects were applied in this study to test the compound symmetry of covariance and the univariate if importance attributes, demonstrating the level of importance of fourteen attributes are significant difference (p<0.000). In step 4 with the gap analysis, the differences between the level of performance and importance are executed. The results of gap analysis are provided in Table 2 with the mean difference. The existence of a performance gap is identified only when there is significant difference among the levels of

importance and performances (p value < 0.05), thus paired-sample t-test is conducted. The results indicate eight attributes (Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q8, Q9, Q11, Q13) with significant importance-performance gap (p -value < 0.05) should be plotted in I-P grid for further interpretation. The results also identified the priority for improvement, mapping in quadrants. The plot is split in to four areas by plotting two axes derived from the mean of all importance attributes ($\bar{X} = 4.26$) on X-axis, and the mean of all performance attributes ($\bar{X} = 4.25$) on Y-axis. Figure 3 shows the importance-performance analysis grid that Q3 attribute were identified in the Quadrant 1 (concentrate here), Q8, Q9, Q11 and Q13 in quadrant 2 (keep up the good work), Q4 and Q5 in low priority, and Q2 in possible overkill.

To explain the IPA of figure 3, only one attribute was in Quadrant 1 (Concentrate here) is an area of high importance but low performance. “Confident in the quality of food” could be considered as underperforming and as a threat to connecting slow food concept toward CBT. The study revealed that Gen Y travelers’ perception toward quality of food is discontented. In accordance with the study of Jang et al. (2011) that Gen Yers want to be offered quality foods with reasonable prices. The study of Ahlawat et al (2019) and Dimitrovski et al (2021) pointed out that taste and quality of food have the strongest influence on satisfaction, especially younger people. While four attributes in both fair and clean principle were plotted in Quadrant 2 (Keep up the good work), which is an area where both performance and importance represent strengths and high competitiveness. It could be interpreted that in food price in CBT activities relatively reasonable along with its dining experience with ecstatic natural landscapes, since most of the CBT enterprises in Thailand located in rural areas where travelers can experience local way of life with beautiful natural environment (Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2018). Besides, Gen Y travelers value the protection of the environment and the diversity of rural food. Therefore, its performance must be maintained as Gen Y concerned about environmental issues and demonstrated green behavior (Leerattanakorn, 2017). CBT activities is linked to local food system and authenticity, the used and cultivation of indigenous plants for food impacts positively to tourists’ experience since tourists want to experience the region they are visiting as well as maintaining biodiversity (Toledo and Burlingame 2006).

Two attributes related to “good principle” fell into Quadrant 3 (Low priority) which is an area where both performance and importance are low, indicating that improvement is not crucial. These attributes are associated with native and local dish menu, and reminisce about healthy food. The reasons might be that all respondents were domestic Gen Y tourists who relatively familiar with local Thai region and value of their own cuisine as it’s connected between people, place, culture, and identity. The results implicit that the nostalgic food with healthy food culture is not set as positioning for Gen Y tourist group. In Quadrant 4 (Possible overkill), only one attribute related to good principle of slow food are situated, feel happy and content with food. It implies that food appreciation is low in importance to the Gen Yers of Thailand but performs strongly.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Culture plays an increasingly important role in tourism and local food is one of the key factors of touristic experience (Du Rand et al., 2003; Payandeh, 2020). Community-based tourism (CBT) is an alternative tourism that requires active participation of the local community and considers the sustainability of the environment, society and culture of the community. The present study attempts to reveal the connection between CBT and slow food principle as well as extending earlier research (Giampiccoli et al., 2020; Payandeh et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2018). Understanding the gap between expectations and the performance of CBT toward slow food principle allows managerial implication for the operational improvement. The results clearly inferred that slow food principles; “Good Fair and Clean” associated with CBT food-related activities in the ways that Gen Y travelers consider that all three principles of slow food were expected while traveling to CBT destination. All fourteen attributes of slow food principles were rated as high in importance and performance. To clearly understand the gap between this importance and performance, the results of IPA reveal that the quality of food in CBT destination needs to be urgently managed to create a memorable experience as its underperforming. The strengths of the CBT destination toward slow food principles were the reasonable price with dining experience that incorporates local food with relaxed atmosphere and blissful natural landscape. The Gen Y travelers’ engagement toward protecting the environment and the diversity of local food was perceived as strength of CBT enterprises. For the low priority focus for CBT toward slow food principle, the native and local dishes menu and reminisce about healthy food were not crucial for improvement. While the feeling of happiness and content with food was low in expectation, however, perform strongly. Less attention should be paid to the fact that Gen Yers tourist in Thailand have not much concerned in this matter.

This study makes some important contributions as the fundamental research to link the connection between slow food principle and community-based tourism. First, it is necessary to mention the need for policy formulation to promote local food based on the concept of slow food to attract tourism to various localities. A collaboration among CBT enterprises, government, private sector, and marketers is essential to strengthen public awareness about the connection between the slow food principle and the CBT concept. Highlighting CBT as part of the slow food movement could be one of

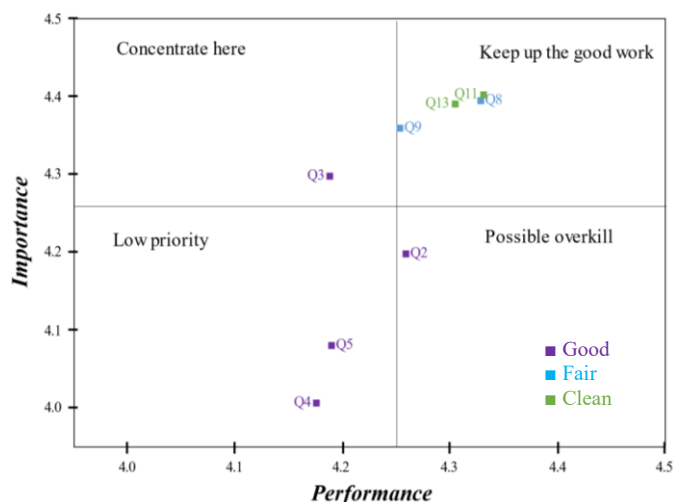


Figure 3. Importance-performance analysis grid

steppingstone toward sustainable development and healthy food culture. The CBT enterprises in Thailand can applied the slow food principle to their managerial plan as the movement is noticeably linked to authenticity, local food system, dining experience, responsible production, and consumption. Besides, the role of CBT should be emphasized as one of mechanisms to conserve local heritage and biodiversity. The CBT marketing strategy should be focused on developing slow food related products, services, and experience to increase tourist awareness as well as community profitability.

Effective food-related CBT promotional strategies can be initiated such as healthy food themed events, food heritage festivals, healthy and responsible food trail etc. To improve the CBT performance and to achieve with the slow food principle, there are several issues for CBT enterprises to consider; most importantly, the quality of food is the high point of improvement containing many aspects such as the raw materials selection, natural ingredients, cleanliness and hygiene, food nutrition etc. In accordance with the study of Payandeh et al. (2020) demonstrated the main driver of demand for local food is quality in terms of taste, tradition, and sustainability. The five sensory experiences should be improved and promoted to enhance the tourist experience including eyesight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste, as a transition process for healthfully culture connected with local heritage. As such further qualitative studies are needed to explain the in-depth understanding about quality of local food and how to promote slow food with all five sensory to enhance tourist memorable experiences. There are several limitations for this study. Covid-19 pandemic was arisen during the data collection process resulting in temporary access restrictions and social distancing interventions in most CBT enterprises in Thailand.

Instead of face-to-face survey conducting in CBT sites, the online questionnaire was adapted which could enable selection bias for those who familiar with technology and online applications. Moreover, this study focused on Generation Y Thai domestic tourists, therefore, the finding could not be generalized to all tourists. Future research may examine different types of tourists and different generations for profound understanding about tourist perspective toward slow food principle.

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