



Tourist opinions on the street art tourist attraction: A case study in Suratthani Old Town, Thailand

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Abstract

This study aims to examine tourists' perceptions toward the service quality of the Art Street and Community Learning Space in the Lower Banlang Area, located in the Old Town district of Surat Thani Municipality. It also investigates differences in perceptions based on personal demographics and travel behaviors. Data were collected from **400** Thai tourists using a questionnaire developed based on the SERVQUAL framework. The findings reveal that the overall level of perceived service quality was high. Among the five SERVQUAL dimensions, tangibility received the highest score, followed by assurance, reliability, responsiveness, and empathy, respectively. Hypothesis testing indicated that gender and place of origin significantly influenced tourists' perceptions. Additionally, travel behavior variables such as source of information, intention to revisit, and willingness to recommend the destination were found to be significantly related to service quality perceptions. The study recommends that destination developers should focus on enhancing service quality in all dimensions, increase promotion through online media, and regularly conduct satisfaction surveys to support ongoing improvements.

Keywords: tourist perceptions, service quality, Art Street attraction, community-based learning space, Surat Thani Old Town

1. Introduction

In the contemporary era, tourism has evolved beyond its traditional role as a leisure activity or site visitation to become a pursuit of meaningful and value-driven experiences. Cultural and art-based tourism, in particular, has garnered increasing attention due to its ability to immerse tourists in local ways of life, art, and cultural expressions. Such forms of tourism serve as important instruments for conveying community identity and facilitating historical and cultural heritage learning (Richards, 2021). In Thailand, cultural tourism plays a significant role in both economic and social development, especially at the community level. This is evidenced by the continued growth of cultural tourism revenue, which increased from 721,965 million baht in 2019 to 858,907 million baht in 2023 (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2023). One emerging form of cultural tourism is the development of "art streets," often situated in historic urban districts rich in cultural and historical narratives.

The Old Town of Ban Don in Surat Thani Province exemplifies a locale with strong potential for sustainable cultural and artistic tourism development. In 2022, the Ban Lang community initiated the "Art Street and Community-Based Learning Space" project, involving the creation of mural art that reflects local stories and everyday life. These artworks were designed using knowledge gathered from local elders and community sages, thereby grounding the creative process in indigenous wisdom. The project not only promotes cultural heritage conservation but also stimulates the local economy and attracts a growing number of tourists from various regions. However, for such a destination to develop sustainably, a thorough understanding of tourist perceptions and satisfaction levels is essential.

This study therefore aims to analyze tourists' perspectives, levels of satisfaction, and differences in perception based on personal characteristics and travel behaviors of visitors to the Art Street and Community Learning Space in the Ban Lang area. The findings will contribute valuable insights for improving service quality and formulating effective management strategies for cultural tourism that respond to tourist expectations while simultaneously promoting local identity and sustainable tourism development in Surat Thani's Old Town district.

2. Literature Review

This study on tourists' perceptions toward the Art Street and the Community-Based Learning Space in Ban Lang, located in the Old Town district of Surat Thani Municipality, is grounded in a comprehensive review of academic literature, theoretical frameworks, and related empirical studies. The purpose of this review is to establish the theoretical basis and conceptual framework for hypothesis development. The relevant components are as follows:

2.1. General Background of Surat Thani Municipality

Surat Thani Province is situated on the eastern coast of southern Thailand, covering an area of approximately 6,245 square kilometers. It is the sixth largest province in the country and the largest in southern Thailand (Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, 2017). The province features a diverse landscape, including mountainous terrain, fertile plains, and an extended coastline bordering the Gulf of Thailand. These geographical features have endowed the province with abundant natural resources conducive to the development of nature-based and ecotourism destinations. Additionally, Surat Thani is home to internationally renowned islands in the Gulf of Thailand—namely Ko Samui, Ko Pha-ngan, and Ko Tao—along with a total of 42 satellite islands. These natural attractions consistently draw both domestic and international tourists, earning Surat Thani recognition as one of Thailand's key tourism destinations, with significant contributions to the national economy and international image.

Tourism in Surat Thani began gaining prominence around 1982, when a local scholar, Ajarn Decho Boonchuchay, composed a poem for a regional tourism seminar. This later inspired the provincial slogan: "City of a Hundred Islands, Delicious Rambutan, Big Shellfish, Golden Yolk, and Land of Dharma." This slogan has since functioned as a symbolic tool that captures the province's tourism identity, reflecting its rich diversity in natural resources, agricultural produce, seafood, and cultural heritage intimately connected to the spiritual and everyday lives of local communities. Consequently, the province has experienced sustained tourism promotion and development, playing an increasingly vital role in both the southern regional and national tourism economies.

Within the urban context, the province contains an area of significant economic and historical value: Ban Don, located in Surat Thani Municipality, Mueang Surat Thani District. Ban Don has long served as the commercial and central business district (CBD) of the province, with over 100 years of continuous community settlement. The district is distinguished by a unique blend of architectural styles, reflecting Chinese and European influences that are evident in building designs, decorative motifs, and spatial

organization. These aesthetic and historical qualities have led to Ban Don's designation as the "Old Town" of Surat Thani Province.

The Ban Don area includes several key sub-communities, such as Talat Lang, Na Dan, Wat Sai (Talat San Chao), Tha Ruea Market, Tapi, and Rat-Uthit (linked to the Kaset Market area), as well as adjacent economic and cultural spaces such as the 100-Year Sapan Khong Market (Sethaphakdi Bridge), the Surat Thani Municipal Fresh Market, and the Tapi Riverfront. Ban Don's significance extends beyond economic functions to include cultural heritage preservation and sustainable urban development. Its ability to maintain a distinct cultural identity while progressing economically positions Ban Don as a model for heritage-based urban revitalization—one that holds historical, economic, and cultural value at both regional and national levels.

2.2. Concepts of Tourism

Tourism refers to the temporary movement of individuals from their usual place of residence to another location for various purposes, excluding permanent migration or resettlement. Tourists typically travel voluntarily in pursuit of leisure, new experiences, or participation in activities of interest, without the intention of earning income or engaging in employment (UNESCAP, 1999). Tourism encompasses both domestic and international travel and manifests in various forms such as recreational tourism, cultural tourism, business tourism, sports tourism, and more.

Cultural tourism, in particular, emphasizes interactions with the local arts and culture of the destination. Tourists engage in learning about history, local ways of life, and artistic expressions through activities such as visiting cultural heritage sites, museums, art galleries, as well as participating in cultural festivals or workshops (Richards, 2021). The concept of cultural tourism aligns with the goals of sustainable development by promoting the preservation of local identity and cultural heritage, while simultaneously generating balanced economic benefits for local communities.

2.3. Concepts and Theories Related to Tourist Perception

Tourist perception refers to the attitudes or evaluations that tourists hold regarding their travel experiences. These perceptions may encompass feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, and acceptance or rejection of what they have encountered. Perceptions are considered a component of attitudes that are measurable and tend to be relatively stable over time. Typically, perceptions are assessed indirectly through surveys or questionnaires, as they are not directly observable (Paisarn Wangpanich, 1988, as cited in Remmer, 1996)^[10].

According to Remmer (1996)^[10], perceptions arise from learning and experience and can be categorized into two principal types: (1) affective or polarized perceptions, which reflect strong positive or negative sentiments often resulting from exceptional or disappointing experiences (e.g., deep admiration or intense dislike); and (2) cognitive-based perceptions, which stem from information processing and understanding, resulting in preferences or aversions based on rational evaluation. In essence, tourist perceptions toward a destination reflect both the direction (positive or negative) and the intensity of their emotional responses. For example, a tourist may express a highly positive perception if

impressed by the site and its services, or a negative one if the experience falls short of expectations.

The significance of tourist perceptions lies in their function as feedback for tourism developers and service providers. They reveal strengths and areas needing improvement within a destination. A systematic survey of tourist perceptions enables strategic planning that aligns with the needs and expectations of the target audience (Sanguan Suthilertarun, 1979, as cited in Remmer, 1996) ^[10]. Furthermore, it fosters a sense of inclusion among community stakeholders; when tourists' feedback is acknowledged and acted upon, it increases the likelihood of repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations, contributing to long-term tourism development.

To measure tourist perceptions, attitude assessment tools such as the 5-point Likert rating scale are commonly employed. This scale captures both the direction (agreement/disagreement) and intensity (from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree") of respondents' views (Pornpen Phetsuksiri, 1988). Owing to its clarity and capacity to convert abstract opinions into quantifiable data for statistical analysis, this method is widely used in tourism and marketing research.

2.4. Concepts and Theories of Service Quality

Service quality refers to the extent to which a service can effectively meet the needs and expectations of its users. It is commonly assessed by comparing customers' expectations prior to receiving a service with their actual perceived experience afterward (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988) ^[8]. If the perceived service performance meets or exceeds expectations, the service is considered to be of high quality. Conversely, if the performance falls below expectations, it is regarded as low quality. This principle underpins the development of one of the most widely accepted service quality measurement models—SERVQUAL—proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) ^[8]. The SERVQUAL model identifies five key dimensions of service quality used to evaluate customer perceptions:

- **Tangibles:** The physical aspects of the service that can be seen and touched, such as the environment and facilities at the tourist site, cleanliness, aesthetics, signage, and the appearance or demeanor of staff.
- **Reliability:** The ability to deliver the promised service accurately and dependably, such as providing correct information, adhering to operating hours, and ensuring safety for users.
- **Responsiveness:** The willingness and promptness in assisting service users, including the ability to address and resolve issues or concerns in a timely manner.
- **Assurance:** The knowledge, competence, courtesy, and credibility of service providers that instill trust and confidence in customers, such as the professionalism of guides or staff and their friendly attitude.
- **Empathy:** The provision of personalized attention, demonstrating an understanding of individual customer needs, and offering services with warmth and care.

These five dimensions encompass critical factors used by customers to evaluate the quality of services, regardless of

whether they pertain to tourism businesses or other service sectors. Numerous studies have confirmed that when customers perceive high service quality, it often leads to higher satisfaction and positive behavioral outcomes, such as repeat visits or word-of-mouth referrals (Kitapci *et al.*, 2014; Rungtup Nilphat, 2018) ^[5, 11]. In the context of tourism, service quality at a destination directly influences tourists' impressions and satisfaction, forming a crucial component of their overall perception of the destination.

2.5. Concepts and Theories of Tourist Behavior

Tourist behavior refers to the actions and decision-making patterns of individuals related to the planning and execution of travel. This behavior encompasses various stages, including pre-travel (e.g., information searching and destination selection), during travel (e.g., activity choices, spending, and adaptation), and post-travel (e.g., satisfaction assessment and sharing of experiences) (UNESCAP 1999). Individual tourist behavior may differ depending on several factors. These include personal characteristics such as age, gender, education level, and income, as well as social and psychological factors such as peer influence, family, culture, and personal interests. Situational factors—such as economic and political conditions, available holidays, and health status—also play a role in shaping tourism decisions (Techataveewan 2002) ^[14].

According to the study by Sureerat Techataveewan (2002, as cited in UNESCAP 1999) ^[14], seven key factors significantly influence tourist behavior: (1) Economic factors – income and wealth affect spending decisions for travel; (2) Demographics – characteristics such as age influence preferred travel styles; (3) Geography – regional background affects travel patterns; (4) Politics – political stability and government policies influence the attractiveness and safety of destinations; (5) Mass media – media coverage and reviews can shape the positive or negative image of destinations; (6) Time/seasonality and health – availability of time, holidays, seasonal preferences, and physical health determine the feasibility of travel; and (7) Technology – advancements in transportation and communication, especially in online booking platforms, facilitate and encourage tourism.

In addition to these influencing factors, the tourism decision-making process is another critical aspect of tourist behavior that follows a recognizable pattern. According to Boonlert Jittangwattana (2005), the decision to travel involves several sequential steps: the emergence of motivation or inspiration to travel, information search and evaluation of alternatives, destination selection and trip planning (including budgeting), travel preparation, the actual travel experience, post-trip satisfaction evaluation, and the formation of attitudes or opinions toward the travel experience. These opinions may lead to recommendations or plans for future trips.

From this conceptual framework, it is evident that tourist behavior and tourist opinions are closely interlinked. The experiences encountered during travel shape the attitudes or sentiments formed afterward, and those resulting opinions can influence future behavioral intentions (e.g., a highly positive experience may lead a tourist to plan a return visit). Based on the literature review, the researchers were able to identify observable variables and provide their operational definitions as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Observable Variables and Their Operational Definitions

Variable	Component	Indicator	Reference
Tourist Demographics	Gender, Age Group, Education Level, Occupation, Income, Place of Residence	Classified according to respondents' demographic characteristics	UNESCAP (1999); Techataveewan (2002) ^[14]
Tourist Behavior	Visit Frequency, Travel Purpose, Length of Stay, Number of Companions, Information Channels, Travel Period, Travel Mode, Intention to Revisit/Recommend	6W1H (Who, What, Where, When, Why, Whom, How)	Kotler & Armstrong (2003); Techataveewan (2002) ^[14]
Perceived Service Quality of Tourist Site	Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy (SERVQUAL Dimensions)	Average scores based on a 5-point Likert scale for each dimension	Parasuraman <i>et al.</i> (1988) ^[8] ; Gronroos (1990) ^[2]

2.6. Development of Hypotheses and Related Research

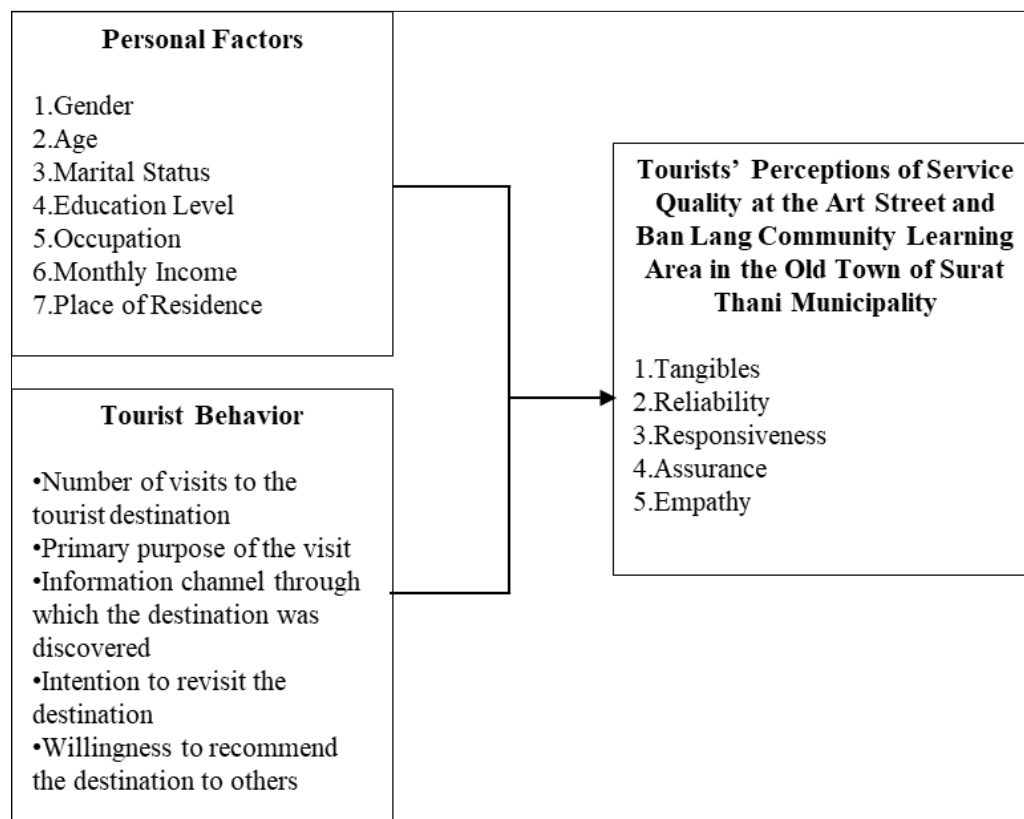
2.6.1 Differences in Tourist Opinions Based on Personal Factors

A review of existing literature in tourism research reveals that gender, age, educational attainment, and income are key variables that significantly influence tourists' evaluations of destinations. Kaenwongkham (2020) ^[4] found that female tourists and those with higher income levels reported higher satisfaction scores compared to other groups. Similarly, Likitsarun (2018) reported that individuals with higher educational backgrounds perceived the benefits of tourism marketing mix differently than those with lower education. Saratjeen (2017) ^[12] further confirmed that female tourists placed greater importance on safety and the availability of facilities than their male counterparts. These findings are consistent with the perspectives of Gronroos (1990) ^[2] and Oliver (1980) ^[7], who proposed that demographic characteristics shape tourists' expectations, ultimately affecting their perceived service quality.

2.6.2 Differences in Tourist Opinions Based on Travel

Behavior

In terms of travel behavior, studies by Techataveewan (2002) ^[14] and UNESCAP (1999) highlighted that variables such as frequency of visits, travel purpose, and channels of information exposure can lead to significant variations in tourists' expectations and evaluations. For example, repeat visitors tend to assign higher ratings to service quality due to their familiarity with the destination's environment (Oliver, 1980) ^[7]. Tourists traveling for artistic photography purposes tend to evaluate aesthetic aspects of a site more favorably than those traveling for business (Kim *et al.*, 2003). Moreover, tourists who obtain information through social media—especially those from Generation Z—tend to have higher expectations and rate their experiences differently from those exposed to traditional media (Chansaenroj *et al.*, 2022; Hsieh & Chang, 2020) ^[1, 3]. Based on the literature reviewed, the conceptual framework of this study on tourists' opinions regarding the Art Street and Community Learning Space in the Old Town of Surat Thani Municipality is illustrated in Figure 1.

**Fig 1:** Conceptual Framework

The findings from the reviewed literature provide essential foundational insights for identifying the variables and formulating the research hypotheses concerning tourists' perceptions of the Art Street and the Community Learning Space of Ban Lang Local Way in the Old Town area of Surat Thani Municipality. These insights led to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Tourists' personal characteristics are significantly associated with differences in their perceptions of the Art Street and the Community Learning Space of Ban Lang in the Old Town of Surat Thani Municipality.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Tourists' travel behaviors are significantly associated with differences in their perceptions of the Art Street and the Community Learning Space of Ban Lang in the Old Town of Surat Thani Municipality.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a survey research design targeting Thai tourists who visited the Art Street and the Community Learning Space of Ban Lang in the Old Town of Surat Thani. Given the fluctuating number of visitors and the inability to precisely determine the population size, the sample was drawn from an unknown (infinite) population using Cochran's formula (1977) to calculate the appropriate sample size, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The minimum required sample size was approximately 384 respondents. To account for potential incomplete responses, the actual number of distributed and collected questionnaires was increased to 400.

The sampling approach combined convenience sampling, where tourists physically present at the site were invited to participate, and accidental sampling through online channels. Questionnaires were distributed via social media platforms such as Facebook tourism groups in Surat Thani and the LINE messaging application, targeting individuals who had previously visited the Art Street of Ban Lang. A screening criterion was applied: respondents had to have visited the Art Street and the Community Learning Space at least once to qualify for inclusion in the study sample. Once 400 completed questionnaires were collected, the researcher conducted a thorough review to ensure completeness, and any incomplete responses were discarded before proceeding with data analysis.

3.2 Research Instrument

The primary data collection instrument employed in this study was a questionnaire, which was developed based on a review of relevant theories, conceptual frameworks, and previous research. The instrument was constructed using the SERVQUAL framework and consisted of three sections:

- (1) Personal demographic information, including gender, age, education level, occupation, income, etc.;
- (2) Tourist behavior information, including frequency of visits, travel purpose, length of stay, and channels of information acquisition; and
- (3) Tourists' perceptions of service quality at the Art Street and the Community Learning Space of Ban Lang, measured across the five SERVQUAL dimensions: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and

Empathy.

All opinion items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The content validity of the questionnaire was evaluated by three experts, yielding an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) score ≥ 0.50 . Furthermore, a pilot test was conducted with 30 participants, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient exceeded 0.70, indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency. The final version of the questionnaire was administered both online (via Google Forms) and through on-site distribution, supplemented by the collection of secondary data from relevant documents and statistical records to support the analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis Methods

All data were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Two levels of statistical analysis were employed:

- Descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage, were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and travel behaviors, while means and standard deviations were calculated to describe tourists' perceptions of service quality across the five SERVQUAL dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy).
- Inferential statistics were used to test hypotheses regarding differences in perceptions across various independent variables. An independent samples t-test was applied to variables with two groups (e.g., gender), while One-Way ANOVA was used for variables with more than two groups (e.g., age, education level, income, frequency of visit, purpose of travel, and information channels). Where significant differences were found, Least Significant Difference (LSD) post hoc tests were conducted to identify specific group differences.

All significance levels were determined at $p < .05$. The quantitative findings from this analysis were used as empirical evidence to propose strategies for improving and enhancing the service quality of the Art Street and the Community Learning Space of Ban Lang as a cultural tourism destination.

4. Research Results

4.1 General Information of the Respondents

According to Table 2, the majority of the respondents were female (61.50%), followed by male respondents (38.50%). Most respondents were between the ages of 20–29 (46.25%), followed by those aged 30–39 (32.00%). In terms of marital status, 53.25% were married, while 46.00% were single. The majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree or equivalent (80.75%). Their occupations included private company employees (31.25%), government officers or state enterprise employees (22.25%), and business owners or merchants (21.00%). Most respondents were residents of Surat Thani Province (62.00%) and had a monthly income of 20,000 baht or higher (39.50%), which represented the largest income group.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Personal Factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	154	38.50
Female	246	61.50
Total	400	100.00
Age		
20–29 years	185	46.25
30–39 years	128	32.00
40–49 years	68	17.00
50–59 years	16	4.00
60 years and above	3	0.75
Total	400	100.00
Marital Status		
Single	184	46.00
Married	213	53.25
Divorced	3	0.75
Total	400	100.00
Education Level		
Below bachelor's degree	68	17.00
Bachelor's degree	323	80.75
Above bachelor's degree	9	2.25
Total	400	100.00
Occupation		
Student	86	21.50
Government officer/State enterprise	89	22.25
Laborer/Daily wage worker	16	4.00
Company employee	125	31.25
Business owner/Trader	84	21.00
Farmer	0	0.00
Others	0	0.00
Total	400	100.00
Place of Residence		
Surat Thani province	248	62.00
Outside Surat Thani	152	38.00
Total	400	100.00
Monthly Income (Baht)		
Less than 10,000	58	14.50
10,001–15,000	85	21.25
15,001–20,000	99	24.75
20,000 or more	158	39.50
Total	400	100.00

4.2. Tourist Behavior

According to Table 3, the majority of Thai tourists visited the Art Street and the Ban Lang Local Living Learning Area for the first time (70.25%). The primary purpose of travel was to photograph historical buildings and street art for posting on social media (35.50%), followed by leisure and relaxation

(24.50%). Most respondents learned about the destination through online media (48.00%), followed by recommendations from friends (18.50%). A majority of tourists expressed their intention to revisit the site (62.50%) and willingness to recommend it to others (62.75%).

Table 3: Tourist Behavior Characteristics

Tourist Behavior	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Number of Visits		
First-time visit	281	70.25
1–2 times	79	19.75
More than 2 times	40	10.00
Total	400	100.00
Main Purpose of Visit		
To study history	87	21.75
For relaxation	98	24.50
To take photos of old buildings/street art	142	35.50
To buy souvenirs	73	18.25
Total	400	100.00
Channel of Tourist Information		
Family	57	14.25

Friends	74	18.50
Online media	192	48.00
TV programs	36	9.00
Tour companies	24	6.00
Others	17	4.25
Total	400	100.00
Intention to Revisit		
Definitely will return	250	62.50
Not sure	118	29.50
Will not return	32	8.00
Total	400	100.00
Willingness to Recommend to Others		
Definitely will recommend	251	62.75
Not sure	117	29.25
Will not recommend	32	8.00
Total	400	100.00

4.3. Tourists' Perceptions of Service Quality at the Art Street Tourist Attraction

According to Table 4, tourists' overall perception of the service quality at the Art Street and the Ban Lang Local Living Learning Area was rated at a high level, with an

average score of 4.078. When considering individual dimensions, Tangibles received the highest rating ($M = 4.185$), followed by Assurance ($M = 4.149$), Reliability ($M = 4.092$), Responsiveness ($M = 4.077$), and Empathy ($M = 3.915$), respectively.

Table 4: Tourists' Perceptions of Service Quality at the Art Street Tourist Attraction

Aspect of Tourist Opinion	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.
Tangibility	3.200	5.000	4.185	0.348
Reliability	2.800	5.000	4.092	0.371
Responsiveness	2.750	5.000	4.077	0.436
Assurance	2.667	5.000	4.149	0.458
Empathy	3.000	5.000	3.915	0.347
Overall	3.409	5.000	4.078	0.227

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

According to Table 5, the results of testing Hypothesis 1, which proposed that tourists' personal demographic factors are associated with differing perceptions of service quality, revealed that gender had a statistically significant effect on perceptions at the 0.05 level ($\text{Sig.} = 0.000$). However, no

significant differences were found based on age, marital status, education level, occupation, or income, with the exception of the tourists' place of residence (inside vs. outside Surat Thani Province), which showed a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level ($\text{Sig.} = 0.001$).

Table 5: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results (Hypothesis 1)

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Test Result	F-Statistic	Sig.
1	Gender	Opinion	Accepted	$F = 9.747$	0.000*
2	Age	Opinion	Rejected	$F = 0.630$	0.641
3	Marital Status	Opinion	Rejected	$F = 0.543$	0.582
4	Education Level	Opinion	Rejected	$F = 2.019$	0.134
5	Occupation	Opinion	Rejected	$F = 2.191$	0.069
6	Place of Residence	Opinion	Accepted	$F = 3.460$	0.001*
7	Average Monthly Income	Opinion	Rejected	$F = 2.355$	0.072

Table 6, the results of testing Hypothesis 2, which posited that differences in tourist behaviors are associated with differing perceptions of service quality, indicated that the frequency of visits and the primary purpose of travel had no significant effect on tourists' perceptions of service quality.

However, information channels, intention to revisit, and willingness to recommend the destination to others were found to be significantly associated with perceptions of service quality at the 0.05 significance level ($\text{Sig.} = 0.003$, 0.046, and 0.042, respectively).

Table 6: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results (Hypothesis 2)

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Test Result	F-Statistic	Sig.
1	Number of Visits	Opinion	Rejected	$F = 1.507$	0.223
2	Main Purpose of Visit	Opinion	Rejected	$F = 1.291$	0.277
3	Channel of Tourism Awareness	Opinion	Accepted	$F = 3.667$	0.003*
4	Willingness to Revisit	Opinion	Accepted	$F = 3.113$	0.046*
5	Willingness to Recommend Others to Visit	Opinion	Accepted	$F = 3.190$	0.042*

5. Discussion

The finding that gender affects perceptions aligns with Kaenwongkham (2020) ^[4], who found that female tourists reported higher satisfaction with tourist destinations compared to male tourists. It is also consistent with Saratjeen (2017) ^[12], who noted that female tourists placed greater importance on safety and amenities than their male counterparts. The significant difference in perceptions based on place of origin, whether within or outside Surat Thani province, can be explained by the framework of Techataveewan (2002) ^[14], which suggests that geographic background and residential location influence tourist behavior and attitudes.

Furthermore, the impact of information channels on perception supports the work of Chansaenroj *et al.* (2022) ^[1] and Hsieh & Chang (2020) ^[3], which indicated that digital and social media exposure tends to elevate expectations, especially among Generation Z, thereby influencing them to rate service quality more critically than those who rely on traditional media. The observed association between intention to revisit and willingness to recommend the destination with perceived service quality is in line with Kitapci *et al.* (2014) ^[5] and Rungtip Nilphat (2018) ^[11], who found that positive service quality perceptions lead to higher satisfaction, which in turn fosters favorable behavioral outcomes such as word-of-mouth referrals and return visits.

5.1 Research Recommendations

1. Tourism destination developers should prioritize enhancing service quality across all dimensions, particularly in the areas of tangibles and assurance, which were rated most highly at this art street destination. For instance, maintaining the cleanliness and aesthetic appeal of the site and its murals is essential. Simultaneously, efforts should be made to improve aspects that received comparatively lower scores.
2. There should be greater emphasis on online promotion through platforms such as websites, Facebook, and Instagram, as these channels exert considerable influence on tourists' information access and travel decision-making. Content should be engaging, informative, and encourage interaction with followers. Tourism managers may also incentivize tourists to share photos and experiences using location-specific hashtags, which can organically boost visibility and popularity.
3. Relevant authorities should conduct regular surveys of tourist satisfaction and opinions to inform the continuous improvement of service quality. Given the dynamic nature of factors such as tourist preferences, quality standards, and environmental conditions, access to up-to-date feedback is critical for aligning service development with evolving expectations in a timely and responsive manner.

5.2 Suggestions for Future Research

1. Future studies should explore strategic approaches to service quality enhancement in art tourism destinations beyond the SERVQUAL framework. This may include dimensions such as marketing strategies, human resource management, and sustainability practices to offer a more comprehensive and integrated development perspective.
2. Qualitative research methods—such as in-depth

interviews, focus group discussions, or participant observation—should be employed to gain deeper insights into tourists' underlying perceptions, attitudes, and expectations that may not be fully captured through structured questionnaires.

3. Comparative studies should be conducted between Thai and international tourists to investigate potential cultural differences in perceptions and evaluations of service quality. This can help in tailoring service improvements to meet the expectations of a more diverse target audience.

6. Conclusion

The findings partially support Research Hypothesis 1, revealing that gender and place of origin significantly influence tourists' perceptions of service quality at the Art Street and Community-Based Learning Area in the old town of Surat Thani Municipality. However, no significant differences were found in perceptions across other personal factors such as age, marital status, educational attainment, occupation, and income.

Similarly, Research Hypothesis 2 was partially supported. While information channels, intention to revisit, and willingness to recommend the destination were significantly associated with perceptions of service quality, the number of previous visits and primary travel purposes did not yield significant effects.

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