Interfans' travel patterns and routes during concert trips in Thailand

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Abstract

Entertainment tourism in Thailand has rapidly grown, becoming a major source of income due to the country's strategic location as a convenient stop in Southeast Asia for regional music tours. This study investigates the travel routes and behaviors of international music fan clubs (Interfans) attending concerts in Thailand. A survey of 312 respondents, primarily females aged 26–40, was analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square tests. Results showed that most respondents continued traveling after the concert, mainly within Bangkok, followed by Chonburi. Social media, recommendations, and reviews were key factors influencing destination choices. The study highlights the economic impact of music tourism, with concertgoers contributing to local businesses through spending on accommodation, food, and shopping. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and tourism operators to enhance services and strategies, encouraging tourists to revisit. Future research should expand the sample to include more nationalities and explore the role of traditional music events in attracting tourists.

Keywords: Interfans' travel patterns; tourism routes; concert trips in Thailand

1. Introduction

Entertainment tourism refers to travel and tourism activities primarily motivated by the desire to experience entertainment-related events, attractions, or activities at a destination. It holds significant importance as people increasingly seek unique and memorable

experiences designed to meet their needs during travel (Luo and Fan, 2022). Entertainment tourism encompasses five categories: music, film, gaming, theme parks, and cultural events. Music tourism, in particular, is a vibrant form of travel where fans journey to experience live performances, festivals, and historic music landmarks. When individuals purchase tickets to attend an event or performance, especially one that requires travel, they often spend additional money within the local economy (Miller, 2024).

In 2023, the number of music events in Thailand increased by 111% (Tingmonthly, 2023), and international tourist numbers, especially from East Asian countries, according to Economics Tourism and Sport Division rise by 350.06% compared to 2022. This growth is attributed to Thailand's location in Southeast Asia, making it a convenient stop for artists on regional tours, leading to more music event organizations in the country. Moreover, the government is aware of the growth in the music event market and supports it through policies that incentivize the development of the entertainment industry. This results in an increase in the purchasing power of consumers, attracting both domestic and international tourists interested in music events to enter the country. In other words, concerts rise with an increase in foreign tourists (Borowiecki and Castiglione, 2014). Event tourism is reshaping the travel industry post-COVID, with an increasing number of people willing to fly to attend concerts. This trend is linked to hedonism, which is defined as the pursuit of pleasure and enjoyable experiences, driven by the desire to satisfy pleasurable needs. Hedonism is often associated with emotional desires, as people generally seek a pleasurable and fulfilling life. Consequently, hedonism can be seen as having a positive impact on individual entertainment and experiences (Luo et al., 2021). When planning a travel trip, it is essential to specify the place you want to visit, determining a destination based on five factors: catering, accommodation, landscape, culture, and recreation and entertainment (Wang et al., 2021). To receive the best experience, satisfaction, and memories, tourists not only attend concerts but also plan to visit other destinations, incurring expenditures such as accommodation, transportation, entertainment, dining, and other related services. International tourist expenditures have a positive impact on economic growth (Rehman et al., 2020). After a successful trip, tourists have the best experience and good memories, bringing the potential for a revisit incentive as a tourist position, not only for tourists but also attracting artists for private trips and the possibility of returning to organize their concerts in the country again.

As mentioned above, the purpose of this study is to explore international fans' experiences during concert trips, including their travel routes and behaviors, and their impact on Thailand's tourism sector. The results of the study are beneficial for policymakers and tourism operators in planning tourism supplies to meet the demand of international music fan clubs, enhance a destination's image, and attract international tourists.

2. Research Objectives

2.1 To study the travel routes of international music fan clubs.

2.2 To study the tourism behavior of international music fan clubs.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Population and Sample Size

The population of this study consists of international music fans from Southeast Asia and East Asia who have attended concerts in Thailand. The sample size of this study includes 207 respondents, determined using the G*Power program, which calculates the sample size without requiring the exact population size (Cohen, 1977)

3.2 Data Collection Tools

To collect data for the study, the researcher developed an online survey and distributed the online survey by post in social media with hashtag about artist and event in Thailand, and directly provided it to Music international fans club.

Part 1: The demographic of participants consists of gender, age, nation, income per month, reason for visiting to Thailand.

Part 2: Travel Route, this section uses closed-ended questions with predefined answer options. The questionnaire allows participants to select one or more destinations from a given list after attending the concert. The survey also explores the factors and motivations influencing their destination choices, as well as their satisfaction with the selected destinations. Participants are asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5, where level 5 indicates very high satisfaction, level 4 indicates high satisfaction, level 3 indicates moderate satisfaction, level 2 indicates low satisfaction, and level 1 indicates very low satisfaction.

Part 3: Tourism Behavior, this section uses closed-ended questions with predefined answer options, allowing participants to select one or more answers. The questionnaire covers topics such as time spent, accommodation, expenditure, travel arrangements in Thailand, intention to revisit Thailand, and sources for finding news or information about traveling. Additionally, participants are asked to rank their top three types of expenditures.

3.4 Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, and mean, were used to analyze data collected from a sample group. This method was applied to closed-ended and ranking questions to determine the average characteristics of concertgoers based on demographics. Additionally, it was used to describe their travel routes and behaviors.

Chi-Square Test

The Chi-square test is used to analyze the relationship between independent variables, including opinion scores on factors and motivations influencing destination choice, and satisfaction with the selected destination. The goal was to identify the variables that are most crucial in explaining dependent variables is revisit intention. The analysis of relationships was divided into two groups: 1) the sample group who continued traveling after the concert, and 2) the sample group who only attended the concert, as shown in Table 9 and Table 10.

4. Research Findings Summary

Based on the questionnaires answered by 312 music international fans located in Southeast Asia and East Asia that had attend concert in Thailand, we have summarized the descriptive statistics of the variables used in our study. The majority of respondents were female (87.9%) and aged between 26 and 40 years (52.4%). Most respondents were Chinese (41%) and had a monthly income level between 25,001 and 35,000 baht. Additionally, a greater proportion of respondents continued traveling after the concert (59.6%) compared to those who only attended the concert (40.4%), as shown in Table 1

Factor	Category	Frequency	Proportion
Gender	Male	32	10.2%
	Female	277	87.9%
	Rather not to say	6	1.9%
Age	Under 18 years	10	32.0%
	18 – 25 years	125	39.7%
	26 – 40 years	165	52.4%
	41 – 60 years	13	4.1%
	Over 60 years	2	0.6%
Nation	Cambodia	2	0.6%
	China	129	41.0%
	Indonesia	33	10.5%
	Japan	19	6.0%
	Laos	1	0.3%
	Malaysia	15	4.8%
	Myanmar	5	1.6%
	Philippines	24	7.6%

Factor	Category	Frequency	Proportion
	Russia	2	0.6%
	Singapore	20	6.3%
	South Korea	22	7.0%
	Taiwan	11	3.5%
	Vietnam	26	8.3%
	Others	6	1.9%
Income per month	Under 5,000 baht	2	0.6%
	5,001 – 15,000 baht	15	4.8%
	15,001 – 25,000 baht	97	30.8%
	25,001 – 35,000 baht	115	36.5%
	35,001 – 45,000 baht	50	15.9%
	Over 45,000 baht	36	11.4%
Reason for visiting on this trip	Attend only concert	126	40.4%
	Carry on traveling after the concert	186	59.6%

Table 1 Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

The result of respondents travel route about type of destination, they mostly go to the place that involve concert theme (20.9%) and live in Bangkok (63.4%). But if it's in the provinces, most people will choose to go Chonburi (14.4%), as shown in Table 2.

Regarding the respondents' opinions on the factors and motivations influencing their destination choice and their satisfaction with the selected destination. In our results, we will separate the respondents into two groups.

The first group consists of those who continued traveling after the concert. They provided average scores for the factors and motivations influencing their destination choice, with the most common being self-interest (Mean = 4.34), social media (Mean = 4.33), and recommendations and reviews (Mean = 4.13), respectively. Their satisfaction was mostly influenced by Thai people (Mean = 4.35), food and beverages (Mean = 4.29), and the destination environment (Mean = 4.15), respectively. As shown in Table 3

The second group consists of those who only attended the concert. They provided average scores for the factors and motivations influencing their destination choice, with the most common being self-interest (Mean = 4.41), social media (Mean = 4.37), and recommendations and reviews (Mean = 4.15), respectively. Their satisfaction was mostly influenced by Food and beverages (Mean = 4.40), Thai people (Mean = 4.39), and the destination environment (Mean = 4.23), respectively.as shown in Table 4

	Category	Proportion
Type of destination	historical/cultural attraction	15.7%
	natural attraction	13.2%
	beach attraction	11.1%
	entertainment attraction	20.2%
	walking street	17.8%
	Place that involves concert theme	20.9%
	Café	1.0%
Provinces	Bangkok	63.4%
	Chonburi (Pattaya)	14.4%
	Phuket	3.2%
	Surat Thani (Koh Samui)	1.8%
	Chiang Mai	5.3%
	Songkhla (Hat Yai)	0.6%
	Phangnga	0.8%
	Krabi	0.8%
	Ayutthaya	8.7%
	Khao Yai	0.8%
	Khonkaen	0.2%

Table 2 Travel Route of the Respondents

	Category	Mean
Factors and motivations that influence destination choice	Self – interest	4.34
	Destination reputation	3.87
	Location	3.65
	Culture	3.55
	Recreation and entertainment	3.93
	Accommodation	4.02
	Recommendation and review	4.13
	Social media	4.33
Satisfaction with the selected destination.	Destination environment	4.15
	Weather	3.34
	Accommodation	3.90
	Transportation	3.85
	Sanitation	3.77
	Culture	3.84
	Food/Beverage	4.29
	Destination facilities	4.11

	Category	Mean
	Thai people	4.35
Factors and motivations that influence destination choice	Self – interest	4.41
	Destination reputation	3.80
	Location	3.55
	Culture	3.40
	Recreation and entertainment	3.92
	Accommodation	3.94
	Recommendation and review	4.15
	Social media	4.37
Satisfaction with the selected destination.	Destination environment	4.23
	Weather	3.24
	Accommodation	4.10
	Transportation	3.94
	Sanitation	3.79
	Culture	3.87
	Food/Beverage	4.40
	Destination facilities	4.07
	Thai people	4.39

Table 4 The score levels from the group that attended only the concert

In terms of travel behavior, most respondents will spend 4-7 days (69.9% of those who continue traveling, 71.4% of those who only attend the concert) in Thailand, choosing to travel independently (71.5% of those who continue traveling, 84.1% of those who only attend the concert) with a friend or coworker (70.4% of those who continue traveling, 57.9% of those who only attend the concert), as shown in Table 5.

		Continue traveling		Only attend the concert	
Behavior	Category	Frequency	Proportion	Frequency	Proportion
Time spends	1 – 3 days	17	9.1%	32	25.4%
	4 – 7 days	130	69.9%	90	71.4%
	8 – 15 days	38	20.4%	4	3.2%
	over 15 days	1	0.5%	0	0.0%
Travel arrangement	Independent tour	133	71.5%	106	84.1%
	Group tour	34	18.3%	12	9.5%
	Package tour	4	2.2%	5	4.0%
	Family tour	15	8.1%	3	2.4%

		Continue traveling		Only attend the concert	
Behavior	**Category**	**Frequency**	**Proportion**	**Frequency**	**Proportion**
Companions	Travel alone	28	15.1%	44	34.9%
	Friend/Coworker	131	70.4%	73	57.9%
	Family	26	14.0%	8	6.3%
	Strangers and become friend	1	0.5%	1	0.8%

Table 5 Tourists behavior

According to travel behavior, most respondents from both groups spend between 20,001 - 30,000 baht per trip (52.1%), with the majority spending on accommodation (68.9%) (Typically, people choose hotels (61.4%), hostels (13.7%), and guesthouses (10.0%)), food and dining (66.3%), and shopping (62.5%), respectively. The survey results found that the main channels through which respondents received information about concerts and attractions were primarily social media (90.5%), websites (51.3%), and blogs or online reviews (26.3%), respectively, as shown in

Most respondents have a high probability of revisiting Thailand in the future. When analyzing their revisit intention in relation to their opinions using the Chi-Square test, we observed that the group who continued traveling after the concert showed more statistically significant factors than the group who only attended the concert. These factors include motivations that influence destination choice (location, recreation and entertainment, destination reputation, self-interest, and accommodation) and their satisfaction with the selected destination (accommodation, destination environment, food/beverage), as shown in Table 6

	Independent variables	**Pearson Chi-square**	**df.**	**Asymptotic Significance (p-value)**	
Factors and motivations that influence destination choice.	Self - interest	12.533	4	0.014	*
	Destination reputation	18.021	6	0.006	**
	Location	24.365	6	<0.001	***
	Culture	8.011	8	0.432	
	Recreation and entertainment	21.175	6	0.002	**
	Accommodation	10.022	4	0.04	*
	Recommendation and review	11.261	6	0.081	
	Social media	6.139	6	0.408	

	Independent variables	Pearson Chi-square	df.	Asymptotic Significance (p-value)	
Satisfaction with the selected destination.	Destination environment	15.309	6	0.018	*
	Weather	12.486	6	0.052	
	Accommodation	16.467	6	0.011	*
	Transportation	1.865	6	0.932	
	Sanitation	5.994	4	0.2	
	Culture	10.384	6	0.109	
	Food/Beverage	11.758	4	0.019	*
	Destination facilities	5.062	6	0.536	
	Thai people	2.765	4	0.598	

Note: *, **, and ***, indicate significance at the confidence level 95%, 99%, and 99.9%, respectively.

Table 6 Results of Chi-Square analysis of the group who continued traveling after the concert

In contrast, the group who only attended the concert showed significance in social media as a factor and motivation influencing destination choice, and in destination facilities for satisfaction with the selected destination, as shown in Table 7

	Independent variables	Pearson Chi-square	df	Asymptotic Significance (p-value)	
Factors and motivations that influence destination choice.	Self - interest	6.749	8	0.564	
	Destination reputation	8.947	6	0.177	
	Location	4.225	6	0.646	
	Culture	8.212	8	0.413	
	Recreation and entertainment	5.375	6	0.497	
	Accommodation	3.383	6	0.759	
	Recommendation and review	6.13	6	0.409	
	Social media	13.338	4	0.01	**
	Destination environment	4.207	6	0.649	
	Weather	10.029	8	0.263	
Satisfaction with the selected destination.	Accommodation	10.675	6	0.099	
	Transportation	4.278	6	0.639	
	Sanitation	4.009	6	0.675	

	Independent variables	Pearson Chi-square	df	Asymptotic Significance (p-value)	
	Culture	3.637	6	0.726	
	Food/Beverage	3.339	4	0.503	
	Destination facilities	11.245	4	0.024	*
	Thai people	6.911	4	0.141	

Note: *, and **, indicate significance at the confidence level 95%, and 99%, respectively.

Table 7 Chi-Square analysis of the group who only attended the concert

5. Discussion of Research Findings

Based on the results mentioned above, the two objectives of this study can be discussed as follows:

The first objective, to study the travel routes of international music fan clubs. The finding that most respondents continued their travels after attending the concert can have economic impacts, as Miller (2023) noted that when individual purchase tickets to attend an event or performance, particularly one that requires travel they tend to spend additional money within the local economy. This is particularly significant in the context of Thailand, where the Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports (2023) reported that tourism plays a crucial role in stimulating the economy. Major events, such as the Taylor Swift concert in Singapore, are expected to generate substantial economic benefits. This highlights the potential of music tourism to drive national economic growth in Singapore, and similarly, music events in Thailand can act as catalysts for broader economic growth, especially when attracting international tourists.

When examining the travel routes, it was found that most respondents were primarily interested in choosing places related to a concert theme. This aligns with the research by Borowiecki and Castiglione (2014), which noted that foreign tourists are more inclined to visit museums and attend concerts. It also corresponds with the study by Stipanović and Zubović (2023), which highlights the significant role of entertainment tourism, particularly attending concerts and exhibitions, as a primary motivation for tourists in selecting their destinations. Additionally, most respondents chose to travel only within Bangkok, which serves as a central hub for entertainment and concerts. However, a subset of respondents opted to travel to other provinces, with the majority selecting Chonburi, reflecting the importance of tourism in provinces that offer entertainment or interesting activities. Chonburi's proximity to Bangkok makes it an attractive option.

Regarding the factors and motivations influencing respondents' destination choices, personal interest, social media, and recommendations from others were key factors.

These findings are consistent with the study by Luo and Fan (2022), which suggests that entertainment tourism is driven by intrinsic motivations such as curiosity, enjoyment, and the pursuit of novelty. The role of social media and recommendations aligns with the findings of Oh et al. (2015), who found that social media significantly influences inbound tourism.

Respondent satisfaction with their chosen destinations stemmed from interactions with the friendliness of Thai people, the food and beverages, and the overall environment. These factors positively impacted their experience and memory, which suggests they had a good experience, according to the study by Rehman et al. (2020). *The second objective*, to study the travel behavior of international music fan clubs. Most respondents stayed in Thailand for 4-7 days, traveled independently with friends or colleagues, and spent between 20,001 - 30,000 baht per trip, primarily on accommodation, food, and shopping. This aligns with the study by Rehman et al. (2020), which showed that international tourist expenditures positively impact economic growth.

Respondents primarily received information about concerts and tourist attractions through social media, websites, and blogs or online reviews. This supports the study by Oh et al. (2015), which found that social media plays a significant role in predicting inbound tourism in Korea. It also aligns with the study by Lee et al. (2014), which emphasized that travel packages must incorporate entertainment elements to attract international fans.

Based on their behavior and satisfaction, most respondents indicated a high likelihood of revisiting Thailand in the future. This aligns with the study by Luo et al. (2021), which found that travel experiences mediate the relationship between hedonism and the intention to revisit. When comparing the two groups, those who continued their travels after the concert showed statistically significant differences from those who only attended the concert, particularly in factors such as location, recreation and entertainment, destination reputation, self-interest, and accommodation. Additionally, satisfaction with the selected destination, including accommodation, the destination environment, and food and beverages, was also significant. This is consistent with studies by Wang et al. (2021), who highlighted that destination reputation is a key factor influencing tourists' destination choices. Additionally, satisfaction with accommodation and the destination environment also impacts the intention to revisit, as suggested by Luo et al. (2021), who emphasized that travel experiences play a crucial role in shaping the intention to return. Conversely, the group that only attended the concert found that social media significantly influenced their destination choice. This can be linked to the study by Oh et al. (2015), which found that social media is a key predictor in determining inbound tourism trends. Furthermore, the consideration of destination facilities within this group reflects the importance of facilities in enhancing tourist satisfaction.

6. Knowledge from Research

This study contributes new insights into the emerging field of music tourism by examining the travel patterns and behaviors of international concertgoers in Thailand. The findings reveal that music tourism is not merely an event-based activity but also a catalyst for extended travel and economic stimulation. A significant proportion of attendees, particularly Chinese tourists aged 26–40, continue their travels after the concert, leading to increased spending on local businesses such as accommodation, dining, and shopping. This underscores the potential of concert tourism as a driver of regional economic growth, especially in areas beyond major metropolitan centers. Furthermore, this study highlights the strategic role of destination branding through entertainment tourism. By identifying the preferences and movement patterns of music fans, policymakers and tourism stakeholders can design targeted strategies to position Thailand as a prime destination for international music events. The integration of music tourism into broader tourism policies could lead to the development of infrastructure and services that enhance both visitor experiences and economic returns.

Additionally, this research contributes to the understanding of fan mobility and experience-driven tourism. Unlike traditional tourists, concertgoers exhibit distinct travel behaviors shaped by emotional engagement with the artists and the event atmosphere. This suggests that music tourism should be analyzed not only from an economic perspective but also through a socio-cultural lens, considering the experiential motivations and community-building aspects of fan travel.Lastly, the study identifies an opportunity to diversify Thailand's music tourism sector by incorporating traditional Thai music genres, such as Molam, into the global entertainment landscape. This could foster cultural tourism and create new avenues for international tourist engagement, ensuring a more sustainable and inclusive music tourism industry.

7. Recommendation

Policy Development for Music Tourism Promotion Policymakers should recognize the growing market for music tourism and develop strategies to promote tourism in various regions of Thailand beyond major cities like Bangkok. Infrastructure and music-related activities should be enhanced in secondary cities to distribute economic benefits more equitably and strengthen the country's image as a music and entertainment tourism destination.

Enhancing Services to Accommodate International Music Fans Tourism operators should improve and tailor their services to better meet the needs of international music fans. This includes offering accommodations that align with the budget preferences of this demographic, promoting restaurants with specialized menu options, and developing travel

packages that connect concert venues with key tourist attractions. Strengthening these services can enhance visitor satisfaction and increase the likelihood of repeat visits.

Expanding Sample Diversity and Research Scope As this study primarily focused on Chinese tourists, its findings may have limited applicability to other international fan groups. Future research should broaden the sample to include a more diverse range of nationalities to provide a more comprehensive understanding of global music tourism trends. Additionally, future studies should explore a wider scope of music events, including traditional Thai music genres such as **Molam**, to promote cultural heritage and expand the music tourism market in Thailand.

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