Understanding Ethnic Tourists and Implications for Tourism Development

Chatarin Subying[1], Chanin Yoopetch[2],
Chaichana Ampornklinkaew[3] and Ornlatcha Sivarak[4]

[1, 2]College of Management, Mahidol University

69 Vipawadee Rangsit Road, Samsennai, Phayathai District, Bangkok 10400, Thailand

[3]Chaichana Ampornklinkaew

222 School of Management, Walailak University, Nakhonsrithammarat, 80160, Thailand

[4]Mahidol University International College, Mahidol University

999 Phutthamonthon 4 Rd., Salaya, Phutthamonthon, Nakhon Pathom 73170, Thailand

[1]chatarin.sub@gmail.com, [2]chanin.yoo@mahidol.ac.th,
[3]chaichana.amp@hotmail.com, [4]ornlatcha.siv@mahidol.ac.th

Abstract

Ethnic tourism is a fast-growing niche tourism, especially in developing countries. In addition, ethnic tourism is crucial to support the local or ethnic minority people to preserve and maintain their traditional and cultural values and increase their income by participating in this unique type of tourism. The current study was based on quantitative research with a survey from various ethnic tourism sites in Thailand. The sample size was 400, and the data were collected with the self-administered questionnaire with the online survey. The respondents with experience with ethnic tourism were allowed to participate in the survey. The findings demonstrated that motivational factors and information sources directly affected the revisit intention of the tourists. Practical contributions can be helpful for the destination site managers to focus on sharing interesting information about the ethnic tourism sites and creating new and unique experiences for the tourists to enjoy and encourage them to share positive word-of-mouth and revisit the destination.

Introduction

The increasing demand for a unique experience for travelers and tourists has led to new types of tourism. Ethnic tourism is a specific type of tourism activity, focusing on the ethnic community with their unique culture, and the tourists can learn to appreciate the ethnic ways of life. Clearly, ethnic tourism has provided economic and social benefits to the local community by providing additional income and supporting the continuity of traditions and cultures (Wood, 1984). Products of ethnic tourism are mainly traditions, dances, artifacts, and cultures of the ethnic people. Due to different types of tourists, it is essential to be able to identify the motivation and characteristics of segmented tourists so that tourism promotion activities can be initiated and further developed to attract the appropriate target groups. Nowadays, the emerging group of independent travelers has increased in numbers around the world, and many of them are young tourists. The personality traits and motivations among young tourists and other age groups are clearly identified as different (Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995). In this current study, the main objective is to explore the relationship between motivation and intention to visit ethnic tourism destinations of young tourists toward the ethnic tourism, including push and pull motivation factors and sources of information.

Furthermore, his study aims to provide a clearer understanding of the motivations for young tourists, representing the growing number of new tourists in today's global tourism environments, especially in the context of ethnic tourism, which is niche tourism mainly in the northern part of Thailand, such as Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai.

Young tourists are deemed to have more potential for the tourism industry in Thailand. Similar to other kinds of tourism, this group of tourists plays a significant role in ethnic tourism. The increasing number of young tourists under ethnic tourism would also positively affect the destination's economy as a whole. Since ethnic tourism could benefit the community of hill tribe peoples in terms of income generation, the increase in popularity of ethnic tourism would significantly help the tribal people living standards. In addition, this study is deemed beneficial to the tourism authorities in those destinations in terms of planning and implementing tourism promotion and policy to support the ethnic groups. The results would provide the authorities with guidelines for developing ethnic tourism destinations.

Initially, the term ethnic tourism has been used to refer to tourism directly associated with a culturally, geographically, and economically isolated ethnic enclave, which is usually poor and undeveloped (Li & Wall, 2014). Due to this, ethnic tourism was assumed to be tailored for only a limited number of visitors, usually motivated by interest and elite peer approval. As a result of the popularity of ethnic tourism, however, the type of ethnic tourists has been extended. At the moment, ethnic tourists are not only a special type of tourists who visit an ethnic tourist destination to observe the culture and lifestyles of ethnic people in a remote village, but they are also travelers who consume ethnic products even if they did not visit the site

and consume ethnic products from the metropolitan area (Li & Wall, 2014).

Although most studies mention the motivation for ethnic tourism is to pursue solely the exotic cultural experience, in reality, there are other motivations for ethnic tourism. This might be viewed in personal and interpersonal dimensions (Gnoth, 1997) or internal desires and external conditions (Hsu, Cai, & Wong, 2007).

The key objectives of the study were to identify the factors positively affecting the intention to visit ethnic tourism sites.

Literature review
Young tourists

Sellars (1998) described young tourists as people with relatively high disposable income, high mobility, and fewer burdens. For this reason, young tourists tended to travel more frequently than older tourists. Young tourists generally have a culture of solid leisure, play, enjoyment, and entertainment components. Horak's and Weber's (2000) study revealed that young tourists spent an average or above-average amount of money during their trips. Additionally, they make extended visits, sometimes up to months, and are open to new tourism products. Most young tourists are often influential trendsetters, meaning they can generate demand for new attractions and directly assist in creating new destinations.

Meanwhile, they are loyal in terms of destination choice (Horak & Weber, 2000). According to Gherrissi-Labben and Johnson (2004), young tourists is referred to people whose ages range from 15 to 25 years. Their study showed that young people travel on average four

times within their own country and two times abroad annually.

Additionally, a set of literature related the young tourists to Generation Y. Williams and Page (2011) described Generation Y as people who grew up in massive and rapidly paced change (e.g., full employment opportunities for women, dual-income households as a normal, wide range of family types seen as usual, and significant respect for ethnic and cultural diversity). However, they demanded goods and services that served their functional needs and had a clear purpose or meaning. Karavasilis, Nerantzaki, Pantelidis, Paschaloudis, and Vrana (2015) referred to Generation Y as Millennials or people born between 1980 and 2000. They are civic-minded and socially conscious consumers who demand quality goods but are brand loyal and willing to pay more.

Moreover, Prayag and Hosany (2014) mentioned that young tourists from the UAE who pursued luxury travel were not related to the desire to stand out from the rest of society, but they desired to conform and be accepted by friends and family. Richards and van der Ark (2013) revealed that the younger tourists who are least likely to consider themselves as "cultural tourists" were more likely to be at the leading edge of the new eras of cultural and creative tourism consumption, such as contemporary art and modern architecture. In addition, those young tourists may position themselves more as creative tourists. In addition, Bizirgianni and Dionysopoulou (2013) suggested that young people are the main group of social networking users, and therefore, tourism product and service providers should make an effort to engage young tourists through their

modes of communication, including websites and social media. Furthermore, these providers can attract young tourists to participate in tourism activities by providing more information for them via all these media.

Tourism motivation

The journey of tourists usually originates from some kind of motivation. Kim and Eves (2012) stated that motivation refers to a set of internal psychological needs triggering a person to perform in a certain way or urge their interest in travel and participation in a tourist activity. According to the models related to tourism motivation, Iso-Ahola (1982) proposed a dichotomous model (seeking/ escaping, personal/ interpersonal). The two motivational forces include: (1) "escaping" the desire to leave the everyday environment behind oneself (2) "seeking" the desire to obtain psychological (intrinsic) rewards through travel in a contrasting (new or old) environment in which these two forces could be divided into two dimensions the tourists have to deal with that are personal and interpersonal dimensions. Gnoth (1997) said that both emotional and cognitive parameters must be included when considering tourism motivation for planning and resource management purposes. In addition, Hsu, Cai, and Wong (2007) proposed a tourism motivations model for Chinese seniors which consisted of two major components: (1) external conditions including societal progress, personal finance, time, and health, of which personal finance and time are mediated through family support and responsibility and (2) internal desires including improving well-being, escaping routines, socializing, seeking knowledge, pride

and patriotism, personal reward, and nostalgia. For the empirical results, Kim, Borges, and Chon (2006) stated that a study of festival motivation was closely related to the study of tourism motivation since attendance at the festival was the essential aspect of tourism; moreover, the finding in the study suggested the possible linkage between the theme of the festival, attendees' specific values, and motivation to attend the festival. Lastly, Rittichainuwat and Rattanaphinanchai (2015) found that film-induced tourism impacted the travel decisions of both typical film tourists and general film tourists; the result also revealed that male general film tourists have higher travel motivations than male-specific film tourists.

According to Murray (1964), motivation is an internal reason that stimulates, directs, and integrates a person's behavior; nevertheless, a trip is almost never compelled by one single motivation. Dann (1977) identified two fundamental motivations for traveling: anomie (desire to exceed the feeling of loneliness existing in everyday life and to get away from it simply) and ego-enhancement (need for recognition, which is obtained through the status from traveling or needs to satisfy personality needs by like visiting places they never visited before). Crompton and Mckay (1997) categorized tourist motivations into push and pull factors, where pull factors refer to tangible factors that pull tourists towards the tourist destination (e.g., historical and cultural resources, beaches, and accommodation), while push factors refer to intangible factors that push a tourist away from home. Crompton and Mckay (1997) revealed that motivation might occur at individual and aggregate levels. To illustrate,

motivation at an individual level occurs when a traveler has a number of needs that he or she wishes to satisfy through a visit, while motivation at an aggregate level occurs when different visitors may obtain different benefits from the same traveling experience meaning motivations of tourists are highly complex. Later, they identified six motivations for visiting festivals: cultural exploration, novelty or regression, recovering equilibrium, confirming group socialization, external interaction or socialization, and gregariousness (Crompton & Mckay, 1997). Ryan and Aicken (2005) mentioned that the first motivation for most tourists for a holiday visit to a particular location might not be to meet local people from ethnic minorities. For example, Maori culture was not found to be the most important motivation for tourists to visit New Zealand, but ethnic tourism may be experienced during their visit. Due to the growth of ethnic tourism recently, Yang (2007) mentioned that the motivations of tourists have altered from curiosity and elite peer approval to become a highly complex classification within tourism studies. It was suggested that the motivation of ethnic tourism is not limited to watching exotic cultural expressions and lifestyles of ethnic peoples in remote villages but has evolved to the categorization of ethnic tourism, which includes consuming ethnic products at cultural parks in cities as well as reuniting with their cultural roots. On the other hand, Zhou and Liu (2008) proposed that culture is not only the heart of tourism, but it is also a vital competitive factor as it is one of the main motivations for tourists to travel to personally feel and experience areas with unique characteristics, ethnic customs,

and traditions. Besides, Stoykova (2015) suggested that motivations for ethnic tourism are believed to be pursuing exotic cultural experiences, including visits to ethnic settlements and ethnic thematic parks. For instance, ethnic tourists are usually involved in ethnic events and festivals, watching traditional dances or ceremonies, or just shopping for souvenirs from a particular ethnic community. In the study, Stoykova (2015) also analyzed the motivational factors ranging from seeking and expanding cultural experience, through the unification of the family and socialization, to the restoration of life's balance. According to Crompton and Mckay (1997) and Yoon and Uysal (2005), motivation factors in the current study were divided into push and pull motivation factors.

For questionnaire development, questions used for "tourism motivation" were shown in Appendix A.

Ethnic tourism

For the definition of ethnic tourism, Wood (1980) stated that "Ethnic tourism should be defined by its direct focus on people living out a cultural identity whose uniqueness is being marketed for tourists. Tourists may engage in "tours of living culture", or they may be presented with staged performances". Pitchford (1995) stated that ethnic tourism, in which a group and its distinctive culture were the main attractions, could be served as a resource for both material and cultural aspects of ethnic struggles. The ethnic group could improve its economic position through the creation of employment and entrepreneurial opportunities from interested outsiders. Furthermore, ethnic tourism differed

from other kinds of tourism since its product was offered as an experience of the authentic, unspoiled, and exotic cultures of the natives. In addition, Yang, Wall, and Smith (2006) stated that ethnic tourism is tourism motivated by a search of visitors for exotic cultural experiences, which includes the consumption of artifacts, performances, and other products or services.

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tourism and base the tourism plans on the development of the ethnic resources. Furthermore, Yang (2011) supported that ethnic tourism was used by many governments for economic and cultural development and also helped minorities to showcase their culture and revive their traditions. Even ethnic tourism would bring economic and social benefits, but it also adversely affected on culture and sense of identity of ethnic groups.

For the research results related to ethnic tourism, Moscardo and Pearce (1999) studied the visitors to an Aboriginal cultural park in Australia in which four distinct groups of visitors were identified based on their levels of interest in various aspects or features of ethnic tourism experiences and the empirical results revealed that the Ethnic Tourism Connection group had the highest participation rates for all other activities, the Passive Cultural Learning group was more likely to attend other performances than to participate in activities such as boomerang and spear throwing, while the Ethnic Activities, the Products group was more likely to participate in activities that attend further performances, and the Low Ethnic Tourism group had the lowest participation rates for all the features examined. In addition, for the studies related to ethnic tourism in Northern Thailand, Cohen (1988) commented on the penetration of tourism into the hill tribe area of northern Thailand, which he had participated during his study that some tourists complained that the people in a tribal village used industrially produced plastic cups instead of indigenously produced bamboo cups which offended the sense of cultural authenticity. Dearden and Harron (1994) stated that ethnic tourism in Northern Thailand focuses on hill tribe peoples,

and the empirical result revealed that the trekkers who participated the trekking in Northern Thailand were changing their motivations to focus on the authenticity of the entire experience rather than the ethnic authenticity of the hill tribes. Johnson (2007) supported that in northern Thailand, ethnic tourism emphasized a number of ethnically distinct minorities who generally live in the highlands. Moreover, Dearden (1991) mentioned that there was a transition of the hill tribes in Northern Thailand from a primary ethnic tourist attraction in which the hill tribes constituted the focus of tourist interest to a secondary ethnic tourist attraction in which the hill tribes were part of the local attraction. Lastly, Ishii (2012) examined how the economic benefits of ethnic tourism for tribal households impact on the division of labor and gender dynamics in the local minority community engaged in the tourism industry collected the sample from a sample of inner-city Akha residents in Thailand, and the results revealed that among the minority people investigated, the young and women were the highest income earners in which the traditional patriarchy was challenged by the new gender division of household labor in which women and the young now earn the main household income.

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According to Hiwasaki's study (2000) on ethnic tourism in Hokkaido, tourism impact is the result of changes economically, socially, culturally, and politically; meanwhile, tourism has actively adapted to or modified communities' ways of living to accommodate to and make the best use of, tourism (Hiwasaki, 2000). On the other hand, the impact can be defined as a positive or negative alteration due to the result of human action on a certain component (either physical, ecological, cultural, social, or economic) in a particular period of time and in a certain place or geographical area, compared to the circumstance in which the action would not have taken place. Ishii (2012) described how socioeconomic impact of ethnic tourism on local minority residents in two contrasting points: (1) ethnic tourism has multiple benefits, such as cultural or identity revival and sometimes even political gains for local minority residents, and (2) ethnic tourism provides a little economic return for local minority residents. In other words, minority residents tend to accept ethnic tourism despite the limited economic return due to the positive impact concerning the revival of culture and identity, which exceeds the small economic return (McKercher & Fu, 2006; Ishii, 2012). Simao and Mosso (2013) defined tourism impact as a set of effects on the local population, the physical environment, and the travelers themselves since it promotes the interaction of visitors with the destinations and their host communities. Kim, Uysal, and Sirgy (2013) suggested that tourism impact studies documented both positive and negative effects of tourism on the economic well-being, social well-being, cultural well-being, and environmental well-being of tourism communities. Examples of positive economic impacts are improved standard of living, increase in investment, and increase in business activity, while negative economic impacts are increases in property taxes, increase in the price of goods and services, and increase in land price (Li & Du, 2021). Concerning the social impacts, tourism brings about social benefits from opportunities for upgrading facilities in the areas such as outdoor recreation facilities, parks, and roads. However, there are traffic congestion and crowdedness, especially in the growth stage of the tourism development cycle,

while other social problems are begging, gambling, drug trafficking, and prostitution uprooting traditional society and causing deterioration of the traditional culture (Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013). Culturally, tourism is a means of revitalizing cultures when dying customs are rejuvenated for tourists, although it has disrupted traditional cultural structures and behavioral patterns (Frey & Briviba, 2021). Regarding the environmental perspective of tourism impact, tourism helps create a greater awareness of the need to preserve the environment and tends to cause fewer pollution problems compared to other types of industries like manufacturing. Still, tourism causes environmental pollution, like the destruction of natural resources, the degradation of vegetation, and the depletion of wildlife. Therefore, it is suggested that the tourism impact may change over time based on the developmental stages of tourism (Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013).

Source of information
Past research studies (e.g., Bukhari, Anis & Ramazan, 2021) highlighted the important influence of sources of information, leading to the visit of tourist sites. According to Seabra, Abrantes, and Lages (2007), sources of information affect how tourists arrange their trips. Additionally, the sources of information can be from friends, relatives, brochures, travel agencies, tour operators, or social media. Molina and Esteban (2006) stated that information sources for tourism activities had changed substantially over the past ten years because of the effect of new technologies, but the public authorities for tourism development were still spending their money on posters, brochures, and videos. Kim, Lehto, and Morrison (2007), Hogg, Liao, and O'Gorman (2014), and Lee and Gretzel (2012) suggested that creating persuasive website designs could help consumers learn about destinations and form strong attitudes about them. In addition, persuasive websites, including personal stories, pictures, and sound available on tourism on websites, would effectively create consumer confidence and help them form attitudes that were more resistant to counterarguments. Furthermore, Ho, Lin, and Chen (2012) and Chung and Koo (2015) suggested that a better understanding of website users' online tourism information search experiences would lead to the development of more effective customer-driven marketing concepts and campaigns.

From another perspective, conventional tourism information sources had an important role for tourists. Jacobsen and Munar (2012) and Ho, Lin, and Chen (2012) stated that conventional word-of-mouth, combined with internal information from people's minds, are still decisive factors for destination choice related to well-known and mainstream locations with high numbers of international summer holidaymakers.

Based on the literature, the source of information for this study included published travel guides/books/brochures, social media, tour operators/ travel agents, blogs/websites, and friends and relatives. Regarding questionnaire development, sources of questions used for "source of information" are shown in Appendix A.

Intention to Visit
Intention to visit the tourist destination is one of the most frequently used in

tourism motivation literature because behavioral intentions could lead to the actual visit to the tourist destination sites (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Podoshen, 2013; Prayag & Hosany,2014). Tomas et al. (2002) and Cho (2008) noted that little research was conducted to focus on the intention to visit a location. In addition, location attractiveness and tourist intention are supported by behavioral – intention theories and self-goal-directed theories.

According to Hunter (2006) and Perugini and Bagozzi (2001), intention can be defined as a self-commitment to performing a behavior, and this concept can be applied to several behaviors, including shopping and traveling. Sources of questions used for "intention to visit" were shown in Appendix A. According to the literature review, the conceptual framework for testing the causal relationship was proposed in Figure 1.
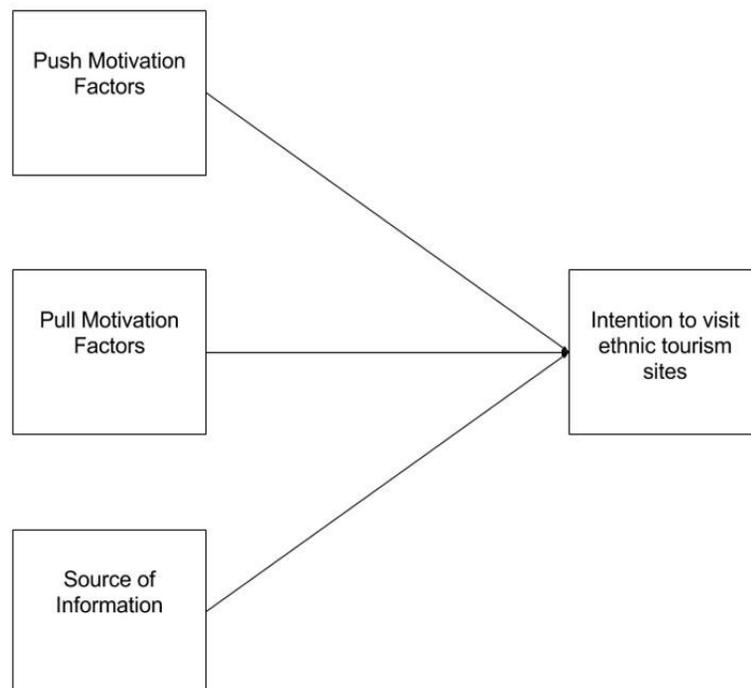

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research methods and data collections

The nature of this research was the quantitative approach. A total of 400 usable questionnaires were collected.

Missing values, outliers, and distribution of all measured variables were examined to purify the data and reduce systematic errors. Serious missing values were not found, and those missing observations were managed by a listwise procedure.

For the sample of the study, the target group was young tourists.

For sampling techniques, to identify the samples for the study based on Carr (2001), the age of young tourists was specified in the range of 16 – 35 years old. The convenient sampling method was used in this study. Online questionnaire surveys via Google were sent out through Facebook groups and Line open chats that relate to tourism.

The online questionnaire survey includes the screening questions, including "Please specify your age years", "Do you have the knowledge of ethnic tourism sites? And "Please specify the ethnic tourism sites that you have known." Only the respondents who met the criteria of the screening questions continued to respond to all other questions in the survey.

In addition, young tourists were asked to fill in the questionnaire concerning their motivations for visiting the ethnic tourism sites in the northern parts of Thailand (e.g. Chiang Rai province).

The questions on the questionnaire survey for each variable were adapted from the past literature. The survey contains 26 questions from four main parts, where each representing the variables of this study, including the source of information, push motivation factors, pull motivation factors, and intention to visit ethnic tourism sites. In the first part, there are five questions representing the source of information; questions are adapted from Asghar, (2015) and Bukhari, Anis & Ramazan (2021). In the second part, there are 10 questions representing the push motivation factors. In the third part, there are six questions representing the pull motivation factors. Questions on both push and pull motivation factors are adapted from Crompton and Mckay (1997), Kim and Eves (2012), Stoykova (2015), Yoon and Uysal (2005). In the fourth part, there are four questions representing the intention to visit ethnic tourism sites; questions are adapted from Cho (2008), Podoshen, (2013), Prayag and Hosany, (2014), Tomas et al., (2002). A seven-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Somewhat Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree) were used in the questionnaire survey. Additionally, the results of the reliability test with Cronbach's alpha are shown in Table 3. For data analysis, multiple regression analysis was employed to analyze the relationships among the motivational factors and source of information, and the intention to visit ethnic tourism sites.

Results

For the general characteristics of the samples, 52% of the respondents were female. The age range of the sample was between 16 – 35 years old. All of the samples were college students from various majors.

Table 1 Frequency and percentage of respondents classified by demographics

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	192	48.00
Female	208	52.00
Total	***400***	***100.00***
Age		
16 - 20	98	24.50
21-25	140	33.50
26-30	101	24.75
31-35	61	15.25
Total	***400***	***100.00***
Marital Status		
Single	255	63.75
Married	115	28.75
Others	30	7.50
Total	***400***	***100.00***
Educational Level		
Below Bachelor's degree	100	25.00
Bachelor's degree	197	49.25
Master's degree or above	103	25.75
Total	***400***	***100.00***

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistic of question items for each variable. The result shows that young tourists look for information about ethnic tourism sites from online channels such as blogs/websites and social media more than offline information sources such as travel agents and published travel guides. In terms of motivation, the opportunity to meet new people, physical activities, experience new and different lifestyles, and feel at home away from home are the top push factors that motivate young tourists to visit ethnic tourism sites. On the other hand, different cultures and outstanding scenery are the top pull motivation factors that attract young tourists to visit ethnic tourism sites.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics of question items

Variables level of agreement 1 (strongly disagree) – 7 (strongly agree)	Mean	S.D.
I. Source of Information		
Published travel guides	5.45	1.559
Friends and relatives	5.67	1.220
Social media	6.12	1.759
Tour operators or travel agents	5.78	1.669
Blogs/Websites	6.21	1.694
II. Push Motivation Factors		
Being physically active	6.11	1.561
Rediscovering myself	6.04	1.229
Meeting new people	6.27	1.072
Being free to act how I feel	5.97	1.084
Trying new food	5.31	0.958
Experiencing new/different lifestyles	6.11	0.856
Getting a change from a busy job	5.22	0.903
Going places friends have not been	5.71	0.884
Rediscovering past good times	5.85	1.004
Feeling at home away from home	6.11	0.870
III. Pull Motivation Factors		
Budget accommodation	5.58	1.021
Wide spaces to get away from crowds	5.88	0.899
Variety of activities to see	6.02	0.889
Outstanding scenery	6.24	0.699
Interesting and friendly local people	5.59	1.022
Different culture	6.28	0.718
IV. Intention to Visit Ethnic Tourism Sites		
If I get the chance to travel, I intend to visit the ethnic tourism sites.	6.29	0.841
One of my potential tourism destinations is the ethnic tourism sites.	5.81	1.027
I always talk positively about ethnic tourism sites.	6.29	0.845
I recommend my friends and family to visit ethnic tourism sites.	6.17	0.896

Based on table 3, the means of intention to visit the ethnic tourism sites, push motivation factors and pull motivation factors, and source of information were indicated. The reliability test showed that all four factors met the criteria since all Cronbach's alpha measures were above 0.8. The mean scores of each factor were used in the causal relationship test.

Table 3 Descriptive statistics of factors

Factors*	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's alpha	N
Intention to visit ethnic tourism sites	6.14	0.902	.90	400
Push motivation factors	5.87	1.042	.91	400
Pull motivation factors	5.93	0.875	.92	400
Source of information	5.85	1.580	.85	400

* (See Appendix 1 for details of each factor.)

Multiple regression analysis was conducted, and the test results are shown in table 4.

Table 4 Standardized coefficients of proposed regression model

Independent variables	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Push motivation factors	.200	4.131	.000	.892	1.121
Pull motivation factors	.190	3.914	.000	.896	1.116
Source of information	.196	4.144	.000	.937	1.067

From the results of multiple regression analysis, the proposed model was acceptable, based on the global test with F-test of 56.576 and sig. of .000. R-square was .168, showing that the independent variables can explain the changes in the dependent variable for 16.8%. In addition, Durbin-Watson test was 1.898, indicating that there is no autocorrelation. For multicollinearity test, VIFs of all factors were less than 10. The highest VIF was only 1.121, representing that there is no multicollinearity among factors in the model.

The regression results indicated that there were three influential factors as shown in the table above. Based on standardized coefficients, push motivation factors had the strongest influence on the intention to visit, followed by source of information and pull motivation factors, respectively.

Discussions

Regarding discussing the results from this study, in terms of motivation, according to the results, the young tourists were intended to visit the ethnic tourism destinations by both push and pull motivation factors. Crompton and McKay (1997) referred to push motivation factors as the drivers to push tourists away from home to travel. Their findings also suggested that push factors had an influence on the intention to visit tourism destinations. Additionally, Yoon and Uysal (2005) noted that pull motivation factors led to the possibility of traveling to the destination. Moreover,

pull factors also further affected tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. For the last influential factor, the source of information was confirmed to have a positive causal relationship with visiting intention. The result was also in accordance with the studies of Molina and Estaban (2006), Seabra, Abrantes, and Lages (2007), Ho, Lin, and Chen (2012), and Jacobsen and Munar (2012).

Conclusions and recommendation

The study achieved its objectives in that the results confirmed the influence of push motivation factors, sources of information, and pull motivation factors to affect the intention to visit ethnic tourism sites. Furthermore, the study has provided a clearer understanding of the impact of the source of information on the intention to visit. Past studies rarely focused on the significance of the source of information due to the fact that most empirical research attempted to explore the roles of push and pull motivation factors. It is found that the source of information had greater influence on the intention to visit than pull motivation factors. This leads to the implications of the study in that the number of tourists can be increased at ethnic tourism destinations when the information becomes more available through several channels to raise awareness and later to enhance the intention to visit those destinations. The support for ethnic tourism is crucial because this type of tourism is usually known as niche tourism. However, young tourists, who are more independent and frequently travel, can be the appropriate groups to visit ethnic tourism destinations.

For managerial implications, the results show that it would be more effective to promote ethnic tourism to young tourists by providing information via online channels than offline channels. Hence, tourism organizations can directly support ethnic tourism by providing information about the destination on online channels such as blogs/websites and social media. In addition, the tribal people can also use social media to offer information to tourists both domestically and internationally with ease. Additionally, ethnic tourism sites can use social media, such as Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, to reach out to potential tourists by creating content in order to enhance the awareness and visibility of the ethnic tourism sites. The content that would be appealing to tourists could be about the nice scenery of the ethnic destination and videos presenting the traditional lifestyle of the local people as the result of this study shows that culture and scenery are the top two factors that attract young tourists to the destination. In addition, the themes that could be used to intrinsically motivate young tourists to visit ethnic tourism destinations are meeting new people, physical activities, different lifestyles, and feeling at home away from home. Moreover, the Tourism Authority of Thailand should support by promoting local festivals and traditions as well as ways of life of the ethnic groups by using governmental social media and websites to support the local ethnic tourism groups.

Future research may continue to measure the experience of young tourists after visiting ethnic tourism sites in order to discover new dimensions of research studies, such as satisfaction or loyalty intentions for ethnic tourism.

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Appendix 1

Questions for each factor (Developed from past literature and related research)

Factors (level of agreement 1 (strongly disagree) – 7 (strongly agree).

I. Source of Information
   When I travel, I find the information about the ethnic tourism sites from…..
   …Published travel guides
   …Friends and relatives
   …Social media
   …Tour operators or travel agents
   …Blogs/Websites
 (Adapted from Asghar, (2015) and Bukhari, Anis & Ramazan, 2021).

II. Push Motivation Factors
   When I travel, my motivation includes…..
   …Being physically active
   …Rediscovering myself
   …Meeting new people
   …Being free to act how I feel
   …Trying new food
   …Experiencing new/different lifestyles
   …Getting a change from a busy job
   …Going places friends have not been
   …Rediscovering past good times
   …Feeling at home away from home
 (Adapted from Crompton & Mckay (1997), Yoon & Uysal (2005), Stoykova (2015) and Kim & Eves ,2012)

III. Pull Motivation Factors
   When I travel, my motivation includes…..
   …Budget accommodation
   …Wide spaces to get away from crowds
   …Variety of activities to see
   …Outstanding scenery
   …Interesting and friendly local people
   …Different culture
 (Adapted from Crompton & Mckay (1997), Yoon & Uysal (2005), Stoykova (2015) and Kim & Eves ,2012)

IV. Intention to Visit Ethnic Tourism Sites
   1. If I get the chance to travel, I intend to visit the ethnic tourism sites.
   2. One of my potential tourism destinations is the ethnic tourism sites.
   3. I always talk positively about ethnic tourism sites.
   4. I recommend my friends and family to visit ethnic tourism sities.
 (Adapted from Podoshen, 2013; Prayag & Hosany,2014). Tomas et al., (2002), and Cho (2008)