# MODELING TOURISTS' INTENTION AND INFORMATION SEARCH BEHAVIOR IN VIRTUAL TOUR TECHNOLOGY: INSIGHTS FROM PHRA PATHOM CHEDI TEMPLE

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**Abstract:** Tourism plays a vital role in Thailand's economy, necessitating innovative approaches to meet the evolving expectations of modern travelers. Virtual reality (VR) technology has become a transformative tool in tourism, offering immersive and accessible experiences that transcend geographical and temporal constraints. This study investigates tourists' intentions to use virtual tour technology at Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, a major historical and religious site in Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand. The aim is to explore how such technology can enhance information search behavior and support cultural heritage dissemination. A quantitative research design was adopted, utilizing a validated questionnaire to collect data from 400 tourists. The study integrates the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with the Information Search Process (ISP) framework to examine five key latent variables: Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Attitude (ATT), Behavioral Intention to Use (BITU), and Information Search Behavior (ISB). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed for hypothesis testing and model evaluation. The results reveal that PU and PEOU significantly influence tourists' attitudes toward virtual tours. ATT positively affects BITU, which in turn strongly predicts ISB. These findings emphasize the central role of tourists' perceptions and attitudes in shaping their engagement with virtual tour technologies. The study highlights the importance of user-centered design and perceived benefits in promoting the adoption of virtual tours. The insights gained can guide tourism stakeholders and developers in creating more effective, engaging, and educational virtual tour systems for cultural and religious destinations, ultimately enhancing the digital tourism experience and fostering broader access to cultural knowledge. These findings improve digital tourism experiences, particularly for cultural and historical sites.

**Keywords:** Intention to Use Information, virtual tour, Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province, digital humanities

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## INTRODUCTION

Thailand is considered a land where Buddhism has prospered and been preserved through generations. Throughout history, numerous temples and Buddha images have been built as expressions of Buddhist faith and devotion, showcasing the value of Thai architecture, art, and history. These elements have merged with Thai traditions and culture to become part of the national identity. Temples serve as centers for transmitting morality, ethics, culture, and various traditions to the people (Phrakhrsangkharakanurak & Yotkaeo, 2017). They are also educational sites for Buddhist tourism and religious places that preserve Buddhist knowledge, allowing visitors to learn about the history of religious sites, revered Buddha images, and sacred objects. Visitors can study Buddhist principles, customs, and traditions and explore the architecture, sculptures, and paintings within religious structures such as pagodas, temples, ordination halls, sala kan parian, trai halls, and bell towers. As a result, temples have become important tourist attractions and learning centers, drawing large numbers of both Thai and foreign visitors seeking knowledge and spiritual relaxation (Ruangmanee et al., 2022).

Phra Pathom Chedi Ratcha Wora Maha Wihan Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province is a first-class royal temple and the most visited tourist attraction in Nakhon Pathom Province, with 87 percent of tourists visiting (Sangraksa, 2011). The temple contains many ancient sites and artifacts that are valuable cultural resources in terms of history and archaeology. Phra Pathom Chedi was built when missionaries of King Ashoka the Great traveled to spread religion to Suvarnabhumi (Khamtrong, 2021)**.** Research studies related to Buddhist learning centers for tourism have found that most Buddhist learning centers have weaknesses in providing important information about their temples. There is a shortage of staff and tour guides, resulting in tourists lacking knowledge about the temple's significance. The information in brochures is insufficient to educate tourists adequately (Nittayachit & Tassanapak, 2017). It is observed that modern tourists prefer to search for information to plan their trips in advance via the Internet, including content, characteristics, sources, and search methods (Dawloomchan, 2020). Therefore, temples, as sources of Buddhist learning for tourism, should utilize virtual reality technology to enhance learning and tourism resources. This will improve access to existing information, aligning with the 3rd National Tourism Development Plan (2023-2027), which aims to upgrade

tourism experiences by providing virtual previews to tourists before they decide to travel. The plan promotes the use of virtual reality technology in tourism, called Virtual Tour, to provide knowledge, disseminate information to tourists, and share Thai culture and identity with a global audience (National Tourism Board, 2022).

Virtual tours represent an emerging trend in tourism promotion and destination marketing. These digital experiences enable access to environmentally or culturally sensitive sites where physical visitation may be restricted or inappropriate. Furthermore, they serve as comprehensive information platforms that facilitate pre-travel decision-making processes by providing immersive experiences and detailed destination insights. The advantages of virtual tourism include unrestricted temporal access, multi-destination exploration capabilities, customizable duration of visits, and experiential learning opportunities that closely simulate physical presence at the destination. This modality also offers practical benefits such as elimination of travel time and associated costs, including entrance fees (Office of Knowledge Management and Development, 2023). To develop effective virtual tours that meet tourist information needs, this research integrates the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw, examining four key constructs: Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Attitude (ATT), and Behavioral Intention to Use (BITU).

The theoretical framework is further enhanced by incorporating the Information Search Process (ISP) model and building upon Dawloomchan's research methodology. This integrated approach is employed to analyze tourists' behavioral intentions regarding virtual tour adoption at Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. This study explored tourists' intentions to engage with information presented through a virtual tour of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, one of the most revered Buddhist landmarks in Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand. The research specifically sought to assess the user acceptance of virtual tour technologies and their potential to serve as practical, interactive, and widely accessible tools for Buddhist education. By examining how virtual tour systems can support disseminating knowledge related to Buddhist cultural heritage, the study contributes to promoting cultural appreciation and digital engagement in religious tourism contexts.

## LITERATURE REVIEW
### The theory of behavioral intention to use

Behavioral intention to use represents an individual's formulated plan to perform or not perform a specific action, with such intentions serving as key determinants of future behavior. This construct has been extensively employed in predicting technology adoption decisions (Venkatesh et al., 2006). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw, examines the critical factors influencing users' acceptance of innovative technologies. The model posits two primary determinants that directly affect technology acceptance: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU). These core constructs influence users' attitudes toward technology, which subsequently shapes their behavioral intention to use. This behavioral intention ultimately determines the actual acceptance and utilization of the technology, as illustrated in Figure 1.
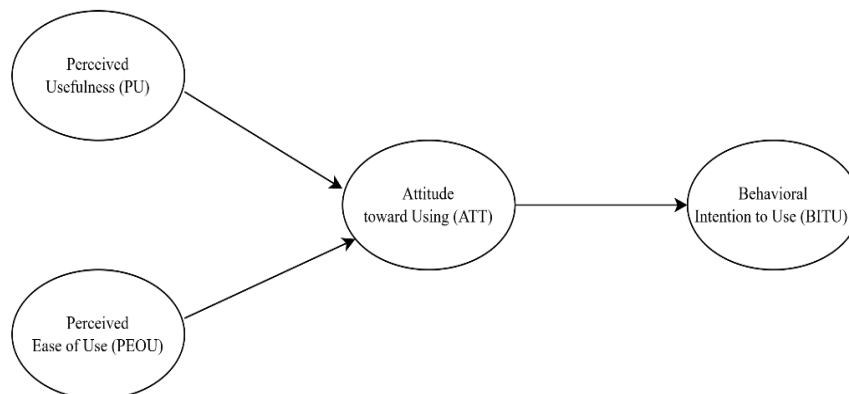


Figure 1. Technology acceptance model (Davis et al., 1989)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) demonstrates that individual technology acceptance is influenced by external variables that create different perceptions for each person. These include:

Perceived Usefulness (PU) refers to the perception of benefits derived from usage, which determines individual perception. In other words, individuals recognize how technology can contribute to their personal development or performance potential. Research by Sarkady et al. (2021) and Shen et al. (2022) found that PU positively affects tourists' attitudes toward technology usage.

Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) refers to uncomplicated usage methods that don't require extensive effort, thus enabling quick understanding. The ability to learn simple technological procedures affects technology acceptance behavior. Research by Schiopu et al. (2022) and Wu et al. (2022) found that PEOU influences tourists' attitudes toward technology usage.

Attitude toward Using (ATT) refers to individual attitudes regarding their intention to use or accept technological systems. Pallud and Straub (2014) explain that attitude means positive or negative feelings individuals have when exhibiting behavior. Their research found that museum website design positively impacts attitudes, and these positive attitudes influence visitors' intentions to revisit the website. Research by Lin et al. (2020) found that ATT affects tourists' Behavioral Intention to Use (BITU) mobile applications, while Li et al. (2024) found that ATT affects consumers' BITU mobile technology in the service and tourism industry.

Behavioral Intention to Use (BITU) refers to individual intention to use technology for accessing information. This aligns with Wilson (2000) who states that Information Search Behavior (ISB) is an individual's behavior where the searcher interacts with information systems or decides whether the found information meets their needs. Kuhlthau (2009) explains that the search process begins with accepting information as necessary and needed, involves searching for information sources and desired information, and includes using the information to meet needs.

**The theory of Information search**

Information search constitutes a systematic process through which individuals seek information from diverse sources. This process commences with the identification of user requirements, progresses through exploration and selection of search elements, encompasses retrieval of relevant documents, and culminates in the presentation of information. This process is facilitated by computer technology as a search instrument and utilizes the Internet as a communication medium, enabling users to conduct efficient and expeditious information searches (Numi, 2016). Kuhlthau (2009) conceptualized the Information Search Process (ISP) model, which delineates six sequential stages: 1) Initiation: Recognition and acknowledgment of information necessity; 2) Selection: Identification and determination of appropriate topics or issues as search parameters; 3) Exploration: Investigation of topic-related information and formulation of search strategies; 4) Formulation: Specification and refinement of pertinent information; 5) Collection: Systematic gathering and documentation of content-relevant information; 6) Presentation: Conclusion of the search process and preparation for information dissemination or utilization.

Furthermore, several research studies have examined information search behavior through the lens of Kuhlthau Information Search Process Theory. Kuhlthau's theory, focusing on three specific processes: data exploration, specification, and collection. Similarly, Zimmer investigated information-seeking behavior and its influence on information source selection, utilizing Kuhlthau's theoretical framework to analyze the three fundamental stages: information need recognition, information searching, and information utilization. This research demonstrated that information-seeking behavior significantly correlates with users' selection of information sources. McMullin's (2018) research applied a simplified version of Kuhlthau's theory, focusing on three specific processes: data exploration, specification, and collection. Similarly, Zimmer (2011) investigated information-seeking behavior and its influence on information source selection, utilizing Kuhlthau's theoretical framework to analyze the three fundamental stages: information need recognition, information searching, and information utilization. This research demonstrated that information-seeking behavior significantly correlates with users' selection of information sources. In a related study, the findings revealed that these tourists engage in systematic pre-trip information searching and planning, characterized by five distinct dimensions:

1)    Information Content: Prioritizing specific content categories, including tourist attractions, accommodations, dining options, and transportation services (Dawloomchan, 2020; Lemy et al., 2021; Wilson, 2020).

2)    Information Type: Demonstrating a preference for online platforms, particularly social media and websites, due to their accessibility, speed, and ease of use (Dawloomchan, 2020; Lemy et al., 2021).

3)    Information Format: Exhibiting a strong preference for visual content, particularly images, which significantly influence destination selection decisions. Secondary preferences include textual descriptions of attractions and accommodations, transportation methodologies presented on websites, video content from YouTube, and detailed travel maps available through social media platforms and Google Maps (Daolomchan, 2020; Duong et al., 2022; Yulia, 2022).

4)    Information Sources: Predominantly utilizing internet-based resources due to their accessibility, efficiency, and user-friendly nature (Daolomchan, 2020; Wu et al., 2022).

5)    Information Access Strategy: Employing Google as the primary search engine and implementing keyword-based search techniques. The search terms used were namely goals, approaches, and information sources (Zarezadeh et al., 2023; Dawloomchan, 2020). This research provides valuable insights into the information search behavior of modern tourists and demonstrates the continued relevance of Kuhlthau's theoretical framework in the contemporary context.

This research uses the Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis et al. (1989) to examine the dimensions of virtual tour usage, including perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude toward use, and intention to use. The study integrates these components with Kuhlthau's (2009) Information Search Process (ISP) Model and other researchers' research frameworks to examine tourists' intentions regarding using virtual tours at Wat Phra Pathom Chedi in Nakhon Pathom Province. The conceptual framework of this integrated approach is presented in Figure 2.
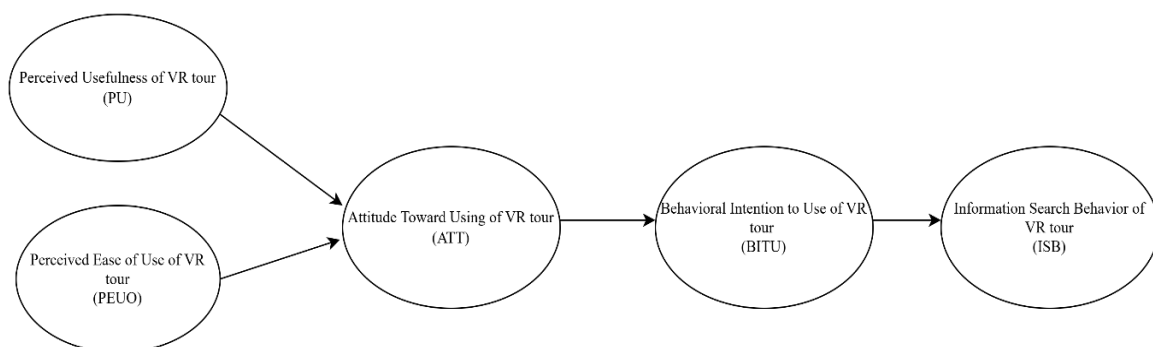


Figure 2. The conceptual framework for studying tourists' intention to use virtual tours (Source: Davis et al. 1989; Wu et al. 2022; Kuhlthau 2009; Dawloomchan, 2020; Lemy et al., 2021; Wilson, 2020; Duong et al., 2022; Yulia, 2022; Zarezadeh, 2023)

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employs survey research methodology with a quantitative approach to investigate tourists' behavioral intentions regarding the utilization of virtual tour information at Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province.

The research population comprised tourists visiting Phra Pathom Chedi Temple. Given that the precise population size was indeterminate, the sample size was established utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) criteria, specifically following Hair et al. (2010) guidelines for determining appropriate sample sizes in structural equation modeling analysis. According to these guidelines, the recommended sample size should range between 10 and 20 times the number of observed variables. This study incorporated 18 observable variables, thus necessitating a minimum sample size between 180 and 360 participants. To ensure statistical robustness for hypothesis testing, the sample size determination adhered to Hair et al.'s criteria, specifically employing the factor of 20 times the number of observed variables. Consequently, a total sample size of 400 participants was established. The selection of participants was governed by specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria stipulated that participants must be tourists aged between 18 and 60 years, possess literacy skills, and demonstrate willingness to participate in the research. The exclusion criterion was limited to foreign tourists.

The sample was selected using simple random sampling. Questionnaires were distributed to tourists visiting Phra Pathom Chedi Temple between July 1 and September 15, 2024, until a sample size of 400 respondents was achieved.

This research is divided into two primary components. The first component involves an analysis of general tourist data. Descriptive statistical techniques, such as frequency distributions, means, percentages, and standard deviations, were employed to examine the data. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS. The second component focuses on investigating the relationships between variables. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was utilized to identify the underlying latent factors explaining the relationships among the variables. Subsequently, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to test the research hypotheses. Data analysis for this component was carried out using AMOS v.28.

## RESULTS

### Descriptive statistical data analysis

A total of 400 fully completed questionnaires were collected from tourists who visited Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The majority of respondents were female (54.75%) and male (45.25%). The largest age group was 18-24 years old (30.75%), followed by 46-60 years old (21.00%) and 37-45 years old (18.00%).

Regarding educational attainment, most respondents held a bachelor's degree (69.25%), followed by a high school/vocational certificate (15.75%) and a postgraduate degree (8.75%). In terms of occupation, the most common group was students (24.00%), followed by private sector employees (22.25%) and government employees (19.25%). Other occupations, such as housewife, farmer, unemployed, and driver, were also represented.

The majority of respondents had a monthly income of 5,001-15,000 baht (36.75%), followed by 15,001-25,000 baht (32.75%) and over 35,000 baht (15.75%). When it comes to accessing information online, mobile phones were the most commonly used device (84.50%), followed by desktop computers (8.25%) and tablets (4.75%) as illustrated in Figure 3.
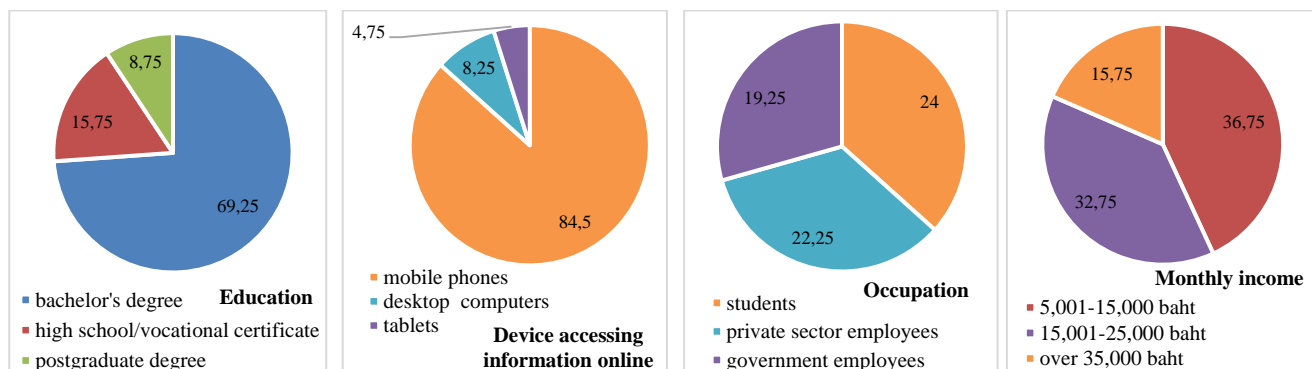


Figure 3. General information for tourists visiting Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province

### Confirmatory factor analysis

This study examines the model's consistency through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the tourist information use intention model applied to a virtual tour of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The analysis incorporates five latent variables: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, intention to use, and information search behavior, operationalized through 18 observed variables. Employing the Reflective Measurement Model (RMM), the CFA results indicate a satisfactory fit between the model and the empirical data. Specifically, the Chi-Square statistic was 80.224 with 63 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.071 (>0.05), and the CMIN/df ratio was 1.273 (<2.0). Additionally, the following fit indices exceeded the recommended thresholds: the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.996 (>0.90), the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) was 0.978 (>0.90), the Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI) was 0.942 (>0.80), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.026 (<0.05), the Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) was 0.017 (<0.05), the Normed Fit Index (NFI) was 0.981 (>0.90), the Incremental Fit Index (IFI) was 0.996 (>0.90), and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) was 0.989 (>0.90). These findings suggest that the proposed model exhibits adequate fit to the empirical data. Furthermore, the model demonstrates validity, as illustrated in Figure 4 and Table 1.
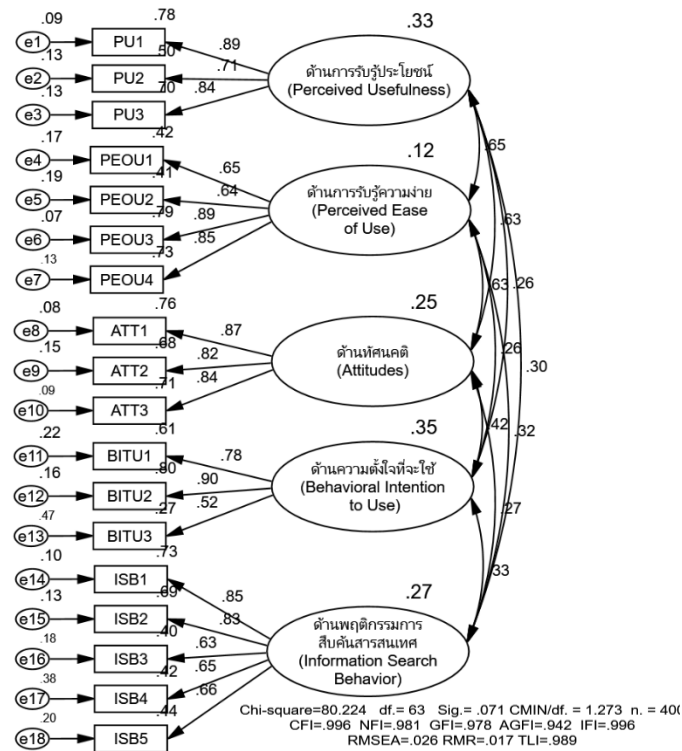
Figure 4. Factor analysis results confirmed the proposed model of tourist intention to
utilize virtual tour information for Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province

Table 1 presents the confirmatory factor analysis results regarding tourists' intention to use virtual tours of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The analysis encompassed five variables: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, intention to use, and information search behavior, comprising 18 observable variables. The analysis revealed coefficient weights ranging from 0.52 to 0.90, exceeding the standard threshold of 0.50 across all observable variables.

Table 1. The results of the factor analysis confirming the intention to use information of tourists in the form
of virtual tours of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province as a whole (*** Statistically significant at 0.001)

| Latent indicator variable | $\lambda$ | SE. | t-value | $R^2$ | AVE | CR. | Cronbach |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PU | | | | 33.0% | 0.665 | 0.855 | 0.853 |
| PU 1 (Parameter constant) | 0.89 | - | - | 79.0% | | | |
| PU2 | 0.71 | 0.04 | 15.993*** | 50.0% | | | |
| PU3 | 0.84 | 0.05 | 19.725*** | 71.0% | | | |
| PEOU | | | | 12.0% | 0.586 | 0.847 | 0.853 |
| PEOU 1 (Parameter constant) | 0.65 | - | - | 42.0% | | | |
| PEOU2 | 0.64 | 0.08 | 13.177*** | 41.0% | | | |
| PEOU3 | 0.89 | 0.14 | 10.458*** | 79.0% | | | |
| PEOU4 | 0.85 | 0.16 | 10.748*** | 73.0% | | | |
| ATT | | | | 25.0% | 0.717 | 0.883 | 0.888 |
| ATT 1 (Parameter constant) | 0.87 | - | - | 76.0% | | | |
| ATT2 | 0.82 | 0.06 | 19.826*** | 68.0% | | | |
| ATT3 | 0.85 | 0.05 | 20.935*** | 71.0% | | | |
| BITU | | | | 35.0% | 0.562 | 0.786 | 0.760 |
| BITU 1 (Parameter constant) | 0.78 | - | - | 61.0% | | | |
| BITU2 | 0.90 | 0.11 | 12.905*** | 80.0% | | | |
| BITU3 | 0.52 | 0.07 | 10.231*** | 27.0% | | | |
| ISB | | | | 27.0% | 0.535 | 0.850 | 0.836 |
| ISB 1 (Parameter constant) | 0.85 | - | - | 73.0% | | | |
| ISB2 | 0.83 | 0.09 | 12.215*** | 70.0% | | | |
| ISB3 | 0.63 | 0.06 | 11.639*** | 40.0% | | | |
| ISB4 | 0.65 | 0.09 | 11.579*** | 42.0% | | | |
| ISB5 | 0.66 | 0.06 | 11.756*** | 44.0% | | | |

The error values ranged from 0.04 to 0.16, with multiple correlation coefficients (R²) of individual items ranging from 27.0% to 80.0%. The multiple correlation coefficients between latent variables were between 12.0% and 35.0%, while the average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.535 to 0.717, exceeding the threshold of 0.50. These results indicate strong convergent validity in the measurement model, demonstrating good variable unity (Hair et al., 2014).

The composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.786 to 0.855, exceeding the 0.60 threshold, while Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.760 to 0.888, surpassing the 0.70 threshold, indicating high indicator variable reliability (Pallant, 2020). The high discriminant validity measurements demonstrated the homogeneity of latent variables, meeting all prescribed criteria. These findings confirm that both observable and latent variables in the component model effectively measured tourists' intention to use virtual tours of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The results support the incorporation of these variables into the structural equation model examining tourists' intention to use virtual tours of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, with statistical significance at the 0.001 level.

### Model analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

To ensure consistency in both the presentation and interpretation of data analysis results, the researcher has established standardized symbols and their corresponding definitions to represent the statistical values and variables employed in the analysis. These are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of latent variables, observed variables, and abbreviation definitions

| Latent variables | Observable variables | Abbreviation |
|---|---|---|
| Perceived Usefulness (PU) | Assistance with travel planning | PU1 |
| | Helping to provide the desired information | PU2 |
| | Helping to improve access to resources | PU3 |
| Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) | Easy-to-understand information | PEOU1 |
| | Reliable information | PEOU2 |
| | Interesting information | PEOU3 |
| | Complete information | PEOU4 |
| Attitudes (ATT) | Good idea | ATT1 |
| | Smart idea | ATT2 |
| | The idea that gave me new experiences | ATT3 |
| Behavioral Intention to Use (BITU( | You want to use the virtual tour system in the future. | BITU1 |
| | You want to use the virtual tour system to learn about Buddhism. | BITU2 |
| | You will recommend others to use the virtual tour system. | BITU3 |
| Information Search Behavior (ISB) | Information search objectives | ISB1 |
| | Content scope | ISB2 |
| | Information characteristics | ISB3 |
| | Information sources | ISB3 |
| | Search strategies | ISB4 |

Based on the identification of latent and observed variables in this study, the structural equation model was designed as illustrated in Figure 5. From the structural equation modeling design, the following hypotheses were established:

**H1:** Perceived usefulness of using virtual tours affects tourists' attitude towards using virtual tours.

**H2:** Perceived ease of using virtual tours affects tourists' attitude towards using virtual tours.

**H3:** Attitude towards using virtual tours affects tourists' intention to use virtual tours.

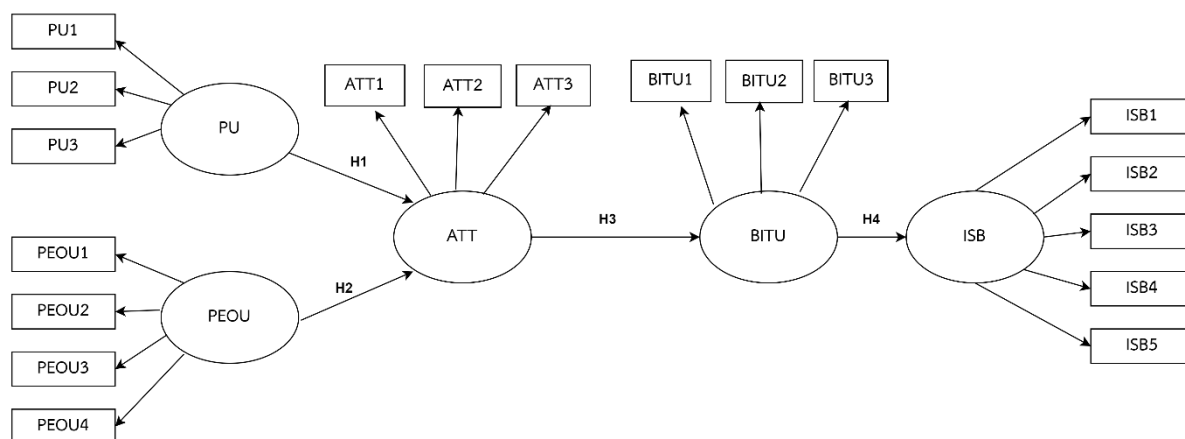**H4:** Intention to use virtual tours affects tourists' information search behavior.



Figure 5. Structural equation modeling of tourist's intention to use information in virtual tour format of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province

This section presents the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis of tourists' intentions to use virtual tour information of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The analysis encompasses five latent variables: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, behavioral intention, and information search behavior, comprising a total of 18 observed variables. The initial model did not meet the specified criteria; therefore, error covariances between variables were adjusted using Modification Indices across 47 paths. The results of these modifications are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The results of model modification (modification indices) in developing a structural equation model
of tourists' intentions to use virtual tour information at Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province

| NO. | Path | | | MI | NO. | Path | | | MI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | e19 | <--> | e20 | 0.141 | 24 | e2 | <--> | e17 | -0.042 |
| 2 | e23 | <--> | e19 | 0.078 | 25 | e1 | <--> | e11 | -0.022 |
| 3 | e23 | <--> | e20 | 0.041 | 26 | e9 | <--> | e13 | 0.060 |
| 4 | e1 | <--> | e6 | -0.020 | 27 | e3 | <--> | e17 | 0.029 |
| 5 | e1 | <--> | e8 | -0.030 | 28 | e7 | <--> | e15 | 0.025 |
| 6 | e5 | <--> | e6 | -0.041 | 29 | e10 | <--> | e18 | 0.021 |
| 7 | e4 | <--> | e7 | -0.034 | 30 | e17 | <--> | e15 | 0.105 |
| 8 | e5 | <--> | e10 | -0.031 | 31 | e3 | <--> | e10 | 0.028 |
| 9 | e6 | <--> | e10 | 0.024 | 32 | e3 | <--> | e13 | 0.042 |
| 10 | e6 | <--> | e8 | 0.033 | 33 | e2 | <--> | e18 | -0.020 |
| 11 | e6 | <--> | e9 | -0.025 | 34 | e18 | <--> | e17 | 0.056 |
| 12 | e6 | <--> | e7 | -0.060 | 35 | e7 | <--> | e17 | -0.047 |
| 13 | e2 | <--> | e4 | 0.023 | 36 | e4 | <--> | e9 | -0.023 |
| 14 | e6 | <--> | e11 | 0.046 | 37 | e5 | <--> | e9 | -0.046 |
| 15 | e7 | <--> | e14 | 0.034 | 38 | e9 | <--> | e7 | -0.031 |
| 16 | e8 | <--> | e11 | 0.048 | 39 | e17 | <--> | e12 | 0.048 |
| 17 | e8 | <--> | e13 | 0.040 | 40 | e16 | <--> | e11 | -0.023 |
| 18 | e8 | <--> | e15 | -0.029 | 41 | e13 | <--> | e14 | 0.024 |
| 19 | e17 | <--> | e14 | 0.056 | 42 | e4 | <--> | e17 | -0.045 |
| 20 | e15 | <--> | e14 | 0.147 | 43 | e6 | <--> | e17 | -0.034 |
| 21 | e10 | <--> | e13 | 0.090 | 44 | e2 | <--> | e10 | 0.014 |
| 22 | e10 | <--> | e16 | 0.019 | 45 | e5 | <--> | e8 | -0.024 |
| 23 | e5 | <--> | e17 | -0.069 | 46 | e6 | <--> | e13 | 0.028 |
| | | | | | 47 | e4 | <--> | e12 | -0.030 |



Chi-square=101.360  df.= 84  Sig.= .096 CMIN/df. = 1.207  n. = 400
CFI=.996 NFI=.975 GFI=.973 AGFI=.945 IFI=.996
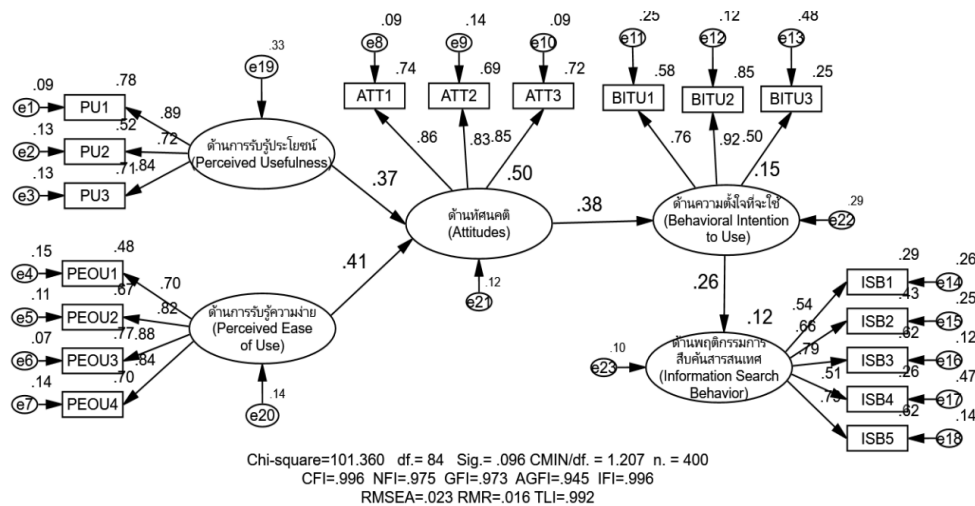RMSEA=.023 RMR=.016 TLI=.992

Figure 6. Structural equation modeling of tourist's intention to use information in virtual tour format
of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province after using model adjustment index method

The results of the model fit indices were adjusted to develop a structural equation model examining tourists' intentions to utilize virtual tour information of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The empirically validated model is presented in Figure 6. From Figure 6, it can be seen that the test results after using the model fit index method passed the specified criteria, which are shown in details in Table 4. As shown in Table 4, the structural equation model of tourist information usage intention for virtual tours of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province, comprises five latent variables: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, intention to use, and information search behavior.

Table 4. Statistical analysis of structural equation modeling: examining tourists' intentions to use
virtual tour information at Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province, Using Model Fit Indices

| Index | Criteria | Results | Conclusions | Reference Concepts    Chi –Square = 101.360   df. = 840. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sig. | > 0.05 | 0.096 | Passed | Hair et al. (2010), Bollen (2014), Sorbon & Joreskog (1996) |
| CMIN/df. | < 2.0 | 1.207 | Passed | Bollen (2014), Diamantopoulos & Siguaw (2000) |
| GFI | > 0.90 | 0.973 | Passed | Hair et al. (2010), Browne & Cudeck (1993) |
| AGFI | > 0.80 | 0.945 | Passed | Durande-Moreau an Usunier (1999), Harrison Walker (2001) |
| NFI | > 0.90 | 0.975 | Passed | Hair et al. (2010), Mueller (1996) |
| IFI | > 0.90 | 0.996 | Passed | Hair et al. (2010), Mueller (1996) |
| CFI | > 0.90 | 0.996 | Passed | Hair et al. (2010), Suciu, Tavares & Zalmon (2018) |
| RMR | < 0.05 | 0.016 | Passed | Diamantopoulos & Siguaw (2000) |
| RMSEA | < 0.05 | 0.023 | Passed | Hair et al. (2010), Browne & Cudeck (1993) |
| TLI | > 0.90 | 0.992 | Passed | Diamantopoulos & Siguaw (2000) |

Table 5. Structural equation analysis results of modeling tourist information usage intention in
virtual tour format of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province ( *Statistically significant at 0.05)

| Variable (path) | | | $\lambda$ | SE. | t-value | Sig. | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ATT | <-- | PU | 0.37 | 0.06 | 5.728 | 0.000* | 50.0% |
| ATT | <-- | PEOU | 0.41 | 0.10 | 5.658 | 0.000* | 50.0% |
| BITU | <-- | ATT | 0.38 | 0.07 | 6.690 | 0.000* | 15.0% |
| ISB | <-- | BITU | 0.26 | 0.03 | 4.291 | 0.000* | 12.0% |

These latent variables are operationalized through 18 observed variables. After adjusting for measurement error using modification indices, the structural equation model demonstrated a good fit with the empirical data. The analysis results indicate that all index values are consistent with the empirical data. This suggests that the structural equation model, representing the intention to use information about Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province, through a virtual tour, is accurately composed of the dimensions of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, intention to use, and information search behavior. In conclusion, the model aligns with the empirical data, meeting the criteria for measurement accuracy (validity) at the 0.05 significance level. The influence line test results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5 presents the results of the structural equation model assessing the intention to use virtual tour information about Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The model includes the variables perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, intention to use, and information search behavior. The standardized regression coefficients range from 0.50 to 0.93, and the R² values for each endogenous variable range from 25.0% to 86.0%. A summary of the standardized regression coefficients for the independent variables is as follows:

1.  Regarding perceived benefits, three significant variables (PU1-PU3) were identified, with coefficient weights ranging from 0.72 to 0.89 and multiple correlation coefficients (R²) between 52.0% and 78.0%. These perceived benefits directly and indirectly impacted the structural equation model of tourists' intention to use virtual tour information for Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The specific influences can be summarized as follows:

1.1 Direct Influence on Attitude: Perceived benefits had a significant positive direct impact on attitude, with a coefficient of 0.37, a standard error of 0.06, a t-value of 5.728, and a p-value < 0.05. This indicates a 50% change in attitude with statistical significance at the 0.05 level.

1.2 Indirect Influence on Intention to Use: Perceived benefits positively and indirectly influenced intention to use through the mediating variable of attitude, with a total coefficient of 0.14 (0.37 x 0.38).

1.3 Indirect Influence on Information Search Behavior: Perceived benefits also had a positive indirect impact on information search behavior, mediated by attitude and intention to use, with a total coefficient of 0.04 (0.37 x 0.38 x 0.26).

2. Regarding perceived ease of use, four observable variables (PEOU1-PEOU4) were identified, with coefficient weights ranging from 0.70 to 0.88 and multiple correlation coefficients (R²) ranging from 48.0% to 77.0%. Perceived ease of use significantly influenced tourists' intention to use a virtual tour of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province through a structural equation model, exerting both direct and indirect effects. These effects can be summarized as follows:

2.1 Direct Influence: Perceived ease of use had a significant positive direct influence on attitude, with a coefficient of 0.41, a standard error of 0.10, a t-value of 5.658, and a p-value < 0.05. This indicates a 50% change in attitude due to perceived ease of use, with a statistical significance level of 0.05.

2.2 Indirect Influence on Intention to Use: Perceived ease of use had a significant positive indirect influence on intention to use through the mediating variable of attitude, with a total coefficient of 0.16 (0.41 × 0.38).

2.3 Indirect Influence on Information Search Behavior: Perceived ease of use had a significant positive indirect influence on information search behavior through the mediating variables of attitude and intention to use, with a total coefficient of 0.04 (0.41 × 0.38 × 0.26).

3. Regarding attitudes, three observable variables (ATT1-ATT3) were identified, with coefficient weights ranging from 0.83 to 0.86 and multiple correlation coefficients (R²) between 69.0% and 74.0%. The attitude construct significantly influences the structural equation model of tourist intention to utilize virtual tour information of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province. This influence manifests in both direct and indirect pathways, as detailed below:

3.1 Direct Influence: The attitude construct exerts a significant positive direct influence on the intention to use construct, with a coefficient of 0.38, a standard error of 0.07, a t-value of 6.690, and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This indicates that a one-unit increase in attitude leads to a 0.38-unit increase in intention to use, and this effect is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

3.2 Indirect Influence: The attitude construct also has a significant positive indirect influence on information search behavior, mediated by the intention to use construct. The total indirect effect is 0.10 (calculated as 0.41 × 0.38)

4. Intention to Use, three observable variables (BITU1-BITU4) were identified with coefficient weights ranging from 0.50 to 0.92, and multiple correlation coefficients (R²) ranging from 85.0% to 25.0%. Intention to use directly influenced the structural equation model of tourist intention to utilize virtual tour information of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province, through a single pathway.

4.1 Direct Influence of Intention to Use: Intention to use had a significant positive direct influence on information search behavior. The coefficient was 0.26, the standard error was 0.03, the t-value was 4.291, the p-value was 0.000 (< 0.05), and the effect size was 12.0%. This indicates a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 level.

5. In terms of information search behavior, five observable variables (ISB1-ISB5) were identified with coefficient weights ranging from 0.51 to 0.79. The multiple correlation coefficient (R²) ranged from 26.0% to 62.0%, indicating that information search behavior, the outcome variable of the structural equation model, significantly influenced tourists' intention to use virtual tour information about Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province.

Table 6 reveals that attitude is the most influential factor on the intention to use information, with a total influence coefficient of 0.38. Perceived ease follows with a coefficient of 0.16, and perceived usefulness with 0.14, resulting in a 15.0% change. Path analysis indicates that perceived usefulness and perceived ease significantly impact attitude, with coefficients of 0.37 and 0.41, respectively, contributing to a 50.0% change. Furthermore, path analysis shows that intention to use is the primary driver of information search behavior, with a coefficient of 0.26.

Attitude follows with a coefficient of 0.10, while perceived usefulness and perceived ease have a combined coefficient of 0.04, leading to a 12.0% change with statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Table 7 presents the structural equation model analysis of tourists' intention to use virtual tour information about Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The model includes the following dimensions: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, intention to use, and information search behavior. The results of the hypothesis testing are summarized below:

**H1:** The test results support Hypothesis H1, indicating that perceived usefulness of virtual tours significantly influences tourist attitudes toward their use. The path coefficient of 0.37 signifies a moderate effect, accounting for 50.0% of the variance in tourist attitudes at the 0.05 significance level.

**H2:** The test results provide empirical support for Hypothesis H2, demonstrating that perceived ease of use of virtual tours has a significant positive impact on tourists' attitudes toward using them. The path coefficient of 0.41 indicates a moderate effect size, accounting for 50.0% of the variance in tourists' attitudes at the 0.05 significance level.

**H3:** The test results support Hypothesis H3, indicating that virtual tour attitude significantly influences tourists' intention to use virtual tours. The path coefficient of 0.38 suggests a moderate positive relationship between these variables, accounting for 15.0% of the variance in intention to use virtual tours at the 0.05 significance level.

**H4:** The test results support Hypothesis 4, which posits that the intention to use virtual tours influences tourists' information-seeking behavior. The path coefficient of 0.26 indicates a statistically significant effect of 12.0% at the 0.05 level.

Table 6. The results of the structural equation influence line analysis on the intention to use
information of tourists in the form of virtual tours at Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province

| Variable | Influence | ATT | BITU | ISB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PU | Direct | 0.37 | - | - |
| | Indirect | - | 0.14 | 0.04 |
| | Overall | 0.37 | 0.14 | 0.04 |
| PEOU | Direct | 0.41 | - | - |
| | Indirect | - | 0.16 | 0.04 |
| | Overall | 0.41 | 0.16 | 0.04 |
| ATT | Direct | - | 0.38 | - |
| | Indirect | - | - | 0.10 |
| | Overall | - | 0.38 | 0.10 |
| BITU | Direct | - | - | 0.26 |
| | Indirect | - | - | - |
| | Overall | - | - | 0.26 |
| $R^2$ | | 50.0% | 15.0% | 12.0% |

Table 7. Summary of the results of the structural equation model hypothesis testing on tourists' intention
to use information in the form of virtual tours of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple, Nakhon Pathom Province

| | Hypothesis | Result | Influence | Path | Coefficient | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | **Perceived usefulness of using virtual tours affects tourists' attitude towards using virtual tours.** | accept | direct | positive | 0.37 | 50.0% |
| H2 | **Perceived ease of using virtual tours affects tourists' attitude towards using virtual tours.** | accept | direct | positive | 0.41 | 50.0% |
| H3 | **Attitude towards using virtual tours affects tourists' intention to use virtual tours.** | accept | direct | positive | 0.38 | 15.0% |
| H4 | **Intention to use virtual tours affects tourists' information search behavior.** | accept | direct | positive | 0.26 | 12.0% |

## DISCUSSION

The researcher conducted a structural equation modeling analysis to examine the factors influencing tourists' intention to utilize a virtual tour of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The findings revealed that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use significantly impacted tourists' attitudes toward the virtual tour. Furthermore, a positive relationship was observed between attitude and intention to use the virtual tour, which, in turn, influenced tourists' information-seeking behavior. The specific details are as follows:

Perceived Usefulness (PU) significantly influences tourists' attitudes toward utilizing virtual tours. The results of this study support Hypothesis H1, aligning with the findings of Sarkady et al. (2021) and Shen et al. (2022), which demonstrate that Perceived Usefulness (PU) positively impacts tourists' attitudes toward technology adoption. During and even post-crisis events like the COVID-19 pandemic, tourists recognize the advantages of virtual tours, leading to a favorable attitude toward using them for virtual travel and mitigating the impact of travel restrictions (Zhang et al., 2022).

Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) influences tourists' attitudes toward utilizing virtual tours. The findings of this study support hypothesis H2, aligning with the research of Schiopu et al. (2022) and Wu et al. (2022), who demonstrated that perceived ease of use (PEOU) impacts tourists' attitudes toward technology adoption. This suggests that tourists perceive virtual reality as an easy-to-learn and adaptable tool for exploring their desired destinations.

Attitude Toward Using (ATT) virtual tours significantly influences tourists' intention to engage with them. The results of this study support hypothesis H3, aligning with the findings of Lin et al. (2020), who demonstrated that ATT impacts tourists' inclination to utilize mobile applications, and Li et al. (2024), who revealed that ATT affects consumers' propensity to employ mobile technology within the hospitality and tourism sector. As explicated by Pallud & Straub (2014), attitude encapsulates an individual's positive or negative sentiments toward a particular behavior. The research indicates that the design of the museum's website exerts a positive influence on visitor attitudes, which, in turn, positively impacts their intention to revisit the website. Additionally, it was discovered that Behavioral Intention to Use (BITU) significantly influences tourists' information search behavior (Suhud et al., 2025). This study supports Hypothesis 4, aligning with Wilson's assertion that Information Search Behavior (ISB) encompasses individuals' actions of seeking, interacting with, and evaluating information systems to determine their suitability (Tuamsuk et al., 2016).

Similarly, Lin et al. (2020) posited that BITU impacts tourists' information search behavior within application contexts. In the contemporary digital era, modern travelers extensively utilize diverse online platforms to acquire information both prior to and during their journeys, as well as to share their experiences post-trip. Consequently, internet-based information sources, including search engines and social media, have gained substantial importance in shaping tourists' travel planning processes. Furthermore, advancements in information and communication technologies have revolutionized online travel information search behavior, concurrently enriching the information context. For instance, virtual travel communities (VTCs) have emerged as effective channels for obtaining informal information, such as firsthand travel experiences and recommendations from fellow travelers. Notably, the integration of virtual reality technology into virtual tours has the potential to foster a sense of engagement and motivation among tourists through immersive virtual experiences.

## CONCLUSION

This research investigates the factors influencing tourists' intention to use a virtual tour of Phra Pathom Chedi Temple in Nakhon Pathom Province. The findings highlight the significant impact of Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Attitude Toward Using (ATT), and Behavioral Intention to Use (BITU) on Information Search Behavior (ISB), a crucial determinant of tourists' needs and intentions regarding virtual tour technology. Furthermore, the study provides valuable insights into tourists' information search behavior, enabling the analysis and design of a virtual tour system that aligns with user needs and maximizes efficiency for the target audience.

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