



FACTORS INFLUENCING SPORTS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
IN PHUKET PROVINCE OF THAILAND

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Abstract

This research aimed to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis of factors influencing sports tourism development in Phuket Province and to examine the causal relationships among selected factors, including sports tourism objectives, sports-related stakeholders, sports tourism venues, and sports tourism impacts on supportive factors for sports tourism development in Phuket Province. The sample comprised 384 residents of Phuket Province, Thailand. The research instrument was a questionnaire investigating factors influencing sports tourism development in Phuket Province. Data were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling. The findings revealed that the structural equation model of factors influencing sports tourism development in Phuket Province, Thailand, demonstrated good fit with empirical data. Sports tourism objectives in Phuket Province had a direct influence on sports-related stakeholders. Sports-related stakeholders directly influenced sports tourism venues in Phuket Province. Sports tourism venues had a direct effect on sports tourism impacts, and sports tourism impacts directly influenced supportive factors for sports tourism development in Phuket Province. The model fit indices were as follows: $\chi^2 = 138.56$, $df = 47$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$, $\chi^2/df = 2.948$, $CFI = 0.99$, $GFI = 0.97$, $TLI = 0.93$, $RMSEA = 0.071$.

Keywords: Factors Influencing, Sports Tourism, Phuket Province



Introduction

The tourism situation in Thailand during the first quarter of 2024, according to the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, shows continuous improvement. International tourist arrivals reached 9.37 million, representing a 43.54% increase compared to the same period last year. When compared to the same period in 2019, international tourist arrivals have recovered to 86.22%. Positive factors contributing to the tourism sector include visa measures and increased flight frequencies from international airlines to Thailand. Tourism revenue in the first quarter of 2024 reached 454,654 million baht, a 41.04% increase from the same period last year, recovering to 87.60% of 2019 levels (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2024). Phuket Province ranks second in tourism revenue in Thailand after Bangkok. The province aims to develop as “A hub of international standard for sustainable development of tourism, education, and innovation in service providing.” To address economic weaknesses and long-term development challenges, the province is strengthening its sport tourism capabilities to become an international sports tourism center (Phuket Provincial Office, 2023). Phuket is also designated as a Sport City under the 20-year National Strategy Framework (2018-2037), focusing on human resource development by promoting better health and quality of life for Thai citizens while utilizing sports activities to enhance the national economy (Sports Authority of Thailand, 2022).

This research aimed to examine the confirmatory factors influencing sports tourism development in Phuket Province and investigate causal relationships among selected factors, including sports tourism objectives, sports-related stakeholders, sports tourism venues, and sports tourism impacts on supportive factors for sports tourism development in Phuket Province. The study framework comprises the following factors, components, and variables:

1. Sports Tourism Purpose Factors in Phuket Province (Purpose: PUR) comprise five observed variables or components (Gibson, Attle, & Yiannakis, 1997; Delpy, 2003; Higham, 2005; Orams, 2005) Sports competition (PUR1), Sports training or competition preparation (PUR2), Recreational activities participation (PUR3), Visiting renowned sports venues (PUR4), and Sports-related business activities (PUR5).

2. Sports-Related Stakeholders Factors in Phuket Province (Participants: PAR) consist of eight observed variables or components (Gibson, Attle, & Yiannakis, 1997; Delpy, 2003; Higham, 2005; Orams, 2005) including Athletes, referring to athletes participating in sports competitions (PAR1), Sports spectators or sports fans, referring to sports spectators or sports fans such as sports club members, sports enthusiasts, or athlete fans, etc. (PAR2), Recreational activity participants, referring to participants in recreational activities such as surfboarding, diving, rock climbing, rafting, sailing, canoeing, mountain climbing, hiking, cycling, Muay Thai, golfing, or yoga, etc. (PAR3), Athletes' family members or friends, referring to athletes' family members or friends



(PAR4), Sports activity administrators, referring to administrators involved in sports activities (PAR5), Sports sponsors and sports business personnel, referring to sports sponsors and individuals working in sports-related businesses (PAR6), Sports experts, referring to sports experts such as coaches, physicians, physiotherapists, sports psychologists, and sports technical staff (PAR7), and Sports media personnel (PAR8).

3. Sports Tourism Venue Factors in Phuket Province (Setting: SET) consist of three observed variables or components (Gibson, Attle & Yiannakis, 1997; Delpy, 2003; Higham, 2005; Orams, 2005) including Natural sports venues, referring to natural locations for sports activities participation such as sea, cliffs, and rivers (SET1), Built sports facilities, referring to human-constructed facilities for sports such as golf courses, artificial climbing walls, and Muay Thai camps (SET2), and Sports heritage sites, referring to historical places for sports such as sports museums, halls of fame, and/or sports stadiums. (SET3).

4. Sports Tourism Impact Factors in Phuket Province (Sports Tourism Impacts: STI) consist of ten observed variables or components (World Tourism Organization, 2020; Centre for SDG Research and Support, 2016) including Jobs and income opportunities (SDG1, SDG8) (STI1), Visitor spending (SDG1, SDG8) (STI2), Competitiveness (SDG1, SDG8) (STI3), Accessibility (SDG11) (STI4), Well-being of tourists (SDG3) (STI5), Welfare of the locals (SDG3) (STI6), Jobs and income opportunities for all women and girls (SDG5) (STI7), Athletes as a role model for all women and girls (SDG5) (STI8), Enhancing awareness and encouraging environmental measures (SDG12, SDG13, SDG14, SDG15) (STI9), and Promoting mutual understanding (SDG16, SDG17) (STI10).

5. Support for Sports Tourism Development Factors in Phuket Province (Support for Sports Tourism Development: SST) consist of 15 observed variables or components (World Tourism Organization, 2020; Centre for SDG Research and Support, 2016) including Partnerships and community involvement (SDG1, SDG8) (SST1), Support of the locals (SDG1, SDG8) (SST2), Sport Events (SDG1, SDG8) (SST3), Sport events for a cause (SDG1, SDG8) (SST4), New sport (SDG1, SDG8) (SST5), Technology (SDG1, SDG8) (SST6), Combining sport tourism with other tourism resources (SDG1, SDG8) (SST7), Safety (SDG1, SDG8) (SST8), Participation of residents (SDG3) (SST9), Consideration of women (SDG5) (SST10), Enhancement of accessibility (SDG11) (SST11), Sustainable use of natural resources (SDG12, SDG13, SDG14, SDG15) (SST12), Environmental measures (SDG12, SDG13, SDG14, SDG15) (SST13), Educating tourists and the locals (SDG12, SDG13, SDG14, SDG15) (SST14), and Encouraging interactions (SDG16, SDG17) (SST15).

Research Hypotheses:

H1: Sports tourism objectives influence sports-related stakeholders in Phuket.

H2: Sports-related stakeholders influence sports tourism venues in Phuket.

H3: Sports tourism venues influence sports tourism impacts in Phuket.



H4: Sports tourism impacts influence support for sports tourism development in Phuket.

Methodology

This research is a quantitative study examining causal relationships and has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee, Phuket Rajabhat University (COA no. PKRU2567/16). The research methodology is as follows:

The study population comprises 413,210 Thai residents in Phuket Province, Thailand (Department of Provincial Administration, 2023). The sample size of 384 residents was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination method (Krejcie, & Morgan, 1970). The sample selection criteria specified Thai citizens, both male and female, aged 18 years and above (Chen, 2001), who reside in Phuket Province, a tourist destination that has hosted national and international sporting events.

The research instrument is a questionnaire on factors influencing sports tourism development in Phuket Province, Thailand, using a 5-point rating scale to measure perception levels and needs. It consists of six parts: Part 1-Respondent demographics, Part 2-Sports tourism objectives in Phuket, Part 3-Sports-related stakeholders in Phuket, Part 4-Sports tourism venues in Phuket, Part 5-Sports tourism impacts in Phuket, and Part 6-Support needs for sports tourism development in Phuket. Parts 2-5 measure perception levels, and Part 6 measures need levels, with scale points defined as: 5-highest perception/need, 4-high perception/need, 3-moderate perception/need, 2-low perception/need, and 1-lowest perception/need. The instrument's quality was verified through content validity assessment by five qualified experts in physical education, sports tourism, or related fields, holding at least a master's degree. The Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) showed a total consistency index of 0.94. The revised questionnaire was pilot tested with 30 non-sample Phuket residents, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, yielding a reliability value of 0.80.

Data analysis for confirmatory factors affecting sports tourism development in Phuket includes measurement models of latent variables or factors. Statistical methods employed are Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using standardized regression weights and model fit statistics including Chi-square (χ^2), Relative Chi-square (χ^2/df), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). The analysis of causal relationships between selected factors uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), examining standardized regression weights, Square Multiple Correlation (R^2), Direct Effects (DE), Indirect Effects (IE), Total Effects (TE), and model fit statistics including χ^2 , χ^2/df , AGFI, GFI, and RMSEA. The analysis of causal relationships between selected factors uses SEM, examining

standardized regression weights, R^2 , DE, IE, TE, and model fit statistics including χ^2 , χ^2/df , AGFI, GFI, and RMSEA.

Results

Part 1: Confirmatory Factors Influencing Sports Tourism Development in Phuket Sports Tourism Purpose Factors in Phuket Province

The initial confirmatory factor analysis results for construct validity testing showed that the hypothesized model did not fit the empirical data ($\chi^2=126.15$, $df=5$, $\chi^2/df=25.23$, $CFI=0.53$, $GFI=0.88$, $TLI=0.07$, $RMSEA=0.252$). Therefore, the model was modified based on Modification Indices while considering question item appropriateness, and items with statistically insignificant factor loadings were removed. After modification, the measurement model for sports tourism purpose factor in Phuket Province demonstrated construct validity with excellent fit indices ($\chi^2=0.00$, $df=0$, $CFI=1.00$, $GFI=1.00$, $TLI=1.00$, $RMSEA=0.000$). The model comprises three components with factor loadings ranging from 0.30-0.99, all statistically significant at the .05 level. When examining the standardized factor loadings of each component, it was found that: 1) PUR3 has a standardized factor loading of 0.99, 2) PUR4 0.66, and 3) PUR5 0.30.

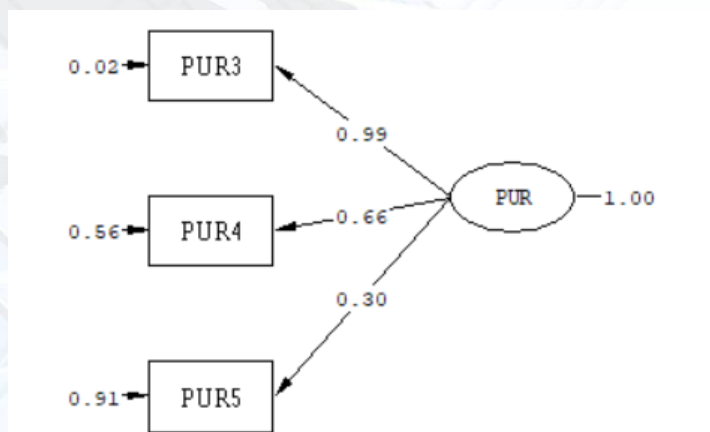


Figure 1 Sports Tourism Purpose Factors in Phuket Province

Sports-Related Stakeholders Factor in Phuket Province

The initial confirmatory factor analysis results for construct validity testing showed that the hypothesized model did not fit the empirical data ($\chi^2=1225.79$, $df=20$, $\chi^2/df=61.29$, $CFI=0.60$, $GFI=0.56$, $TLI=0.45$, $RMSEA=0.397$). Therefore, the model was modified based on Modification Indices while considering question item appropriateness, and items with statistically insignificant factor loadings were removed. After modification, the measurement model for sports-related stakeholders factor in Phuket Province demonstrated construct validity with excellent fit indices ($\chi^2=12.20$, $df=8$, $\chi^2/df=1.53$, $CFI=1.00$, $GFI=0.99$, $TLI=0.99$, $RMSEA=0.037$). The model comprises seven components with factor loadings ranging from 0.39-

0.80, all statistically significant at the .05 level. When examining the standardized factor loadings of each component, it was found that: 1) PAR2 has a standardized factor loading of 0.39, 2) PAR3 0.61, 3) PAR4 0.59, 4) PAR5 0.52, 5) PAR6 0.72, 6) PAR7 0.80, and 7) PAR8 0.44, respectively.

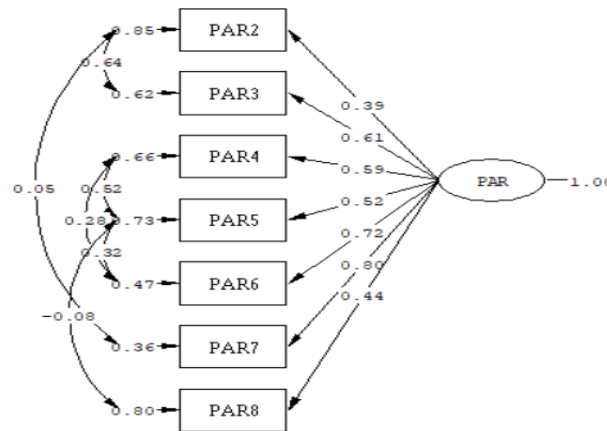


Figure 2 Sports-Related Stakeholders Factor in Phuket Province

Sports Tourism Venue Factors in Phuket Province

The confirmatory factor analysis results for construct validity testing showed that the hypothesized model demonstrated excellent fit indices ($\chi^2=0.00$, $df=0$, CFI=1.00, GFI=1.00, TLI=1.00, RMSEA=0.000). The measurement model for sports tourism venue factor in Phuket Province demonstrated construct validity, comprising three components with factor loadings ranging from 0.26-0.97, all statistically significant at the .05 level. When examining the standardized factor loadings of each component, it was found that: 1) SET1 has a standardized factor loading of 0.97, 2) SET2 0.46, and 3) SET3 0.26, respectively.

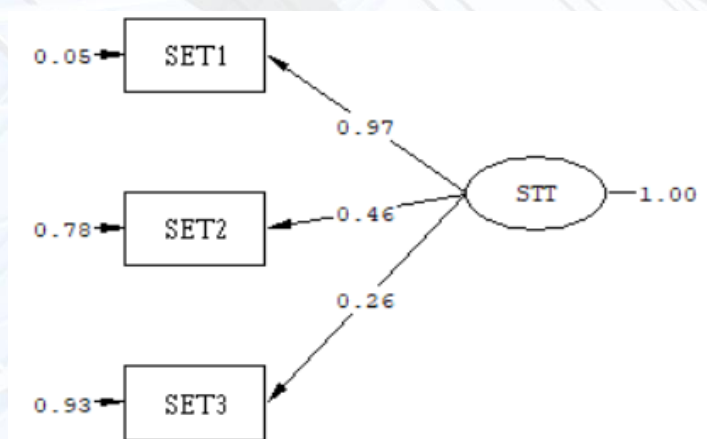


Figure 3 Sports Tourism Venue Factors in Phuket Province

Sports Tourism Impact Factors in Phuket Province

The initial confirmatory factor analysis results for construct validity testing showed that the hypothesized model did not fit the empirical data ($\chi^2=1078.10$, $df=35$, $\chi^2/df=30.80$, CFI=0.27, GFI=0.64, TLI=0.06, RMSEA=0.279). Therefore, the model was modified based on Modification Indices while considering question item appropriateness, and items with statistically

insignificant factor loadings were removed. After modification, the measurement model for sports tourism impact factor in Phuket Province demonstrated construct validity with excellent fit indices ($\chi^2=3.49$, $df=3$, $\chi^2/df=1.16$, CFI=1.00, GFI=1.00, TLI=1.00, RMSEA=0.021). The model comprises five components with factor loadings ranging from 0.43-0.99, all statistically significant at the .05 level. When examining the standardized factor loadings of each component, it was found that: 1) STI1 has a standardized factor loading of 0.99, 2) STI2 0.70, 3) STI3 0.68, 4) STI4 0.43, and 5) STI9 0.46, respectively.

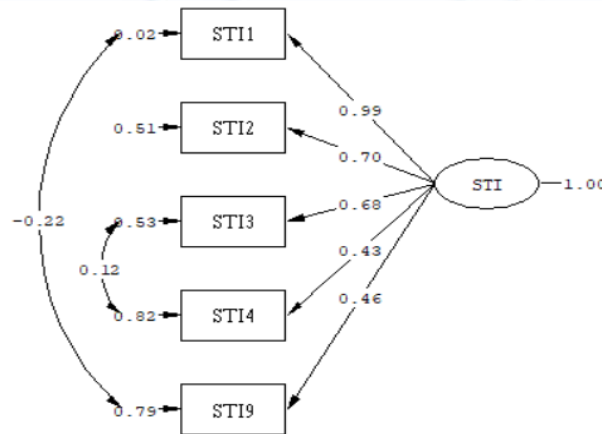


Figure 4 Sports Tourism Impact Factors in Phuket Province

Support for Sports Tourism Development Factors in Phuket Province

The initial confirmatory factor analysis results for construct validity testing showed that the hypothesized model did not fit the empirical data ($\chi^2=3182.21$, $df=90$, $\chi^2/df=35.36$, CFI=0.22, GFI=0.47, TLI=0.09, RMSEA=0.300). Therefore, the model was modified based on Modification Indices while considering question item appropriateness, and items with statistically insignificant factor loadings were removed. After modification, the measurement model for support for sports tourism development factor in Phuket Province demonstrated construct validity with excellent fit indices ($\chi^2=10.92$, $df=7$, $\chi^2/df=1.56$, CFI=0.99, GFI=0.99, TLI=0.99, RMSEA=0.038). The model comprises 6 components with factor loadings ranging from 0.28-0.95, all statistically significant at the .05 level. When examining the standardized factor loadings of each component, it was found that: 1) SST1 has a standardized factor loading of 0.95, 2) SST3 0.91, 3) SST5 0.43, 4) SST6 0.28, 5) SST10 0.28, and 6) SST13 0.32, respectively.

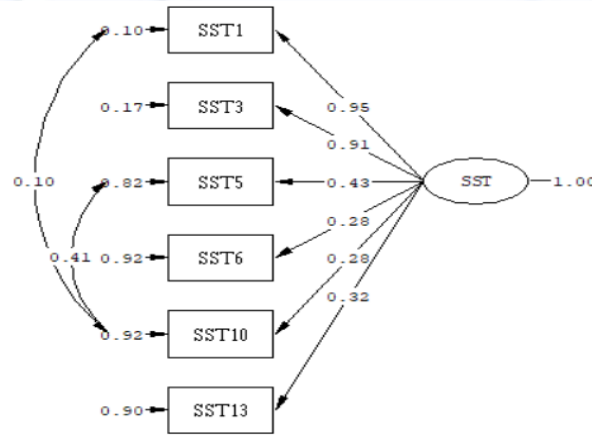


Figure 5 Support for Sports Tourism Development Factors in Phuket Province

Regarding the basic statistical analysis of observed variables studied in the model of factors influencing sports tourism development in Phuket Province, Thailand, the researcher calculated Mean, Standard Deviation (S.D.), Skewness (Sk), and Kurtosis (Ku). The findings showed that mean values ranged from 3.984 to 4.781, with Visitor spending showing the highest mean (Mean=4.781), followed by Partnerships and community involvement (Mean=4.755). Standard deviation values ranged from 0.322 to 0.692, with “visiting renowned sports venues” showing the highest standard deviation (S.D.=0.692), followed by “sports sponsors and sports business personnel” (S.D.=0.673). Skewness values ranged from -1.366 to 2.390, with “natural sports venues” showing the highest skewness (Sk=2.390), followed by “built sports facilities” (Sk=0.812). Kurtosis values ranged from -2.003 to 3.730, with “natural sports venues” showing the highest kurtosis (Ku=3.730), followed by “Consideration of women” (Ku=0.017). Statistical testing revealed significant results for most variables, suggesting non-normal distribution. However, for samples larger than 300, distribution normality depends on frequency statistics graphs and absolute values of skewness and kurtosis. Normal distribution typically shows skewness values between -2 and +2 and kurtosis values between -7 and +7 (Byrne, 2010; Hair et al., 2010). This study showed skewness values between -1.366 and 2.390 and kurtosis values between -2.003 and 3.730. Overall, only one observed variable showed skewness greater than 2, indicating that most observed variables demonstrated normal distribution, making them suitable for structural equation modeling analysis.

The researcher examined the relationships between variables using Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient to verify that the observed variables under study did not have correlations high enough to cause multicollinearity problems. The examination of relationships between variables revealed that the correlation coefficients of the observed variables used in this study did not exceed 0.85 (Kline, 2005), indicating no multicollinearity issues. Therefore, the data was deemed appropriate for structural equation modeling analysis.



Part 2: Causal Relationships Between Selected Factors, Including Sports Tourism Objectives, Sports-Related Stakeholders, Sports Tourism Venues, Sports Tourism Impacts, and Their Effects on Support for Sports Tourism Development in Phuket

The analysis of the structural equation model or LISREL model examined whether the linear structural relationship model, developed from theoretical foundations and related concepts, fits the empirical data. The analysis then considered the effect sizes within the linear structural relationships. When the model showed insufficient fit with empirical data, the researcher modified it for better fit by considering Modification Indices and allowing error terms of some observed variables in the structural equation model to correlate, while maintaining theoretical appropriateness and consistency with related research. The analysis details are as follows: The initial model fit assessment results with empirical data revealed a chi-square (χ^2) value of 4026.79, with 249 degrees of freedom and p-value of 0.000. The relative chi-square (χ^2/df) value was 16.172. CFI showed a value of 0.53, while GFI was 0.49. The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) registered at 0.44, and RMSEA was 0.199. When comparing these fit indices with established criteria for model fit with empirical data, the hypothesized model demonstrated insufficient fit.

Subsequently, the researcher modified the model by considering theoretical feasibility and result interpretation, along with Modification Indices, allowing certain measurement errors between observed variable pairs to correlate. The post-modification assessment showed substantial improvement in model fit, with a chi-square (χ^2) value of 138.56, 47 degrees of freedom, and p-value of 0.000. The relative chi-square (χ^2/df) decreased to 2.948. CFI improved to 0.99, and GFI increased to 0.97. The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) rose to 0.93, while RMSEA decreased to 0.071, indicating a significantly better fit with the empirical data. When examining these fit indices against the criteria indicating model fit with empirical data, the modified model of factors affecting sports tourism development in Phuket Province, Thailand demonstrated good fit with the empirical data. The effect sizes estimated in this model were acceptable, thus confirming the hypotheses, as shown in Table 1.



Table 1 Standardized Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, and Total Effects of the Model

Dependent variable	R ²	Relationship	Independent variable			
			PUR	PAR	SET	STI
PAR	.42	DE	.54*	-	-	-
		IE	-	-	-	-
		TE	.54*	-	-	-
SET	.14	DE	-	.47*	-	-
		IE	.25*	-	-	-
		TE	.25*	.47*	-	-
STI	.14	DE	-	-	.14*	-
		IE	.04*	.07*	-	-
		TE	.04*	.07*	.14*	-
SST	.14	DE	-	-	-	.47*
		IE	.02*	.03*	.07*	-
		TE	.02*	.03*	.07*	.47*

$\chi^2=138.56$, $df=47$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$, $\chi^2/df=2.948$, $CFI=0.99$, $GFI=0.97$, $TLI=0.93$,
RMSEA=0.071

*Statistically significant at the .05 level

Based on Table 1, the adjusted model of factors influencing sports tourism development in Phuket Province, Thailand shows the following details:

1. The sports tourism purpose factor has a direct influence on the sports-related stakeholders factor in Phuket Province, with statistical significance at the .05 level (effect coefficient=0.54).
2. The sports-related stakeholders factor has a direct influence on the sports tourism venue factor in Phuket Province, with statistical significance at the .05 level (effect coefficient=0.47).
3. The sports tourism venue factor has a direct influence on the sports tourism impact factor in Phuket Province, with statistical significance at the .05 level (effect coefficient=0.14).
4. The sports tourism impact factor has a direct influence on the support for sports tourism development factor in Phuket Province, with statistical significance at the .05 level (effect coefficient=0.47).

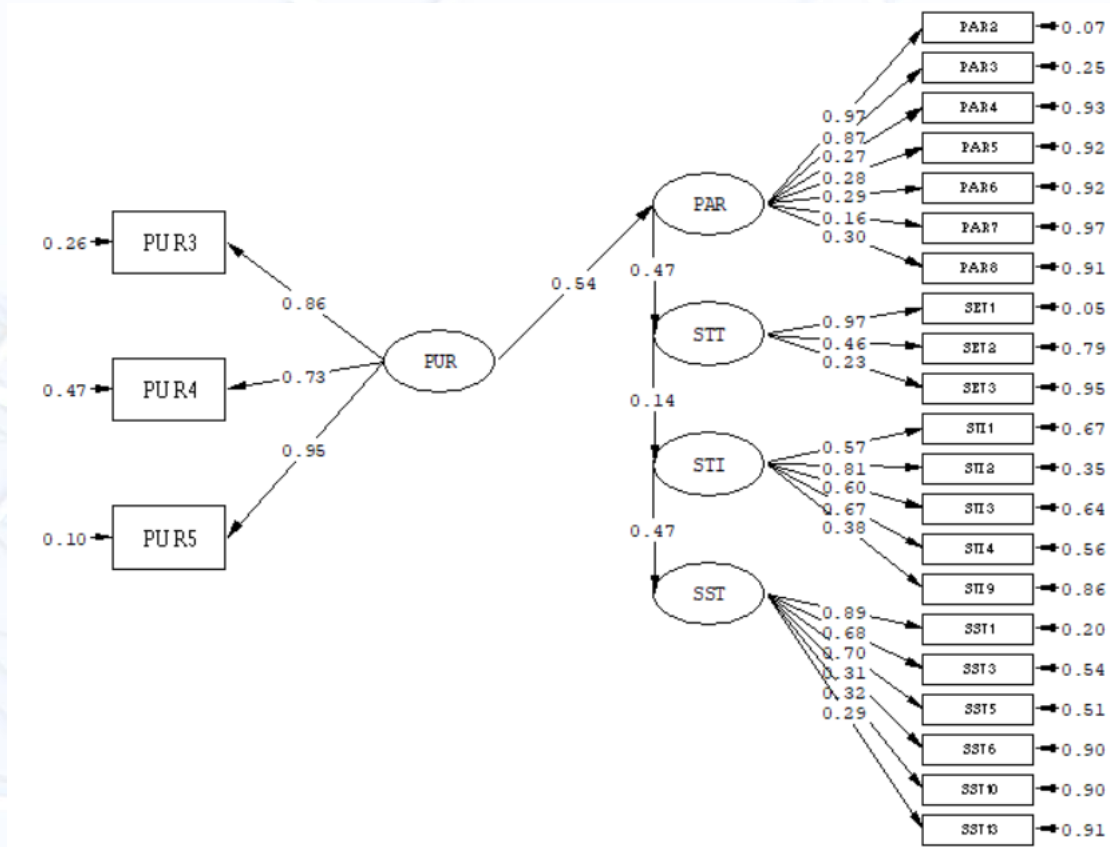


Figure 6 Structural Equation Model of Factors Influencing Sports Tourism Development in Phuket Province, Thailand

Conclusion

The structural equation model of factors affecting sports tourism development in Phuket Province, Thailand demonstrates good fit with empirical data in explaining sports tourism phenomena in Phuket. The model shows that sports tourism involves travel for sports activities with various purposes, participants engaging in sports activities according to those purposes at specific sports tourism venues. The model comprises the following relationships among factors (Gibson, Attle & Yiannakis, 1997; Delpy, 2003; Higham, 2005; Orams, 2005; World Tourism Organization, 2020; Centre for SDG Research and Support, 2016).

The findings reveal an interconnected structure of sports tourism development factors in Phuket Province. Primarily, the sports tourism purpose factor (PUR) encompasses three key components: recreational activities, visits to renowned sports venues, and sports-related business activities. This factor significantly influences the sports-related stakeholders factor (PAR), which in turn comprises a diverse group of participants including sports spectators and fans, recreational activity participants, athletes' family members and friends, sports activity administrators, sports sponsors and business personnel, sports experts, and sports media personnel.



Subsequently, these stakeholders directly influence the sports tourism venue factor (SET), which consists of three distinct types of venues: natural sports venues, built sports facilities, and sports heritage sites. The venue factor then impacts the sports tourism impact factor, which encompasses various economic and social aspects including jobs and income opportunities, visitor spending, competitiveness, accessibility, and environmental awareness measures. Therefore, policymakers and tourism developers should consider these aspects when planning sustainable tourism strategies.

Ultimately, these factors collectively influence the support for sports tourism development factor (SST). This final component incorporates crucial elements such as partnerships and community involvement, sport events, new sport initiatives, technology integration, consideration of women's participation, and environmental measures. Notably, while the sports tourism impact factor (STI) directly influences the SST factor, it also receives indirect influences from the entire chain of preceding factors: sports tourism purpose (PUR), sports-related stakeholders (PAR), and sports tourism venues (SET), demonstrating the interconnected nature of sports tourism development in the province.

Discussion

Based on the above research findings, the objectives of sports tourism in Phuket demonstrate direct influence on sports-related stakeholders in the province. Furthermore, these stakeholders exert direct influence on sports tourism destinations within Phuket. As Gibson et al. (1997) note, sport tourism encompasses travel for both competitive and recreational sporting activities. The sector comprises diverse participant groups, including essential support personnel such as coaches, trainers, physiotherapists, physicians, sport psychologists, and equipment technicians. Furthermore, accompanying groups family members, supporters, spectators, administrators, organizers, sponsors, and affiliated business representatives constitute a significant proportion of sport tourism participants. This demographic heterogeneity creates a complex and multifaceted tourism segment. A notable recent development in sport tourism involves visitors to sport-related historical and heritage sites, including museums, halls of fame, and memorials, which have emerged as significant tourism attractions (Delpy, 2003). Higham (2005) and Orams (2005) also highlight that the diversity of sport tourism necessitates various operational settings. These encompass natural environments, constructed facilities, and heritage sites. Many sport tourism destinations integrate natural landscapes with anthropogenic modifications. Contemporary developments include purpose-built facilities designed to replicate natural sporting environments.

This finding aligns with Pongprasert's (2015) study on "Factors Influencing Sports Tourism Development in Thailand: A Structural Equation Model," which found that sports tourism



objectives in Thailand encompass sports competitions, recreational activities, and sports training or preparation camps. These objectives influence both sports-related participants and sports tourism destinations. Similarly, Inpongpan's (2019) research on "Factor Affecting Sport Tourism Strategy of Thailand" revealed that tourists place significant emphasis on the aesthetic appeal of destinations. Furthermore, Yuvanont's (2018) study on "The Study of Sport Tourism Management Status" identified that the primary objective of sports tourists is to participate in sporting events, either as competitors or spectators. The research found that sports tourists primarily comprise sports spectators or fans, followed by athletes participating in competitions. The study also noted that sports tourists typically gravitate toward purpose-built sporting facilities such as stadiums, golf courses, artificial climbing walls, and racing circuits.

Sports tourism destinations in Phuket demonstrate direct influence on the impacts of sports tourism in the province. Subsequently, these impacts directly influence the supporting factors for sports tourism development in Phuket. As the World Tourism Organization (2020) notes, "sport tourism, when appropriately developed and managed, can contribute significantly to sustainable development and the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." As a distinct tourism segment, sport tourism offers unique pathways to sustainable development through its characteristic features. The comparative advantages of sport tourism include enhanced physical activity engagement, facilitation of social interactions, and broad development potential across various scales, particularly evident in small-scale events and low-impact activities such as walking.

Further supporting these findings, Gursoy and Kendall (2006) indicate that residents who receive benefits demonstrate direct influence on supporting tourism development initiatives. Similarly, Hritz and Ross (2010) note that sports tourism development is facilitated when residents willingly support such development upon receiving social, economic, and environmental benefits. Hinch, & Higham (2004) identified environmental conservation awareness in natural tourist destinations as a crucial factor in sports tourism development.

These findings align with Pongprasert, & Karnjanakit's (2019) structural equation modeling analysis, which revealed that sports tourism destination factors significantly influence sports tourism impacts, which in turn affect supporting factors for sports tourism development ($p < .05$). Additionally, Yuvanont's (2018) research demonstrated that sports tourism management generates economic impacts through tourist revenue, contributes to urban renewal and national image enhancement, promotes diversity of cultural activities, and leads to improvements in public utilities, communications, and community public spaces. Regarding support needs for sports tourism management development, the research identified a significant demand for development initiatives and increased awareness of environmental conservation in natural sports tourism



destinations. These findings collectively emphasize the interconnected nature of destination factors, tourism impacts, and development support in creating sustainable sports tourism environments.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Research Finding Implementation:

1. Sports activity planning in Phuket's sports tourism sector should carefully consider event objectives to effectively determine target participant groups and appropriate sports tourism venues. This alignment between objectives and implementation is crucial for successful outcomes.
2. Policies should be established to promote sports tourism in Phuket, encouraging private sector and business investment in the service industry. These policies should focus on developing sports-related infrastructure and facilities to enhance the province's tourism capabilities.

Recommendations for Future Research:

Further research should be conducted to analyze the causal relationships between sports tourism in Phuket and international tourist segments. This analysis would provide deeper insights into the dynamics of international sports tourism in the region.

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