

**Chinese Fans' Attitude towards Thai Boy's Love TV Dramas,  
Boy Love TV Actors and their Intention to Travel to Thailand**



**An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts (Communication Arts) in Strategic  
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ทัศนคติของแฟนคลับชาวจีนที่มีต่อละคร โทรทัศน์ชายรักชาย นักแสดงชายรักชายและความตั้งใจ  
เดินทางมาประเทศไทย



สารนิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาโทสาขาสถาปัตยกรรมศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต  
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| Field of Study          | Strategic Communication Management   |
| Thesis Advisor          | Assistant Professor Dr. SUTHILUCK VUNGSUNTITUM, Ph.D.  |

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ปัจจุบันนี้มีวัฒนธรรมย่อยเกิดมากขึ้นเรื่อย ๆ เช่น วัฒนธรรมของแฟนคลับ ส่งผลกระทบให้เกิดการเติบโตทางเศรษฐกิจของวัฒนธรรมแฟนคลับเช่นกัน คราสินค้าหรืออุตสาหกรรมบางประเภทได้พัฒนาและใช้ความนิยมของกระแสแฟนคลับเพื่อส่งเสริมการขายและธุรกิจหลากหลายประเภท งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาการเปิดรับของแฟนคลับชาวจีนต่อละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชาย ทัศนคติของแฟนคลับชาวจีนที่มีต่อนักแสดงละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายและความตั้งใจเดินทางมาประเทศไทย ตลอดจนถึงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างทัศนคติของแฟนคลับชาวจีนที่มีต่อละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายและทัศนคติของพวกเขาที่มีต่อนักแสดงละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชาย และความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างทัศนคติของแฟนคลับชาวจีนที่มีต่อนักแสดงละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายและความตั้งใจเดินทางมาประเทศไทย งานวิจัยนี้ใช้การวิจัยเชิงปริมาณ โดยการใช้แบบสอบถามสำรวจออนไลน์กับกลุ่มจากแฟนคลับหญิงชาวจีน 230 คนที่มีอายุระหว่าง 18 ถึง 45 ปี ผลการวิจัยพบว่าผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามมีการเปิดรับชมละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายและรับชมเนื้อหาที่เกี่ยวข้องเกือบทุกวัน มีทัศนคติของผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามที่มีต่อนักแสดงละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายในกลุ่มความชื่นชอบสูงส่วนใหญ่ส่วนตัว (Intense personal) ในระดับปานกลาง ( $M=3.55$ ) มีทัศนคติที่เป็นบวก (favorable attitude) ต่อตั้งใจมาเดินทางมาประเทศไทยเพื่อดูนักแสดงที่พวกเขาชื่นชอบ นอกจากนี้ผลการวิจัยยังแสดงให้เห็นถึงทัศนคติของแฟนคลับชาวจีนที่มีต่อละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายและนักแสดงละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายมีความสัมพันธ์กันในเชิงบวก ( $r=0.468$ ) นอกจากนี้ทัศนคติของแฟนคลับชาวจีนที่มีต่อนักแสดงละครโทรทัศน์ไทยชายรักชายมีความสัมพันธ์ในเชิงบวกกับความตั้งใจเดินทางมาประเทศไทย ( $r=0.548$ )

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Nowadays, more and more subcultures have emerged, such as fan culture, and the resulting fan economic impact is also growing. Certain brands or industries have already developed to use the enthusiasm of fans to achieve specific promotional effects. Therefore, the objectives of this research are to examine the Chinese fans' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas, their attitude toward BL celebrities, and intention to travel to Thailand, as well as the relationship between Chinese fans' attitudes towards Thai BL TV dramas and their attitudes towards celebrities in BL TV dramas, and the relationship between Chinese fans' attitudes towards celebrities in Thai BL TV dramas and their intention to travel to Thailand. The quantitative research was conducted by an online survey, collecting data from 230 Chinese female fans aged between 18 and 45 years old.

As results show that (1) the respondents have a high degree of exposure to Thai BL TV dramas and watch related content almost every day ; (2)the respondents' attitudes towards celebrities in Thai dramas can be summarized as Intense personal (M=3.55) ; and (3) they intend to travel to Thailand with a favorable attitude toward traveling to Thailand to see their favorite celebrity. Moreover, the research results demonstrate Chinese fan's attitude towards Thai BL TV drama and the Thai BL celebrities is related( $r=0.468$ ). Also, Chinese fan's attitude towards celebrities is related to their travel intention( $r=0.548$ ).

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Significance of this Study

With the development of the internet, people's preferences have begun to diversify, and the entertainment industry has seen unprecedented development. Fans' consumption behavior is not only characteristic of consumers but also of idol worship. As consumers in the entertainment industry, fans are more critical to the real economy. Their impact is also increasing. Among them, the consumption of TV dramas by fans has a considerable influence on tourism consumption.

First of all, from the perspective of TV drama consumption, for Chinese audiences, after the popularity of Japanese TV dramas, Singapore TV dramas, and Korean TV dramas, Thai TV dramas came to the china market and got the engagement. Judging from the catalogs of "Imported foreign TV dramas from 2003 to 2011" of China, the total number of imported Thai dramas had been rising. In 2003, China Central Television (CCTV) introduced the first Thai TV drama, "Sao Chai Hua Jai Chicago," which Chinese audiences enjoyed. The CCTV repeatedly broadcasted it many times. Furthermore, the second Thai drama, "Phoenix Blood," was introduced in 2006. It also attracted countless Chinese audiences, and the audience responded very crazily.

In 2009, Anhui Television (AHTV, Chinese:安徽卫视) broadcasted the Thai TV series “Battle of Angels,” and its ratings became one of China’s top ten series in that year. These Thai TV dramas have accumulated a fan base for Thai dramas in China and enabled Chinese people to understand Thailand. This popularity also directly led to Chinese platforms’ release of dozens of Thai TV dramas during 2009-2013.

Among them, AHTV is the leader in introducing Thai TV dramas into China.

Including famous Thai dramas “Battle of Angels,” “Phoenix Blood,” “Defendant of Love,” “Buang Ruk,” “Buang Ruk Kamathep,” and “Hua Jai Sila,” the number of introductions was more and more. The stories told in Thai dramas included ancient court stories, grievances between wealthy families, and fancy love stories among young people. There are many themes of Thai TV dramas, such as horror, comedy, action, romantic, and historical. Most Thai TV drama actors are handsome or beautiful, and it is easy for audiences to fancy the actors. Also, due to the similarity in the roots of the traditional cultures of Thailand and China, Thai TV dramas are more readily accepted and recognized in China. (Fen Chen, 2011)

Nevertheless, after the Chinese local TV drama production industry developed. To protect local TV dramas and regulate the broadcasting of overseas TV dramas, the National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA) of China has issued a series of regulations on the introduction, broadcasting time, and broadcasting platform of overseas TV dramas. These regulations have restricted the introduction of many overseas dramas into China. Luckily, with the development and popularization of the

internet, cross-cultural communication has still developed rapidly. Online platforms can watch many other TV dramas worldwide. So Thai TV dramas have also changed from TV broadcasting from 2008-2013 in China to online platform broadcasting. The emergence of Thai TV fansub has enabled more fan groups to watch Thai TV dramas, among which Boy's love (BL) TV dramas are wildly popular. A fansub (short for fan-subtitled) is a version of a foreign film or foreign television program which has been translated by fans (as opposed to an officially licensed translation done by professionals) and subtitled into a language usually other than that of the original. It is a new thing born on the Internet, and it belongs to a kind of non-governmental spontaneous organization. The fansub is composed of fans according to their personal interests. The ultimate purpose of the fansub to make subtitles is to spread the film or foreign television program.

Continue with the previous paragraph, the word "BL" originated from Japan and is also called "Danmei" in China. Danmei (耽美), literally "addicted to beauty," is the most common name for BL in China. It is a romance between males and males created by female or sexual minority groups. A sexual minority is a group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society. The BL culture has many forms such as novels, comics, games, radio dramas. It first appeared in Japanese girl comics in the 1970s and spread to the entire East Asian region through Japanese ACG (Anime, Comics, and Games) culture. (Yang Ling & Xu Yanrui, 2017)

With BL culture sweeping in Asia, the Chinese fans are also looking forward to such productions' appearance in China. However, due to the Chinese government's censorship mechanism, the BL TV series is almost impossible to be filmed in China. Furthermore, the content of Chinese school romance dramas is conservative and straightforward. In contrast, Thai TV dramas shine in school romance dramas, and BL elements are trendy in Thailand. (Wu Yaqian, 2015)

Table 1.1 The popularity of Thai BL TV dramas on Weibo during the year 2015-2020

Unit: Million (M)

| Thai BL TV dramas   | The popularity of Super Topic | Year |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| Love Sick           | 470M                          | 2015 |
| SOTUS: The Series   | 1010M                         | 2016 |
| Make It Right       | 250M                          | 2016 |
| 2Moons: The Series  | 550M                          | 2017 |
| Love by Chance      | 1490M                         | 2018 |
| Why R U the series  | 240M                          | 2019 |
| 2gether: The Series | 720M                          | 2020 |
| My Engineer         | 420M                          | 2020 |

Source: sorted by the researcher from Weibo

Table 1.1 shows that on China's leading social media platform Weibo, the popularity of Thai BL TV dramas' Super-Topics during 2015-2020. Weibo is one China's mainstream social media platform, which functions similar to Twitter. The

Super-Topic is the hashtag function in Weibo. The more use of the hashtag, the higher popularity of Super-Topic. Table 1.1 shows in recent five years, Thai BL TV dramas have received much attention on Chinese social media. It is worth noting that “Love by Chance” and “SOTUS: The Series” have more than 1 billion views. Therefore, it can be concluded that Thai BL TV drama has a considerable fan base in China.

On the other hand, movies and TV dramas have a substantial role in promoting tourism. After watching movies or TV dramas, many people have the intention to travel to the filming scene. (Li Junru & Liao Jiayu, 2009) This kind of tourism influenced by media information channels such as film and television is called film-induced tourism (Evans, 1997). Generally, film-induced tourism includes TV dramas, videotapes, and movies. (Beeton, 2005).

The advantage of film-induced tourism is that tourism attracted by TV dramas has a more prolonged exposure rate than commercials. Besides, along with the plot, BL TV drama fans are immersive and empathetic when arriving at BL TV dramas’ shooting scene. The special effects are handled in the lens, and the endorsement of favorite actors will enhance the locations’ impression. Moreover, the TV dramas will make fans think that this is not an advertisement but a "non-sales" communication mode. (Riley & Van Doren, 1992)

According to Wen, Josiam, Spears, and Yang (2018), from their open-ended question of the impact of film and television on Chinese tourists' perception of international tourist destinations, respondents were asked to write down movies’



names that most inspired them to travel. According to their answers, "Lost in Thailand" is the most mentioned movie, and 132 people (25.1%) want to travel to Thailand after watching this movie. The movie "Lost in Thailand" is also one of the main reasons for the 61.3% increase in Chinese tourists to Thailand from 2010 to 2013. Also, as of the end of 2013, China has become the primary source country market for Thailand's tourism industry. (Untong, Ramos, Kaosa-Ard, & Rey-Maquieira, 2015)

In fact, in addition to the example of the movie "Lost in Thailand," more examples prove movies and television impact tourist destinations and the tourism industry. For example, the British Tourism Board once launched a Harry Potter tour route map; the movie "The Lord of the Rings" also played a significant role in New Zealand tourism industry, especially in the construction of tourist attractions; in South Korea, certain areas of Seoul and Jeju Island are sought after by most tourists because of the popular Korean dramas. A considerable number of tourists are attracted by the scenes in the TV dramas they watched. They went to the TV dramas' shooting scenes and imitated the characters' behaviors in the dramas.

As a result of the above research, it can be predicted that Chinese fans are also affected by the Thai BL TV dramas, which positively influences the fans' travel intention. Besides, with the increasing development of the fan economy, getting close to the couple (CP) has become a critical tourism motivation. Chasing CP is a behavior developed from chasing celebrities. Generally speaking, when a fan of Thai BL TV drama watches some BL dramas, they usually match the celebrities in the drama by

themselves. According to their pairing, they worship the celebrities of Thai BL TV drama. A series of tourism consumption activities related to chasing CP will be launched during fans' trip. For example, visit the filming location of TV dramas, imitate CP to take pictures, buy merch, merch is a series of products related to celebrities, posters, stickers, clothes, etc.

Figure 1.1&1.2 was captured by the researcher from Super-topic on the Weibo platform. In the selected red box part in Figure 1.1, fans expressed their desire to travel to Thailand in individual posts or comments. When a fan posts such content, most other fans express the same willingness to travel to Thailand. As for the yellow circle content, fans described specific activities they want to do when they arrive in Thailand. For example, “.... Buy all kinds of merch, buy the same items of celebrities”, “.... To chase CP....”. Figure 1.2 shows that influencers among fans lead a poll about purchasing and delivering a celebrity photo album. It is not difficult to see that many fans participate in voting, and fans are willing to spend time and money waiting for international delivery.



Figure 1.1& Figure 1.2 Source: Weibo screenshot (hashtag of super-topic)

Table 1.2 Famous location for Chinese fans to check-in when travel to Thailand

| Famous Location          | Reasons for popularity                |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Siam square              | The love of siam, Love Sick           |
| Rangsit University       | SOTUS: The Series, 2Moons: The Series |
| GMM Grammy Entertainment | Produced a lot of BL dramas           |
| Phra Pinklao Bridge      | SOTUS: The Series                     |
| Bangkok University       | Love by Chance                        |
| Kasetsart University     | Krist's university                    |

Source: collected by researchers

Table 1.2 is summarized by researchers in travel forums and fan groups on social media platforms. These locations are potential places where Chinese fans will go

when they travel to Thailand. For example, some Thai universities are the places where Thai BL TV drama actors go to study or film dramas. So, many fans will go to these universities intentionally to get close to their idols. On the one hand, fans imitate actors' behavior in the drama, such as buying favorite food and drinks from dramas in the university cafeteria and trying on university uniforms. On the other hand, it also satisfies the fans' curiosity about Thai universities. Some fans even want to study in Thailand because of their visiting Thai universities.



Figure 1.3 Source: fan meeting merch filmed by fans in the GMM building

Figure 1.3 shows the information that some Chinese fans in Thailand bought merch for other Chinese fans who were unable to come to Thailand to participate in the events. The GMM building has attracted many fans to check-in because some merch is sold in here, and fans got a high opportunity to see celebrities there.

Furthermore, GMM Grammy Public Company Limited is the largest media conglomerate entertainment company in Thailand. As for other locations, apart from getting close to celebrities, Thailand is also a popular tourist destination that can attract tourists. Chinese fans want to travel to Thailand for their favorite celebrities and their holiday.

This research mainly studies the Thai BL drama fans traveling to Thailand from the following aspects based on the above discussion.

The first is to study whether Thai BL dramas' fans will shift from their attitudes towards Thai BL TV dramas to Thai BL drama actors. If it happens, whether the degree of exposure of Thai dramas to fans is related to transferring this specific meaning. On the other hand, according to the meaning transfer theory, fans' attitude towards celebrities will be transferred to products endorsed by celebrities. Therefore, there may be a specific relationship between Thai BL TV drama celebrities and Thai BL TV drama.

Secondly, what kind of attitude do fans of Thai BL TV drama have towards their favorite celebrities? According to the theory of reasoned action, attitudes affect consumers' intentions, determining whether consumers will perform certain behaviors. This study can explain why fans travel to Thailand for their favorite celebrities after understanding the fans' attitudes.

In summary, this research can help the tourism market develop more suitable products for fans and enable fans to have a better travel experience. At the same time,

the results of this research can also provide data support for the development of diversification of tourism forms. Therefore, this research is necessary and beneficial for both tourists and tourism industry.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

1. To investigate the Chinese fans' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas.
2. To understand the attitudes of Chinese fans towards Thai BL TV dramas.
3. To investigate the attitudes of Chinese fans towards celebrities in Thai BL TV dramas.
4. To find out the relationship between Chinese fans' attitudes towards Thai BL TV dramas and their attitudes towards celebrities in BL TV dramas.
5. To find out the relationship between Chinese fans' attitudes towards celebrities in Thai BL TV dramas and their intention to travel to Thailand.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

1. What is the Chinese fans' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas?
2. What is the attitude of Chinese fans towards Thai BL TV dramas?
3. What is the attitude of Chinese fans towards Thai BL TV dramas celebrities?
4. What is the relationship between Chinese fans' attitudes towards Thai BL TV dramas and celebrities in BL TV dramas?

5. What is the relationship between Chinese fans' attitude towards Thai BL TV drama celebrities and their intention to travel to Thailand?

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This research studies 18-45 years old Chinese female fans of Thai BL TV dramas who are interested in traveling to Thailand to chase celebrities. Using quantitative research methods to collect data from mid-October to early November 2020 through the online survey instrument "wjx." The data is collected in the Chinese fans social media platforms, and 230 valid data was collected.

#### **1.5 Operational Definition**

Thai Boys' Love TV dramas refer to Thai TV dramas that mainly use the love between men and men as the theme and plot. BL TV drama is a form of expression of BL culture. BL TV dramas cater to female consumers' needs, with a romantic and aesthetic style and a particular virtual imagination. Most BL dramas imagine the "love" between men from a female perspective. The reason why most women love BL dramas is that it breaks gender stereotypes. In BL dramas, female characters are no longer the weak need to be protected in the love relationship. Female audiences can appreciate and imagine stories from onlookers' perspective, which allows them to be satisfied without being offended. Besides, Thai BL TV dramas were produced by Thai

companies (e.g., GMM, COPY A BANGKOK, WABI SABI studio) that take Thailand as the filming location and reflect Thai society and culture.

Fans come from the word “fanatic,” which means one individual is very addicted to somebody or something, and can generally be called fandom for the fans group. Fans in this study mainly refer to Chinese female fans who like to watch Thai BL TV dramas.

Exposure to Boys' Love TV drama refers to Thai BL TV drama fans' frequency of watching Thai BL TV drama and their attributes preferences of Thai BL TV dramas.

Attitude toward celebrity refers to fans' overall favorable and unfavorable of celebrities in Thai BL TV drama. According to the Celebrity Attitude Scale(CAS), fans' attitudes will be divided into three dimensions, namely ①Entertainment Social, ②Intense personal, and ③Borderline Pathological. According to fans' celebrity worship level pathologically, these three dimensions are determined from low to high. From ①Entertainment Social, the level of worship of celebrities is gradually increasing. Fans who are ③Borderline Pathological level may have crazy behaviors.



Intention to travel directly determines how consumers act on travel behaviors and the possibility of adopting specific travel behaviors. According to the theory of reasoned action (TRA), an individual's behavior intention is determined by the individual's attitude and subjective norms. Among them, an attitude refers to the evaluation of the individual's psychological level of liking or disliking a specific behavior; subjective norms are the emotional expressions of approval or disapproval of the reference group (e.g., family members, friends, relatives, colleagues) to the individual's specific behavior. These two parts affect intentions together; then, the intention will lead the behavior to occur or not. This study will directly measure respondents' attitudes, subjective norms and travel intentions through Likert scale questions.

#### **1.6 Benefits of the Study**

1. To generate a general idea of Chinese fans' consumption intentions to predict fans' behavior better when traveling.
2. Provide suggestions for stakeholders, such as creating customized tourist routes, specialized merch production, and promoting the tourism industry's development.

3. To understand the impact of celebrity endorsements on fans to maximize the utilization of celebrity effects.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter provides an overview of this research's key concepts, including the fan economy, exposure to Thai BL TV drama, fans' attitudes, and travel intentions. By summarizing the previous related literature, sort out the research framework of this research.

First of all, previous studies used to explain what idolatry is. Then continue to analyze the fandom developed by idolatry. Moreover, explain the consumption of fans under the fan culture and fan economy. Secondly, according to the cultivation theory and meaning transfer theory, understand the fans' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas and how fans attach celebrities with Thai BL TV dramas. Thirdly, summarize the definition of consumer attitudes and different dimensions of fans' attitudes. The influence of attitude on tourism intention will be based on the theory of reasoned action. Finally, through related literature, clarify the relationship between Chinese fans' attitude towards Thai BL TV Dramas, BL TV actors, and their intention to travel to Thailand. The research framework based on those reviews of literature was formed and presented at the end of this chapter.

#### **2.1 Fans Economy**

##### **2.1.1 Idolatry**

Idolatry is developed from totem worship and deity worship. Followers idolize

the worshipped objects, create a specific image for them, and worship them. With the changes in society and human knowledge improvement, primitive worship has gradually transformed into idolatry with "people" as the object. Fromm (1978) believes that idolatry is a kind of attachment to outstanding figures in fantasy. This fantasy is highly subjective, so it is often over-reinforced or idealized. Li Peizhen also believes that "fan" is due to some special devotion. When people carefully observe fans' behavior will find that fans are indeed the most conspicuous and recognizable audience. They are very fascinated by people or objects and have a high sense of involvement. This concept regards idolatry groups as "fans" groups.

### 2.1.2 Fans

Fans are enthusiastic followers of celebrities. In reality, fans belong to the same group who usually have similar cultural tastes and preferences. They confirm their identities through a unique discourse system within the group. Simultaneously, with the development of the internet, communication between individuals has gradually broken through time and space boundaries. Fans have formed a group of communities centered on fixed subjects.

Moreover, through network interaction, fans gathered together and enhanced mutual understanding. In the fan community, the fans themselves lead their communication and take advantage of online media's spontaneity and interactivity. They share content and emotional exchanges in real-time and gradually form a sense

of belonging and behavioral convergence. (Xu & Hu, 2012) In this way, a fan community will be established. Fans will carry out a complete series of similar cultural consumption behaviors, in the end, forming the fan economy. (Sun, 2017) and unique fan culture.

### 2.1.3 Fans culture

Fan culture is a type of subculture in popular culture, and at the same time, it has commercialization characteristics. As a subculture that has only gradually been shown to the public in the last 20 years, it has developed rapidly. Its acceptance and effect on the public are tremendous. The progress of network technology, the increase of social media platforms, the rapid development of film and television, the open and tolerant cultural atmosphere, and the diversification of entertainment methods have promoted fan culture development. (Li, 2020) According to Chen Yuanhong's research, three characteristics of fan culture can be summarized.

The first character is interactivity. The internet provides a good communication platform for fans to receive the information they are interested in. They support their favorite celebrities through WeChat, Weibo, and TV, and even communicate with their favorite celebrities online through these channels.

The second character is diversity. With the continuous improvement of people's living standards, the fan culture is not limited to a particular group of people but

people of all ages. People of different ages and experiences have different preferences for celebrities.

The third character is the nature of the commercial. With the rapid development of the national economy, people's consumption patterns are varied gradually. Fan culture belongs to the commercial culture at the root. Taking advantage of the fans' love of the celebrity, the company hires celebrities to endorse products and uses the celebrities' popularity to promote fan consumption. Fan culture has promoted the fan economy's development and has become an indispensable part of the national economy.

#### 2.1.4 Fans economy

Individuals in the fan economy often have the dual identities of fans and consumers. (Li, 2020) According to research conducted by Shi Yaxian, Wei Yuhan, Niu Wanting, Hu Yongfang, and Shi Lin, in China, the scale of fan consumption promoted by idols in 2018 exceeded 40 billion yuan. This so-called fan industry means there are a series of consumer behaviors in fans adore celebrity, involving the consumption field of various products and services. The fan economy is a part of the commodity economy. Generally speaking, the fan economy requires numerous fans, and fans have a strong trust in endorsers and brands, relying on trust to realize commercial value. (Zhu, 2019)

Fans are willing to pay for merch and endorsements, which makes the fan industry continue to operate. Factors such as the degree of involvement and fans' economic strength will influence a "fan" consumer's consumption behavior. Some consumers may only buy the products they need or choose a product with a celebrity endorsement among similar products. Some consumers may buy all the products endorsed by the celebrity. (Li, 2020) Under the fan economy theory, products' quality and utility are no longer the primary considerations for consumers' purchasing decisions. The adjustment effect of prices has also been significantly reduced.

Corresponding to the above is that fans mainly concern with the value of celebrity elements attached to products. Based on the principle of supporting celebrities and getting close to celebrities, fans make reflexive decisions under the influence of this emotional orientation. Several examples in social marketing prove that the fan economy is supported by fans' crazy adore of celebrities, which can obtain considerable economic benefits quickly. Therefore, the use of celebrity effects for quick sales has become a standard method for businesses today.

#### 2.1.5 Meaning transfer theory

Grant McCracken(1989) proposes the meaning transfer model. This model believes that a celebrity's influence on audiences as a brand endorser is a process of migration of celebrities' symbolic meaning. It includes the following three stages (Figure 2.1): the first stage, a specific cultural environment or professional activities

give celebrities a particular symbolic meaning. Then, in the second stage, when celebrities and products appear together, celebrities transfer this symbolic meaning to the product, making it have a particular symbolic meaning. Finally, in the third stage, consumers obtain these symbolic meanings by using or consuming this product and reconstruct their self-image. The meaning transfer theory clarifies the mechanism of celebrities' emotional transmission between people and stuff. The celebrities use their image and position from the fans' perspective to obtain the relevant symbolic meaning and add value to the product. As a result, under this dual value stimulus, consumers make purchase decisions and stimulate the fan economy.

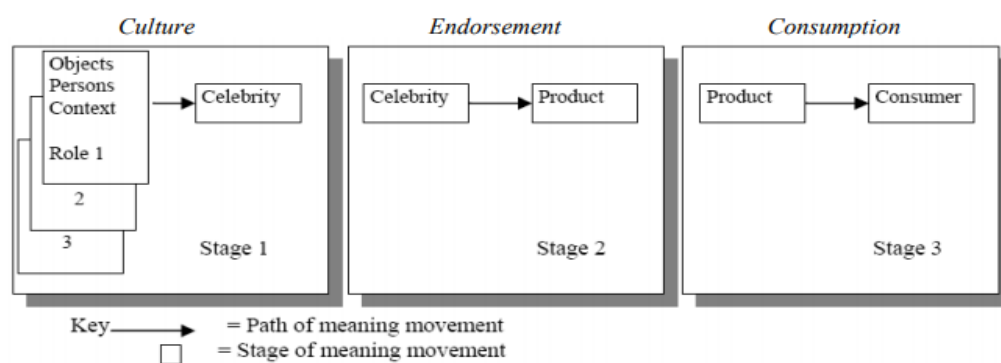


Figure 2.1 The Meaning Transfer Model

Source: McCracken, 1989, p. 315

In another aspect, the theory of meaning transfer plays a role of theoretical support for studying fans' attitudes towards Thai BL dramas and fans' attitudes towards Thai BL celebrities. It can be compared with the meaning transfer model. In the first stage, Thai BL TV drama is used as a specific professional activity. Celebrities gain TV drama fans' attention by appearing in Thai BL TV dramas; in the



second stage, fans combine celebrities and Thai BL TV dramas, fans' attitudes towards Thai BL TV dramas and celebrities overlap. According to previous research, fans' attitudes towards drama and celebrity should be positively correlated (Wong & Lai, 2015). Finally, in the third stage, fans completed the transfer of celebrity's meaning by consuming Thai BL TV dramas or performing consumption behaviors related to Thai BL TV dramas.

This theory helps explain the relationship between fans' exposure to Thai dramas and their attitudes towards Thai drama celebrities.

## **2.2 Exposure to Thai BL TV dramas**

### **2.2.1 Exposure**

Media exposure is defined as the extent to which individuals encounter specific media messages or content. (Shi & Nagler, 2020) The media's influence on the individual's subjective reality depends on the individual's dependence on the media as a source of information (Allen & Hatchett, 1986), often referred to as exposure. (Liu, 2006) Moreover, direct or indirect media exposure plays a key role in the first step of the process of persuasion. If people want to persuade someone or change others' attitudes, they must study media exposure. However, there is still no standard way to measure media exposure. (Nagler, 2020) In this study, the researcher chose general self-report as the measurement tool. General self-reporting measures aim to record the time people spend on specific media (for example, "On a typical weekday,

how many hours do you watch TV per day?"). In an early example of this approach, cultivation theory researchers would survey respondents about their television viewing and their fears regarding violence. Then they found that heavy viewing was associated with greater fears.

### 2.2.2 Cultivation theory

Cultivation theory (Gerbner, G, 1980) is a communication theory, which mainly studies the long-term influence of television on audiences. The main content is that in a specific group of people, the longer they watch TV, the closer the audience's perception of reality is to TV content. In cultivation theory, the narrative of television produces two phenomena: resonance and mainstreaming. The resonance means that when the TV content is close to the audience's real experience, the cultivation effect of the TV becomes more pronounced. The mainstream means that for a topic, there should be diverse values. However, exposure to a particular media information content makes people's opinions similar to the "mainstream of opinion" presented in the media. The difference between light TV viewers and heavy TV viewers is the degree of cultivation.

This theory provides theoretical support for the relationship between Chinese fans' exposure to Thai dramas, and their imagination of the world depicted in Thai dramas.

### 2.2.3 Exposure to Thai BL TV dramas

With media exposure and cultivation theory, fans' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas is mainly analyzed by fans' viewing time and frequency. The media exposure measurement decides which level of viewers the fans of Thai dramas belong to. Under such media exposure, whether they have a positive attitude towards celebrities' image portrayed in the Thai BL TV drama or positive image of Thailand.

### 2.2.4 Celebrity fandom tourism

Celebrity fandom travel is a new style of travel. As a thematic trip of a niche group, there are few related pieces of research. However, research on film-induced tourism is associated with this term. Celebrities are often discussed in film-induced tourism research—celebrities' attraction to tourists. Wong and Lai's research results show that celebrity attachment is positively correlated with film-induced behavioral intentions. Celebrities in movies or TV shows are practical promotional tools for destination marketing. When the celebrities on the screen show a positive attitude towards the movie-related locations, the destination placement ads are realized. A strong relationship has been formed between the audience and the celebrities. (Wong & Lai, 2015).

Reacher Zhou Jing pointed out that after a successful film was released, the reputation and ability to attract tourists to its shooting location were improved, thereby promoting the destination's tourism development. Therefore, the positive performance of film and television productions can improve the tourism image. It is

also in line with the cultivation theory. The higher the degree of media exposure, the more likely it is to affect the audience. If the media disseminates positive images, the audience is more likely to receive positive images. Concurrently, based on the meaning transfer model, the film celebrities will become the tourist destination's endorser and the bond between the fan and the tourist destination. Fans travel to the shooting scene, thus realizing the strengthening of Fans' identity and their desire to be close to celebrities.

## **2.3 Attitude**

### **2.3.1 Definition**

According to Ajzen, an attitude refers to the feelings of approval or disapproval of an individual or organization for a particular behavior, including positive and negative aspects. It is determined by the individual or organization's perception of the expected consequences of the behavior and the evaluation of these consequences. At the same time, attitude is an acquired tendency, an individual's cognitive evaluation of an object, which will affect consumer behavior. Consumer attitudes refer to consumers' behavioral intentions, feelings, and beliefs about something in the marketing environment, generally referring to retail stores and brands. These components are usually considered highly interdependent, and together they present an influencing consumer's response to the object. (MacLean, 2019)

Attitude, as an estimable psychological composition, is relatively durable and stable.

To a certain extent, it can affect the behavior of individuals or organizations.

Therefore, a deeper understanding of consumer attitudes is essential.

### 2.3.2 The celebrity attitude scale

To better measure fans' attitude towards celebrities, psychologists mainly conduct measurement research from two perspectives: pathological and non-pathological. Among them, the representative character of idol worship in pathological angle research is McCutcheon. In 2002, he proposed the absorption-addiction model to explain celebrity worship. In this model, absorption means all the fans' attention, all intuition, all the resources of muscle movement, imagination, and all these resources are devoted to the celebrities they follow, and eventually developed into a state of seeking a strong identity and social role addiction psychologically and behaviorally.

Based on this model, scholars formulated the Celebrity Attitude Scale. (McCutcheon, Maltby, Houran, & Ashe, 2004). This scale table divides the idol worship level from low to high into Entertainment-social level, Intense-personal level, and Borderline-pathological level from a pathological perspective. This scale can include a more extensive situation of celebrity worship.

The definitions of the three dimensions are 1) Entertainment-social: this is used to describe a relatively low obsession level. An example of a typical entertainment-social attitude would be "My friends, and I like to discuss what my

favorite celebrity has done.” 2) Intense-personal: This is an intermediate level of obsession with neuroticism and behaviors linked to psychoticism. An example of an intense-personal attitude toward a celebrity would include claims such as “I consider my favorite celebrity to be my soulmate.” 3) Borderline-pathological: This classification is the most severe level of celebrity worship. The measurement conditions are such as "I would gladly die to save the life of a celebrity." This level may lead to excessive fanaticism.

Because attitude itself is predictable, and its effect is manifested in individuals' or organizations' cognitive and emotional responses, the attitude can predict consumers' behavioral intentions stably. (Zhang, Hong & Zhou, 2020)

Therefore, this research mainly uses these three dimensions of fans' attitudes to explore the impact of different attitudes on travel intentions.

## **2.4 Travel intention**

### **2.4.1 Definition**

Intention refers to the subjective probability of an individual to perform a specific behavior. Some research defines behavioral intention as the intensity of a voluntary plan to participate in a specific behavior. Generally speaking, the stronger the intention of a person to participate in something, the greater the possibility of participating in the behavior. (Cheng Lam, Sangpu; Hsu, 2006) In consumer behavior, the concept of intention comes from purchase intention: the possibility that consumers are willing to take a particular purchase behavior. The concept of tourism intention

comes from the basic theory of consumer behavior. Woodside and Lysonski believe that a tourist's travel intention refers to the perceived possibility of a potential tourist visiting a specific tourist destination within a certain period. The travel intention and the contextual variables at the time jointly predict the tourist's actual destination choice behavior.

#### 2.4.2 Theory of reasoned action

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Figure 2.2) was first proposed by American scholars Fishbein and Ajzen to understand behavior and predict results. They believed that behavioral intention is determined by two factors: the individual's attitude towards behavior and subjective norms. Attitude refers to the individual's evaluation of the psychological level of favorable/non-favorable feelings of specific behaviors; subjective norms are the emotional expressions of the individual's support/opposition to the individual's specific behaviors by the surrounding people (family, friends, relatives, colleagues, etc.) It can be used to explain the relationship between attitude and behavior and predict individual behavior based on pre-existing attitudes and behavioral intentions. (Zhang, Hong & Zhou, 2020)

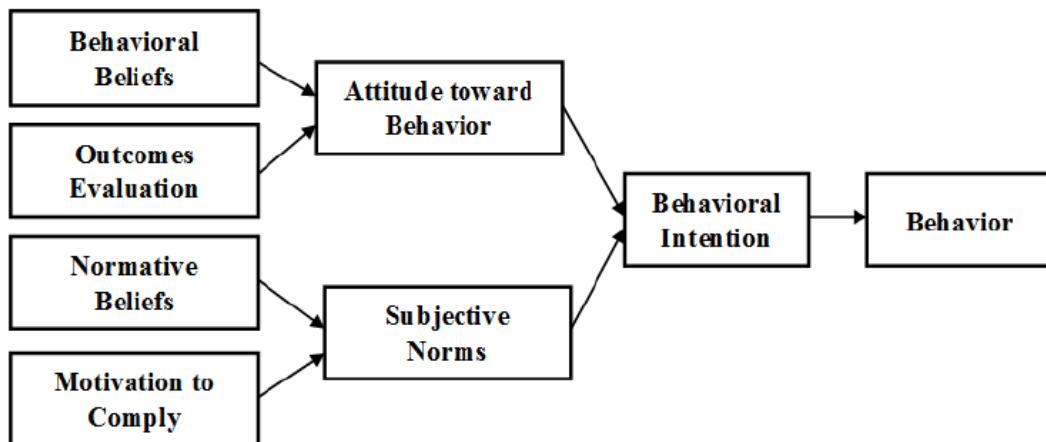


Figure 2.2 Theory of reasoned action model

Source: SAGE Reference - The Persuasion Handbook: Developments in Theory and Practice. (n.d.). Retrieved September 27, 2020, from [https://sk.sagepub.com/reference/hdbk\\_persuasion/n14.xml](https://sk.sagepub.com/reference/hdbk_persuasion/n14.xml)

In most travel intention research, scholars will choose the theory of planned behavior (TPB). TPB's perceived behavioral control is a critical reason for determining whether consumers will take travel behavior. However, this research mainly discusses the relationship between attitude and intention, so only TRA is selected.

In the questionnaire, the theory of reasoned action will be used to form three questions about travel intentions.

#### 2.4.3 Travel intention caused by the attitude towards celebrity

Celebrity attachment can significantly and positively influence behavioral intentions and transform them into quasi-social relationships. In this relationship, the



process of constructing valuable personal meaning enhances tourists' intention to visit locations related to movies. Therefore, celebrity attachment can also act as a catalyst to encourage people to visit destinations related to celebrities. (Wong & Lai, 2015).

## 2.5 Related Research

Samuel Seongseop Kim, Kye-Sung Chon, Jerome Agrusa, and Heesung Lee (2007) take "Winter Sonata" as an example, Japanese tourists as the research object. Through their investigation, it is found that video tourism is one kind of tourism forms in cultural tourism. Tourists can watch TV dramas or TV Shows to understand the cultural characteristics of different regions, and video tourism promotes cultural exchanges in different regions.

Hu Ning (2013) took Hallyu fans as an example to analyze the female tourism market's characteristics in fan culture and found that Hallyu is of great significance to Korean tourism image construction. In this celebrity fandom tourism, celebrity is the source of tourists' attention, the intensity of attention is directly proportional to the degree of attention to celebrity. Hence, it presents similar and unique characteristics of tourism activities to ordinary tourists, and fans are more proactive and purposeful in traveling and consumption. The amount of consumption is more considerable than the ordinary travelers.

Song Guanjie and Jin Caiyu (2017) studied Korean dramas' influence on Chinese youth's intention to travel to Korea. The research results show that the celebrity in Korean dramas has a significant role in promoting Chinese audiences to travel to Korea. Moreover, in the survey of celebrity endorsements' impact on the willingness to travel to Korea, 43% of the respondents believe that Korean dramas actors as Korean tourism ambassadors will increase tourism products' popularity. In other words, Korean drama actors will be able to promote tourism to Korea.

Liu Yang's (2020) research shows that the literary work "Dao Mu Bi Ji" has played a significant role in increasing the number of tourists in the Changbai Mountain Reserve. With the popularity of "Dao Mu Bi Ji," many fans came to Changbai Mountain Reserve not to be a simple eco-tourism sightseeing. The fans' main psychological appeal was to visit the classic scenes in the novel and the novel's mentioned route. The "fan economy" has brought extremely high occupancy rates and considerable economic benefits to the accommodation industry in tourist destinations in a short time.

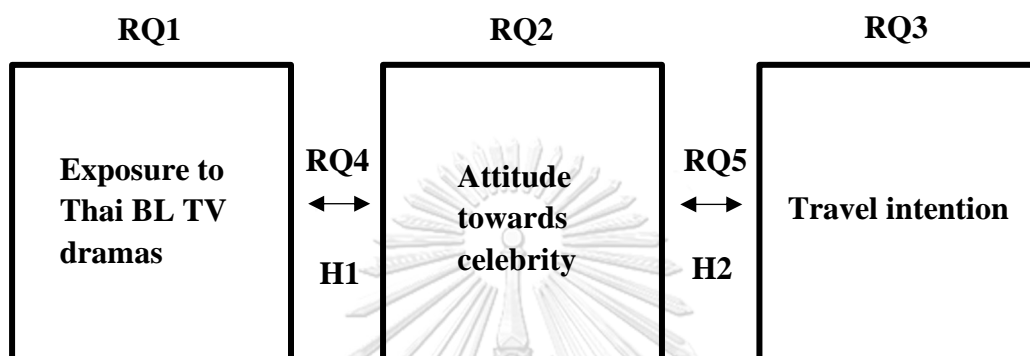
## **2.6 Research Hypotheses and Research Framework (Figure 2.3)**

From the literature review above, we draw two hypotheses below.

H1: There is a correlation between the female Chinese fans' exposure to Thai Boys' love TV drama and their attitude towards celebrities.

H2: There is a correlation between Chinese fans' attitudes toward celebrities and Chinese fans' intention to travel to Thailand.

Figure 2.3 Research Framework



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter clarifies this study's methodology, including research methodology, population, samples, sampling techniques, research instruments, measurement of variables, data analysis, and data presentation procedures. The details were described below.

#### **3.1 Research Methodology**

This research used a quantitative approach, and the questionnaire was distributed on China's leading media platforms WeChat, Weibo, and Douban, targeting 200 female Thai BL drama fans aged 18-45. 18 is the legal age in China. According to previous research, the age of fans of Thai BL dramas is concentrated in the 18-45 years old group. This part of the population accounts for at least 70% (Estates, 2016) of the total fans. The women are chosen because the data shows that most of the fans of Thai BL dramas are women, and the proportion is as high as 90% (Aiman, 2018) of the total fans.

### 3.2 Population and Sample

The total population in this study is a group of Chinese fans of Thai BL TV dramas. They live in mainland China, 18-45 years old, and watch online fansub videos. The population is estimated to be about 195 million (iiMedia Research, 2019). The samples' gender is female and they are willing to come to Thailand to chase celebrities. According to the Yamane formula (1967), at the acceptance sampling error of 7%, the sample size will be around 200.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$$



n= Sample Size  
N= Population Size  
e= The Acceptable Sampling Error

### 3.3 Sampling Techniques

This research used purposive sampling to collect data and targeted Chinese social media platforms used by Chinese fans, including WeChat, Weibo, and Douban. The questionnaire survey link was sent to the WeChat group, Weibo group, and Douban group. These groups are all established by fans of the Thai BL TV drama, so the questionnaire's distribution can reach the target group accurately.

The Chinese fan groups in Table 3.1 are the main online groups for researchers to distribute online questionnaire links.

Table 3.1 Thai BL TV Drama Social Media Fan Group

| Name  | Platform | Link  |
|---|----------|---|
|  | Wechat   |    |
| 豆瓣泰娱  | Douban   | <a href="https://www.douban.com/doubanapp/dispatch?uri=/group/657970">https://www.douban.com/doubanapp/dispatch?uri=/group/657970</a> |
| Mewgulf   | Weibo    | <a href="https://weibo.com/p/10080855e24c2cfcbcd685dbb9222b51360e15">https://weibo.com/p/10080855e24c2cfcbcd685dbb9222b51360e15</a>   |

### 3.4 Research Instruments

The online questionnaire is provided by the Chinese online survey service platform, "wjx." "wjx" is a professional online questionnaire survey, evaluation, and voting platform. It has been widely used by many companies and individuals and is currently the most commonly used online questionnaire platform in China. The survey question consists of six parts, including 1) screening questions, 2) demographic data, 3) exposure to Thai BL TV dramas, 4) attitude towards celebrity, 5) travel intention to Thailand, and 6) travel behavior preferences. The 3-5 parts are scored using the Likert five-level scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), and score the answers that best match the respondents' views and behaviors.

Part 1: Screening questions. This part used three questions to screen the respondents to ensure that the respondents are qualified research objects. The questions are as follows: 1) What age range are you? 2) Are you female? 3) Do you have one or more than one favorite celebrities of Thai BL TV drama for more than three months?

Part 2: Demographics. In this part, respondents were asked three profile questions about them: education level, annual income, and occupation.

Part 3: Exposure to Thai BL TV dramas. In this section, respondents need to answer questions about the degree of exposure to Thai BL TV drama and their Thai BL TV drama preference.

Part 4: Attitude towards celebrity. In this part, participants were asked 9 questions to investigate their attitudes towards celebrities. The question is adapted from the Celebrity Attitude Scale of Mccutcheon, Maltby, Houran, and Ashe (2004).

Part 5: Intention to travel to Thailand. In this part, participants were asked to answer three questions to test their intention to travel to Thailand. The three questions are based on the theory of reasoned action models (Ajzen, 1975).

Table 3.2 Questions for Part 3-5

| Category                    | Code | Items  | Source                                     |
|-----------------------------|------|--|--|
| Thai BL TV drama preference | A1   | I watch the Thai BL TV drama because the storyline is very attractive to me  |  |
|                             | A2   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because the music is very nice.   |  |
|                             | A3   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because the shooting scenes are very beautiful.   |  |
|                             | A4   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because it is well-produced and the director and production team are well-known.            |  |
|                             | A5   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because I like celebrities, and I watched this drama for him.                               |  |
| Attitude towards celebrity  | B1   | One of the main reasons I maintain an interest in celebrities because it gives me a temporary escape from life's problems. | (Mccutcheon, Maltby, Houran, & Ashe, 2004) |
|                             | B2   | My celebrities are practically perfect in every way.   |  |
|                             | B3   | I share with my celebrities a special bond that cannot be described in words.  |  |
|                             | B4   | To know my celebrities is to love them.  |  |
|                             | B5   | When my celebrities fail or lose at something, I feel like a failure myself.   |  |
|                             | B6   | I am obsessed with the details of my celebrities' life.  |  |
|                             | B7   | I love to talk with others who admire my celebrities.  |  |
|                             | B8   | News about my celebrities is a pleasant break from a harsh world.  |  |
|                             | B9   | I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to celebrities because it means a good time.                                       |  |



|                                 |    |   |                          |
|---------------------------------|----|---|--------------------------|
| Intention to travel to Thailand | C1 | You like the idea of traveling to Thailand for your favorite celebrities.             | (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) |
|                                 | C2 | You believe that your friends in the same fan group will agree if you go to Thailand. |                          |
|                                 | C3 | You intend to go to Thailand for your favorite celebrities.                           |                          |

Part 6: Travel behavior preference. The questions in this part are composed of single-choice questions and multiple-choice questions from the researcher's summary of the fan group's discussions on the internet. The single-choice questions consist of two questions. Each asks the participants about their preferred travel partners and the duration of idol-related behaviors. The multiple-choice questions include four questions, investigate the sources of travel information, shopping preferences, tourist activities in Thailand, and behaviors that participants will do related to the Thai BL TV dramas.

### 3.5 Measurement of Variables

There were three variables in this study. The measurements of each were as below.

Variable 1: Exposure to Thai dramas.

Investigate the Chinese fans' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas in inferring Chinese fans' attitudes towards Thai BL drama celebrities. It is measured by investigating the viewing frequency and preference of Chinese fans.

#### Variable 2: Attitudes toward celebrities

Attitudes toward celebrities use the Celebrity Attitude Scale as a measuring tool.

The attitude of fans towards celebrities is divided into three dimensions: Intense personal, Entertainment Social, and Borderline Pathological. It is convenient to measure the relationship between these three dimensions of attitude towards travel intention.

#### Variable 3: Travel intention

Measure travel intentions to investigate the relationship between travel intentions and attitudes towards celebrities through the theory of reasoned action.

Among them, variable 1 and variable 2 are mutually dependent and independent variables of hypothesis 1. Variable 2 and variable 3 are mutually dependent and independent variables of hypothesis 2.

#### 3.5.1 Checks for Reliability

Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to test internal consistency. First, 30 samples were collected as pre-test data. The reliability scores of the three variable measurement scales are shown in Table 3.2. All three Cronbach's have alpha numbers

more significant than 0.7, indicating that the three scales have high internal consistency (Bland & Altman, 1997).

Table 3.3 Cronbach's Alpha of Measurement Scales

| Variables                       | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Exposure to Thai BL TV drama    | 0.994            |
| Attitude towards celebrity      | 0.991            |
| Intention to travel to Thailand | 0.989            |

### 3.6 Data Collecting Method

The data provided answers to these research questions through Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics on each question frequency, mean, and standard deviation of understanding the sample's demographics and general views. Inferential statistical calculations to infer the links between variables that conform to research hypotheses.

### 3.7 Data Analysis and Data Presentation

The survey data is analyzed by using SPSS. For descriptive statistics, the mean and standard deviation will be calculated. The scores of the Likert five-point scale are shown in.

Table 3.4 Likert Scale Calculation

| Level of Agreement | Score | Meaning           | Scoring Range |
|--------------------|-------|-------------------|---------------|
| Strongly agree     | 5.0   | Strongly agree    | 5.00-4.21     |
| Agree              | 4.0   | Agree             | 4.20-3.41     |
| Somewhat agree     | 3.0   | Somewhat agree    | 3.40-2.61     |
| Disagree           | 2.0   | Disagree          | 2.60-1.81     |
| Strongly disagree  | 1.0   | Strongly disagree | 1.80-1.00     |

In inferential statistical analysis, the correlation between variables is proposed by measuring the Pearson product difference correlation coefficient. The result of a positive correlation or negative correlation is obtained, as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.5 Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Measurement (r)

| Scoring Scale | Meaning               |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1.00-0.80     | Very high association |
| 0.79-0.60     | Hight association     |
| 0.59-0.40     | Normal association    |
| 0.39-0.20     | Low association       |
| 0.19-0.00     | Very low association  |

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

This chapter presents the data collected from the questionnaire completed by a sample of 230 respondents meeting our targeting requirement. The data were collected in Mid-October 2019. The finding is divided into descriptive analysis and inferential analysis.

#### 4.1 Findings from Descriptive Analysis

Part 1: Demographics

Part 2: Exposure to Thai Boys' Love TV drama

Part 3: Attitude towards celebrity

Part 4: Travel intention

Part 5: Travel preference

Part 1: Demographics

This part shows the demographic data of samples, including (1) age, as shown in table 4.1, (2) level of education, as shown in Table 4.2, (3) annual income, as shown in table 4.3, and (4) occupation, as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.1 Age range of the samples

| Items                   | Categories | n.  | %    |
|-------------------------|------------|-----|------|
| What age range are you? | 18-25      | 145 | 63.0 |
|                         | 26-35      | 75  | 32.6 |
|                         | 36-45      | 10  | 4.4  |
| Total                   |            | 230 | 100  |

Table 4.1 shows the age range of the samples, which has been divided into 3 groups. The majority of the respondents were 18-25 years old (63.0%) and 26-35 years old (32.6%), together taking up 95.6% of the total samples. Only 10 respondents fell into the range of age 36-45, which took up 4.4% of the total samples.

Table 4.2 Level of education of the samples

| Items   | Categories                | n.  | %    |
|---|---------------------------|-----|------|
| What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? | Lower than high school    | 1   | 0.4  |
|   | High school               | 24  | 10.4 |
|   | Bachelor's degree         | 152 | 66.1 |
|   | Master's degree or higher | 53  | 23.1 |
| Total   |                           | 230 | 100  |

As for the samples' education background, the majority was with a bachelor's degree or equivalent, taking up 66.1% of the samples. 53 persons were with a master's degree or higher, consisting of 23.1% of the total. Only a minority of the respondents

with a high school degree, accounting for 10.4% of the total. Among all respondents, only 1 person had lower education than high school.

Table 4.3 The annual income of the samples

| Items                                    | Categories      | n.  | %    |
|--|-----------------|-----|------|
| What is your annual income (unit: yuan)? | Under 50,000    | 140 | 60.9 |
|  | 50,001~100,000  | 57  | 24.8 |
|  | 100,101~200,000 | 25  | 10.8 |
|  | Over 200,001    | 8   | 3.5  |
| Total                                    |                 | 230 | 100  |

Table 4.3 illustrated the annual income of the respondents. 140 individuals earned under 50,000 Yuan per year. This is the largest group accounting for 60.9% of the total. The least group of people who earned over 200,001 Yuan per year, consists of 8 individuals or 3.5% of the sample. 57 respondents have an annual income of 50,001~100,000 Yuan, making up 24.8% of the total. This was followed by 25 people (10.8%) who earned 100,101~200,000 yuan per year.

Table 4.4 Occupation of the samples

| Items                            | Categories                                      | n.  | %    |
|----------------------------------|---|-----|------|
| What is your current occupation? | Student   | 124 | 53.9 |
|                                  | Business owner                                  | 13  | 5.6  |
|                                  | Work in the government service/state enterprise | 22  | 9.6  |
|                                  | Private company employee                        | 58  | 25.2 |
|                                  | Unemployed                                      | 13  | 5.7  |
| Total                            |   | 230 | 100  |

Table 4.4 shows the occupation of the samples. More than half (53.9%) of the respondents were students, followed by employees of private companies (25.2%), state enterprises (9.6%), business owners (5.6%), and unemployed (5.7%).

## Part 2: Exposure to Thai BL dramas

This part presents the respondents' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas and their preference for Thai BL TV dramas.

Table 4.5 Respondents' exposure to Thai BL dramas

| Items  | Categories        | n.  | %    |
|--|-------------------|-----|------|
| How many days do you watch Thai BL TV drama(including the relative clips, such as behind-the-scenes footage, fan-made videos, and related press conference videos)per week?                                    | 1 DAY             | 41  | 17.8 |
|  | 2-3 DAYS          | 55  | 23.9 |
|  | 4-5 DAYS          | 49  | 21.3 |
|  | 6-7 DAYS          | 85  | 37.0 |
| Based on the previous question, how many hours of Thai BL TV drama(including the relative clips, such as behind-the-scenes footage, fan-made videos, and related press conference videos)do you watch per day? | Less than 1 hours | 52  | 22.6 |
|  | 1-3 hours         | 119 | 51.7 |
|  | 4-6 hours         | 47  | 20.4 |
|  | 7-9 hours         | 3   | 1.3  |
|  | More than 9 hours | 9   | 4.0  |
| Total  |                   | 230 | 100  |

According to Table 4.5, most respondents (37.0%) watched Thai BL TV dramas and related content 6-7 days a week. The differences among the rest of the



respondents are not very notable. Among them, 41 people (or 17.8%) watch Thai dramas on only one day of the week, 55 people (or 23.9%) watch Thai dramas 2-3 days a week, and 49 respondents (or 21.3%) watch Thai TV dramas 4-5 days a week.

It can be signified that more than half (51.7%) of the respondents watch Thai dramas for 1-3 hours a day. This is followed by less than 1 hour of watching per day (22.6%) and 4-6 hours of watching per day (20.4%). Only 12 respondents watched Thai dramas for more than 7 hours a day, 3 of them watched 7-9 hours a day, and 9 people watched more than 9 hours a day.

Table 4.6 Respondents' preferences to Thai BL dramas

| Items   | Mean | SD   |
|---|------|------|
| I watched the Thai BL TV drama because the storyline is very attractive to me                                   | 4.07 | 0.90 |
| I watched the Thai BL TV drama because the music is very nice.  | 3.63 | 0.88 |
| I watched the Thai BL TV drama because the shooting scenes are very beautiful.                                  | 3.74 | 0.92 |
| I watched the Thai BL TV drama because it is well-produced and the director and production team are well-known. | 3.15 | 0.96 |
| I watched the Thai BL TV drama because I like celebrities, and I watched this drama for him.                    | 4.67 | 0.69 |

Table 4.6 lists five aspects to measure Thai BL TV dramas' acceptance preferences and illustrates the mean and standard deviation of respondents' preferences. Respondents gave a strongly agreed score for the Thai BL TV dramas

with their favorite celebrities and storyline. The scores are ( $M=4.67$ ,  $SD=0.69$ ) and ( $M=4.07$ ,  $SD=0.90$ ) respectively. As for the other three aspects, the respondents' answers indicate that they all agree that nice music ( $M=3.63$ ,  $SD=0.88$ ), beautiful shooting scenes ( $M=3.74$ ,  $SD=0.92$ ), and excellent production ( $M=3.15$ ,  $SD=0.96$ ) all are the reasons why they watched Thai BL TV dramas.

### Part 3: Attitude towards celebrity

This part used the Celebrity Attitude Scale to investigate fans' attitudes towards celebrities and used the mean to generalize all respondents.

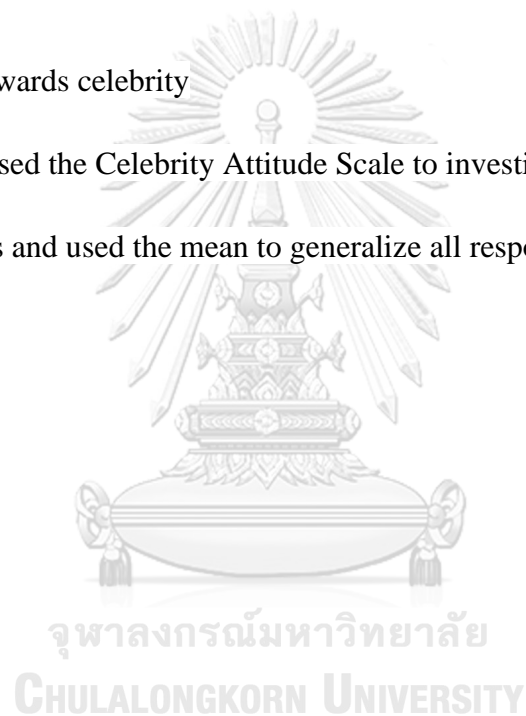


Table 4.7 Respondents' attitude towards celebrity

| Items  | Mean | SD   | Code | Group |
|--|------|------|------|-------|
| I share with my celebrities a special bond that cannot be described in words.  | 3.36 | 1.22 | B3   | ①     |
| I am obsessed with the details of my celebrities' life.  | 3.18 | 1.22 | B6   | ①     |
| News about my celebrities is a pleasant break from a harsh world.  | 3.87 | 1.03 | B8   | ①     |
| Group average  | 3.47 | 1.16 |      |       |
| One of the main reasons I maintain an interest in celebrities because it gives me a temporary escape from life's problems. | 3.10 | 1.25 | B1   | ②     |
| My celebrities are practically perfect in every way.   | 3.37 | 1.26 | B2   | ②     |
| I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to celebrities because it means a good time.                                       | 4.17 | 0.90 | B9   | ②     |
| Group average  | 3.55 | 1.14 |      |       |
| To know my celebrities is to love them.  | 3.49 | 1.13 | B4   | ③     |
| When my celebrities fail or lose at something, I feel like a failure myself.   | 2.96 | 1.29 | B5   | ③     |
| I love to talk with others who admire my celebrities.  | 3.98 | 0.96 | B7   | ③     |
| Group average.   | 3.48 | 1.13 |      |       |

According to the Celebrity Attitude Scale, there are three dimensions of attitudes towards celebrities, namely ①Entertainment Social(B3; B6; B8), ②Intense personal(B1; B2; B9), and ③Borderline Pathological(B4; B5; B7). The codes of

different items belong to the above three dimensions. After calculation, it can be concluded that the three dimensions are scored as ①Entertainment Social(average M=3.47), ②Intense personal(average M=3.55), and ③Borderline Pathological(average M=3.48). From the calculation results, it can be seen that there is almost no difference in the degree of obsession with celebrities of all respondents in the first and third dimensions, and the highest average M is in the second dimension.

#### Part 4: Travel intention

This section shows the samples' views on the intention of traveling to Thailand.

Table 4.8 Respondents' travel intention

| Items   | Mean | SD   |
|---|------|------|
| You like the idea of traveling to Thailand for your favorite celebrities.             | 3.82 | 1.15 |
| You believe that your friends in the same fan group will agree if you go to Thailand. | 3.98 | 1.00 |
| You intend to go to Thailand for your favorite celebrities.                           | 3.98 | 1.16 |

Table 4.8 shows that the respondents mostly agreed that they like the idea of traveling to Thailand for their favorite celebrities. (M = 3.82). They agreed that they believed that their friends in the same fan group would agree if they went to Thailand (M = 3.98) and intended to go to Thailand for their favorite celebrities (M = 3.98).

## Part 5: Travel preferences

This section provides a statistical description of the respondents' travel preferences.

Table 4.9 Respondents' travel companion selection

| Items   | Categories                              | n.  | %    |
|---|---|-----|------|
| If you travel to Thailand, whom do you want to travel with? | Traveling with Family                   | 33  | 14.4 |
|   | Traveling with other BL TV dramas' Fans | 105 | 45.6 |
|   | Traveling with colleagues               | 76  | 33.0 |
|   | Traveling alone                         | 16  | 7.0  |
| Total   | 230                                     | 100 |      |

It can be seen from Table 4.9 that most of the respondents are more willing to travel with fans who are also Thai BL TV dramas fans, accounting for 45.6% of the total. Then 33.0% chose to travel with colleagues, and 14.4% chose to travel with their family members. Only 7.0% of respondents said they would travel alone.

Table 4.10 Respondents' travel time arrangement

| Items   | Categories    | n.  | %    |
|---|---------------|-----|------|
| If you travel to Thailand, how many percentages will you spend on activities related to Thai BL TV drama? | Less than 25% | 64  | 27.8 |
|   | 25%-50%       | 98  | 42.6 |
|   | 51%-75%       | 55  | 23.9 |
|   | 76%-100%      | 13  | 5.7  |
| Total   |               | 230 | 100  |

Table 4.10 shows the time that respondents are willing to spend on Thai BL TV drama activities. Almost half of the respondents (42.6%) plan to spend 25%-50% of their time doing things related to Thai dramas. There are 98 people in this group. 64(or 27.8%) respondents indicated that they would only spend less than 25% of their total travel time doing activities related to Thai dramas. 55(or 23.9%) respondents expected to spend 51%-75% of the total travel time doing things related to Thai dramas. Only 13(or 5.7%) people chose to spend 76%-100% of their time doing activities related to Thai drama.

Table 4.11 Respondents' travel information resource

| Items  | Categories                             | n.  | %     |
|--|--|-----|-------|
| If you travel to Thailand, which channels will you use to obtain travel information? | TV broadcasts                          | 71  | 30.9% |
|  | Newspapers and Magazines               | 47  | 20.4% |
|  | Radio broadcasting                     | 12  | 5.2%  |
|  | Travel guide books                     | 26  | 11.3% |
|  | Travel agencies                        | 44  | 19.1% |
|  | Thai drama                             | 165 | 71.7% |
|  | Thailand celebrity recommendation      | 107 | 46.5% |
|  | Introduction from relatives or friends | 58  | 25.2% |
|  | Internet/travel website                | 93  | 40.4% |
|  | Weibo, WeChat                          | 180 | 78.3% |
|  | Others                                 | 17  | 7.4%  |
| Total  |  | 230 | 100%  |

Table 4.11 lists some familiar sources of tourism information. The number of people selected from high to low is Weibo, WeChat (180, or 78.3%), Thai drama (165, or 71.7%), Thailand celebrity recommendation (107, or 46.5%), Internet/travel website (93, or 40.4%), TV broadcasts (71, or 30.9%), Introduction from relatives or friends (58, or 25.2%), Newspapers and Magazines (47, or 20.4%), Travel agencies (44, or 19.1%), Travel guide books (26, or 11.3%) and Radio broadcasting (12, or 5.2%). Also, 17 people chose the option Other and indicated that they would obtain travel information through other social media such as Instagram, Douban, Douyin, and Zhihu; streaming media such as bilibili and the information source in the table.

Table 4.12 Respondents' consumption preferences

| Items   | Categories                             | n.  | %     |
|---|--|-----|-------|
| If you travel to Thailand, which souvenirs will you buy during your travel? | Cosmetics                              | 146 | 63.5% |
|   | Brand-name clothing                    | 46  | 20%   |
|   | Electronic products                    | 12  | 5.2%  |
|   | Special Thai food products             | 147 | 63.9% |
|   | Merch of Thai BL TV dramas             | 157 | 68.3% |
|   | Endorsement products of Thai celebrity | 79  | 34.6% |
|   | Thailand traditional crafts            | 111 | 48.3% |
|   | Others                                 | 15  | 6.5%  |
| Total   |  | 230 | 100%  |

Table 4.12 contains some common souvenir categories. Among them, three categories of souvenirs are chosen by most people. They are Merch of Thai BL TV dramas (157, or 68.3%), Special Thai food products (147, or 63.9%), and Cosmetics (146, or 63.5%). The popular ones are Thailand traditional crafts (111, or 48.3%) and Endorsement products of Thai celebrities (79, or 34.4%). The other categories are: Brand-name clothing (46, or 20%), Electronic products (12, or 5.2%) and Others (15, or 6.5%)

Table 4.13 Respondents' Activity preferences

| Items   | Categories                               | n.  | %     |
|---|--|-----|-------|
| If you travel to Thailand, which of the following activities in Thailand are you interested in? | Visit the filming location of Thai drama | 133 | 57.8% |
|   | Chasing Thai BL celebrities              | 176 | 76.5% |
|   | Participate in Thai celebrity activities | 136 | 59.1% |
|   | Thai cultural experience                 | 152 | 66.1% |
|   | View of historical sites                 | 109 | 47.4% |
|   | Visit natural scenery                    | 132 | 57.4% |
|   | Medical treatment, beauty and health     | 9   | 3.9%  |
|   | Travel and shopping                      | 97  | 42.2% |
|   | Rest and entertainment                   | 120 | 52.2% |
|   | Festival activities                      | 85  | 37.0% |
|   | Others                                   | 6   | 2.6%  |
| Total   |  | 230 | 100%  |



According to Table 4.13, 76.5% of respondents expressed interest in chasing BL celebrities in Thailand, and 152 people were interested in exploring Thai culture, which occupied 66.1% of the total samples. 59.1% of respondents want to participate in Thai celebrity activities, 57.8% of respondents want to visit the filming locations of Thai dramas, and 57.4% want to see natural scenery. Besides, other respondents chose Rest and entertainment (120, or 52.2%), View of historical sites (109, or 47.4%), Travel and shopping (97, or 42.2%), Festival activities (85, or 37.0%), Medical treatment, beauty and health (9, or 3.9%) and Others (6, or 2.6%).

Table 4.14 Respondents' expected activity

| Items   | Categories   | n.  | %     |
|---|--|-----|-------|
| If you travel to Thailand, what will you do about your favorite Thai celebrities? | Go to places where Thai celebrities grow up and work.  | 113 | 49.1% |
|   | Taste the food that Thai celebrities like or recommend.  | 173 | 75.2% |
|   | Buy products related to Thai celebrities.  | 133 | 57.8% |
|   | Participate in Thai celebrities' activities (concert, fan meeting, signing, press conferences, etc.) | 171 | 74.4% |
|   | Look for the places related to photos of Thai celebrities  | 125 | 54.4% |
|   | Others   | 11  | 4.8%  |
| Total   |  | 230 | 100%  |

According to Table 4.14, about 3/4 of the respondents have chosen that they will try foods that Thai celebrities recommend (173, or 75.2%) and participate in activities related to Thai celebrities (171, 74.4%). 57.8% of respondents said they would buy goods related to Thai celebrities, 54.4% of respondents would look for places where Thai celebrities took photos, 49.1% of respondents would first go to where Thai celebrities work and live, and 4.8% of respondent chose Other.

## 4.2 Findings from Inferential Analysis – Hypothesis Testing

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this project aims to study the relationship between the exposure to Thai BL TV dramas and fans' attitudes towards Thai celebrities and their intention to travel to Thailand. Also, two related hypotheses are proposed in Chapter 2. Hence, the collected data was processed by inferential analysis with Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Measurement to test the hypotheses.

*4.2.1.H1: There is a correlation between the female Chinese fans' exposure to Thai Boys' love TV drama and their attitude towards celebrities.*

Through Pearson's correlation measurement, the results in Table 4.15 show that at a significance level of 0.01, there is an association between exposure to Thai BL TV dramas and attitudes towards celebrities ( $r = 0.468$ ). This implies that the more Thai

BL TV dramas fans are exposed to, the more likely they are to have attitudes towards celebrities in Thai dramas, and vice versa.

Table 4.15 Pearson's Correlation between exposure to Thai BL TV drama and attitude towards celebrity

|                              | Attitude towards celebrity |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Exposure to Thai BL TV drama | 0.468**                    |

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*4.2.2.H2: There is a correlation between Chinese fans' attitude toward celebrities and Chinese fans' intention to travel to Thailand.*

Table 4.16 shows that when significant levels of 0.01, there is an association ( $r=0.548$ ) between attitude towards celebrity and intention to travel to Thailand. So H2 is established and shows that the better the attitude towards celebrities, the stronger travel intentions, or inversely related.

Table 4.16 Pearson's Correlation between intention to travel to Thailand and attitude towards celebrity

|                            | Intention to travel to Thailand |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Attitude towards celebrity | 0.548**                         |

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will further provide a summary of data analysis and discussion based on this research's findings. The practical implication of this research is summarized through the analysis of the data as well. Finally, the limitations of this research and the direction of further research are proposed.

#### 5.1 Summary

This study recruited Thai BL TV drama female Chinese fans, ages 18-45, and collected data from mid-October to early November 2020, finally received 230 valid respondents. The survey findings are divided into five parts: fans' demographic data, exposure to Thai BL TV dramas, attitudes towards celebrities, intention to travel to Thailand, and travel preferences. Besides, the results of correlation analysis are also given.

##### *Demographics*

Demographic information includes the age group, education level, annual income, and occupation of the respondent. Among the 230 respondents, 63% were between 18-25 years old. In terms of education level, 89.2% of the respondents have a bachelor or higher education level. As for annual income, about 60.9% of respondents have an annual income of less than RMB 50,000, which corresponds to the occupation of most respondents. Among all respondents, students accounted for 53.9%.

### *Exposure to Thai BL dramas*

According to the survey results, 37% of respondents watch Thai BLTV drama-related content 6-7 days a week. More than 51% spend 1-3 hours watching content related to Thai BL TV drama per day. It means that the exposure of Thai BL TV dramas to Chinese female fans is relatively high. In addition to the frequency of watching Thai BL TV dramas, the respondents' preference attributes of Thai BL TV dramas can also be seen. The attributes of Thai BL TV dramas that Chinese fans pay the most attention to is whether celebrities they love in this Thai BL TV drama. Most people strongly agree that (M=4.67) if the Thai BL TV drama have their favorite celebrities, they will be more willing to watch the drama.

### *Attitude towards celebrity*

The survey results in the section show that the fans are in the middle-level celebrity worship. This level's name given by the Celebrity Attitude Scale is called an "Intense personal." The items for measuring attitudes in this dimension include, "One of the main reasons I maintain an interest in celebrities because it gives me a temporary escape from life's problems." (M=3.10); "My celebrities are practically perfect in every way." (M=3.37); "I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to celebrities because it means a good time." (M=4.17). From the above results, it can be seen that most Chinese fans regard their favorite Thai celebrities as perfect and treat celebrity worship as entertainment in their lives as part of the pastime.

### *Travel intention*

Regarding travel intentions, most of the respondents agreed that they liked the idea of chasing celebrities in Thailand (M=3.82). They believed that their fan friends would agree with their idea of chasing celebrities in Thailand (M=3.98). At the same time, they also confirmed that they have plans to chase celebrities in Thailand (M=3.98).

### *Travel preferences*

In tourism preference, 45.6% of respondents said they are willing to travel with Thailand BL TV drama fans together. More than 42.6% of the respondents said they would spend 25%-50% of the entire travel time on Thai BL TV drama activities. Most of the respondents collected travel information through WeChat and Weibo (78.3%). In addition, Thai dramas (71.7%), Thai celebrity recommendations (46.5%), and travel websites (40.4%) were also the primary sources of travel information for respondents. In terms of shopping, cosmetics (63.5%), Thai specialty foods (63.9%), and Thai BL merch (68.3%) are favored by most fans. In the preference for the specific arrangement of travel activities, most of the fans are willing to participate in chasing Thai BL celebrities (76.5%). Among them, 74.4% of the respondents said they expect this participation and Thai celebrities' Fan meetings, concerts, or media conferences.

### *Inferential Statistics Analysis*

From the calculation result of Pearson's correlation coefficient, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between the exposure of Thai BL TV

dramas to Chinese fans and the fans' attitudes towards celebrities ( $r=0.468$ ) at a significant level of 0.01. Meanwhile, there is also a positive correlation between fans' attitude towards celebrities and their intention to go to Thailand ( $r=0.548$ ).

## 5.2 Discussion

This study's discussion mainly includes three points based on the results of data collection and analysis. This section mainly discusses the relationship between fans' exposure to Thai BL TV dramas, fans' attitudes towards roles in BL TV dramas, and fans' attitudes towards celebrities and their intention to travel to Thailand.

### 5.2.1 Exposure to Thailand BL TV dramas and Thai drama preference

According to the cultivation theory, the more a child is exposed to violence on television, the more likely he or she thinks that the real world is full of violence. Moreover, heavy users of television are more afraid of violence in television reality. (Gerbner, G, 1980) Therefore, higher exposure has a significant influence on the audience. The higher exposure will make fans form a "mainstream" real world similar to the Thai BL TV drama world. According to the questionnaire results, fans of Thai BL dramas have relatively high exposure to Thai dramas. A fan will watch content related to Thai BL dramas on average every day of the week for at least 1 hour a day. In other words, fans of Thai BL TV dramas have been exposed to Thai BL TV dramas for a long time, making it very likely that Thai drama fans will think that the Thai society described in Thai BL TV dramas is the real Thai society. It may also be believed that the celebrity BL spouse in the Thai BL TV drama is also a pair in reality.

Most Chinese fans share the resources of Thai dramas through Weibo or Baidu Cloud (similar to Google drive). Many Thai drama Fansub have their own social media accounts. After they get the source video of the Thai drama, they will record and subtitle them. Therefore, most of the Thai drama fans can quickly watch the latest Thai dramas, and the update frequency is almost the same as in Thailand. In addition to TV series, some media interviews, TV shows are also followed by fans in the same way.

In addition, due to the “after-sales” service of Thai BL TV dramas, fans are more addicted to the BL TV reality. “After-sales” service refers to that after most of the Thai BL TV dramas are released, producers will use the CPs in the drama as the main body to conduct offline activities or product endorsements. All these have strengthened fans' love and obsession with celebrities in Thai BL TV dramas. Take fans of Korean TV dramas as an example. They promoted their favorite celebrities on Chinese social media platforms, allowing Korean celebrities to get advertisers' attention. (Ke, 2017) Chinese fans post pictures and videos for their favorite Thai celebrities on Weibo. On the one hand, fans strengthen the connection between them and other fans in this way, and on the other hand, they increase the visibility of their favorite celebrities. According to the meaning transfer theory, fans have shifted their attitudes towards Thai BL TV dramas to celebrities by following up dramas and participating in activities. The most important part of the TV dramas is good actors. After the audience recognizes these actors, the audience will "empathize" the emotions towards the protagonist in the drama to the actors. (Hu, 2017). Another piece of evidence is from fans' preference for Thai BL TV dramas. Fans agreed that if a Thai BL TV drama has their favorite celebrities appear, they will be willing to watch



it. This point is also consistent with a survey of Chinese college students' motivations for watching Korean dramas. Among all reasons, celebrities they like ( $M=3.59$ ) can well show that celebrities in TV series greatly influence students' motivation to watch Korean dramas. (Zhang,2016) In order to chase celebrities, fans will pay attention to celebrities' works. Then, the next attribute preferences are the storyline of the drama and the drama's shooting scene.

### 5.2.2 Escape the pressure of the real world

According to the above discussion results and the correlation investigation on Hypothesis 1: There is a correlation between the female Chinese fans' exposure to Thai Boys' love TV drama and their attitude towards celebrities. Based on the previous paragraph analysis, we can conclude that fans have high exposure to Thai BL TV dramas. They maintain a positive attitude towards Thai BL TV dramas. Furthermore, because the correlation coefficient  $\alpha$  is greater than 0.4, the more fans like Thai BL TV dramas, the more they will like celebrities in Thai BL dramas. Conversely, the more fans love Thai BL drama celebrities, the more they will also prefer Thai BL TV dramas featuring celebrities.

For the measurement of fans' attitudes towards celebrities, this study uses the Celebrity Attitude Scale, a classification of the degree of idolatry. The results of the questionnaire show that most of the fans are in moderate idolatry. However, the difference in scores between the three groups of idolatry dimensions is slight. It means that fans are incredibly likely to switch between the three dimensions of attitudes, occasionally entertainment social, occasionally on borderline pathological, and on average in intense personal. Previous studies have also pointed out that intense

personal and borderline pathological idolatry level significantly impact travel intentions (Zhan, 2017).

In the fan community, fans are participants in fan culture, and the relationship between fans and official content is active. Fans can independently interpret the content of official communication. Such re-interpretation is a manifestation of the attitude of subcultural groups. Fan behavior is mainly the link between fans and the creators of film and television dramas. It is also a concrete manifestation of fans' emotional consumption and fans' driving force to participate in fan culture. As a participatory cultural group, the fan group is a weak social relationship, not necessities. (Song, 2020) But the expression of human emotions is necessary for individuals. Therefore, through such a participatory cultural approach, fans enter the virtual text set by the communication subject, seek the emotional sustenance of real life, connect with the current moving, perceive the culture, and perform a performative expression. It is the most important feature of fan-participatory cultural behavior.

According to the survey on attitudes of the questionnaire, fans have a positive attitude towards celebrities. They think their favorite celebrities are perfect, and sharing news about celebrities with other fans makes them feel relaxed. Paying attention to celebrities' news and discussing celebrity news with other fans is important for fans to escape from other real worlds. Therefore, chasing celebrities and getting close to celebrities will make fans happy. It is one reason for the formation of the relationship between fans' attitude towards celebrities and the intention to go to Thailand.

### 5.2.3 Relationship between attitude towards celebrities and Travel Intention

Based on the verification of Hypothesis 2, this research confirms that there is a correlation between Chinese fans' attitude toward celebrities and Chinese fans' intention to travel to Thailand. Simultaneously, according to TRA, attitude influences intention, and this hypothesis is also supported by this theory. The more positive the fan's attitude towards the celebrity, the higher the fan's travel intention. It shows that as idol worship's dimension deepens, fans' time investment and emotional investment in chasing idols have significantly increased. As the desire to get close to idols deepens, travel intentions become more apparent, which ultimately stimulates fans to make travel decisions. Ganbimeng's (2018) research shows a significant positive correlation between the obsession of celebrities and the cognitive image and affective image of the TV dramas' shooting location. In a post-modern society, celebrities are a cultural icon. They can serve as a medium to shape the cognition and needs of many audiences. Among them, cognitive image has a direct and indirect dual effect on tourism intention, the affective image has a direct impact on tourism intention, and the affective image has a more significant effect on tourism intention than cognitive image. (Zhan, 2017) It shows that the more fans love celebrities, the more positive feelings they have towards Thailand, and the more likely to stimulate their travel intention. Fans' feelings for celebrities are also transferred to Thailand in the process, making it easier for fans to build a good impression of Thailand than ordinary tourists.

### 5.3 Limitations of the Study

In this research, only Thai BL TV dramas are studied. The research sample is limited to female fans of this kind of TV drama, lacking the influence of other kinds of TV dramas on the audience. Moreover, traveling to Thailand is international tourism. According to the questionnaire data, most of the respondents in this study belong to low-income student groups. Suppose the factor of perceived behavior control in theory of planned behavior is taken into account. In this case, the possibility of traveling behavior is tiny. Arrangements and preferences for tourism activities may only exist in anticipation. It is uncertain how likely it is to perform the behavior.

### 5.4 Practical Implications

#### *Develop media contents to promote the tourism industry*

Film and television works can widely spread. The film and television works must rely on a particular space and characters for expression. Therefore, the tourism department can cooperate with film and television to promote the local tourist attractions with the carrier of film and television dramas. From the travel preference findings, it can be known that most fans are more willing to travel with fans, and their channels for obtaining travel information are mainly social media platforms, Thai dramas and Thai drama celebrities. Therefore, tourism practitioners can consider creating such travel routes specially designed for fans. Simultaneously, using the celebrities in the play as a means of propaganda helps fans' attitudes towards celebrities are transferred to their intentions of travel. Make full use of the word-of-

mouth (WOM)effect of celebrities and the e-WOM effect among fan groups to promote local tourism, thereby promoting the local tourism industry's development.

*Develop distinctive tourist attractions, tourism methods and celebrity endorsement tourism*

According to the data in the travel preference section, fans are influenced by celebrities during travel. They prefer travel activities, tourist attractions, and souvenirs related to their favorite celebrities. Therefore, practitioners in the tourism industry should develop tourism products that meet the preferences of fans. For example, in terms of food, restaurants and delicacies recommended by celebrities can be promoted, with celebrity recommendations as the critical point of promotion, or celebrity endorsements can attract fans to consume. From the survey findings of shopping preferences and activity preferences, it can be found that after coming to Thailand, many female fans will buy cosmetics. Therefore, to attract fans of Thai BL TV dramas in the future, the Thai beauty brand mistine even invited a pair of CP of Thai BL TV dramas to do the sell goods live broadcast. The CP of these two celebrities is called Mewgulf. In just one hour of live broadcast, Mistine's sales exceeded 3 million RMB. It is also possible to transform the filming venues of film and television dramas to attract fans to visit to satisfy their desire to get close to celebrities. South Korea retains the shooting scenes of popular dramas such as "Dae Jang Geum" and "You from the Star" so that fans of the drama can visit and experience the characters' lives in the drama.

## 5.5 Directions for Future Research

The second chapter of the literature review mentioned the importance of media exposure and the difficulty of measuring. Therefore, for follow-up research, media exposure can be measured more to study the impact of different media exposures on attitudes more accurately.

In terms of attitudes, this study mainly uses pathological attitude classification to measure the attitudes of fans. Subsequent studies can combine other disciplines on celebrity worship attitudes to further classify fans. Then refine fan attitudes to determine what kind of attitudes has the most significant influence on intention.

In terms of research methods, this study only uses the questionnaire survey method of quantitative. Therefore, for follow-up research, in-depth interviews in qualitative can be used. At the same time, to better understand the details of the audience's perspective.

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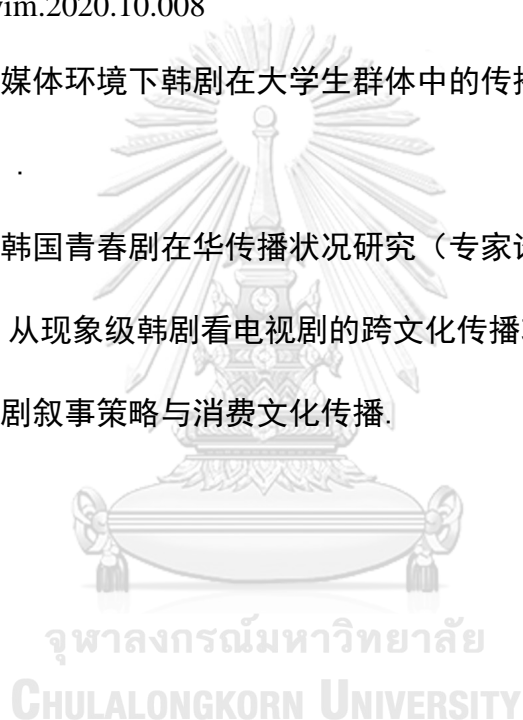
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## APPENDIX

### Research Questionnaire I

#### **Chinese Fans' Attitude towards Thai Boy's Love TV Dramas, Boy Love TV Actors, and Their Intention to Travel to Thailand**

This research project is conducted in partial requirement of a Professional Project enrolled by a student of M.A. Strategic Communication Management from Faculty of Communication Arts, Chulalongkorn University. This questionnaire aims to understand the Chinese fans' preferences of Thai BL TV drama and their travel preferences. What is more important is to study the relationship between Chinese fans' attitudes of Thai BL TV dramas to Thai BL TV dramas and celebrities in Thai BL TV dramas and fans' intention to travel to Thailand.

This questionnaire survey will take approximately five minutes. Participants are requested to complete all of the following questions based on their experience to reflect their attitudes and choices as accurately as possible. This questionnaire is voluntary, and the data will be collected confidential. All the data collected will only be analyzed for educational purposes.

### Section 1: Screening questions

Instructions: Please choose the option that best represents you.

1. What age range are you in? [单选题] \*

18-25    26-35    36-45

Neither (Please end the survey here.)

2. Are you female? [单选题] \*

Yes    No (Please end the survey here.)

3. Do you have one or more than one favorite celebrities of Thai BL TV drama for more than three months? [单选题]\*

Yes    No (Please end the survey here.)

### Section 2: Demographics information

Instructions: Please choose the option that best represents you.

4. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? [单选题] \*

Lower than high school    High school    Bachelor's degree

Master's degree or higher



5. What is your annual income (unit: yuan)? [单选题] \*

- Under 50,000       50,001~100,000       100,101~200,000  
 Over 200,001

6. What is your current occupation ? [单选题] \*

- Student       Business owner  
 Work in the government service/state enterprise       Private company  
 employee  
 Retired       Unemployed

Section 3: Chinese fans' degree of exposure and preference for Thai BL TV dramas

Instructions: In this section, respondents need to answer questions about the degree of exposure to Thai BL TV drama and their preference for Thai BL TV drama.

7. How many days do you watch Thai BL TV drama (including the relative clips, such as behind-the-scenes footage, fan-made videos, and related press conference videos)

per week? [单选题] \*

- 1 DAY       2-3 DAYS       4-5  
 DAYS       6-7 DAY

8. Based on the previous question, how many hours of Thai BL TV drama (including the relative clips, such as behind-the-scenes footage, fan-made videos, and related press conference videos) do you watch per day? [单选题] \*

- Less than 1 hours                      ○1-3 hours  
 ○4-6 hours                                ○7-9 hours                                ○More than 9 hours

| 9 | Statements  | Strongly disagree ↔ Strongly agree |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|   |   | 1                                  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|   | I watch the Thai BL TV drama because the storyline is very attractive to me                                     |                                    |   |   |   |   |
|   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because the music is very nice.  |                                    |   |   |   |   |
|   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because the shooting scenes are very beautiful.                                  |                                    |   |   |   |   |
|   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because it is well-produced and the director and production team are well-known. |                                    |   |   |   |   |
|   | I watched the Thai BL TV drama because I like celebrities, and I watched this drama for him.                    |                                    |   |   |   |   |

#### Section 4: Attitude towards celebrity

Instructions: In this section, respondents need to answer questions about their attitude towards celebrity. Please choose numbers for the following statements, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

|    | Statements   | Strongly disagree ↔ Strongly agree |   |   |   |   |
|----|--|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    |  | 1                                  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | One of the main reasons I maintain an interest in celebrities because it gives me a temporary escape from life's problems. |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 11 | My celebrities are practically perfect in every way.   |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 12 | I share with my celebrities a special bond that cannot be described in words.  |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 13 | To know my celebrities is to love them.  |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 14 | When my celebrities fail or lose at something, I feel like a failure myself.   |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 15 | I am obsessed with the details of my celebrities' life.  |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 16 | I love to talk with others who admire my celebrities.  |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 17 | News about my celebrities is a pleasant break from a harsh world.  |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 18 | I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to celebrities because it means a good time.                                       |                                    |   |   |   |   |

Section 5: Intention to travel to Thailand.

Instructions: In this section, respondents need to answer questions about their travel intention to Thailand. Please choose numbers for the following statements, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

|    | Statements  | Strongly disagree ↔ Strongly agree |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    |   | 1                                  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19 | You like the idea of traveling to Thailand for your favorite celebrities.             |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 20 | You believe that your friends in the same fan group will agree if you go to Thailand. |                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 21 | You intend to go to Thailand for your favorite celebrities.                           |                                    |   |   |   |   |

### Section 6: Travel behavior preference

Instructions: In this section, please answer your travel preferences.

22. If you travel to Thailand, whom do you want to travel with? [单选题] \*

- Traveling with Family                       Traveling with other BL TV dramas' Fans  
 Traveling with colleagues                       Traveling alone

23. If you travel to Thailand, how many percentages will you spend on activities related to Thai BL TV drama? [单选题] \*

- Less than 25%     25%-50%                       51%-75%     76%-100%

24. If you travel to Thailand, which channels will you use to obtain travel information? [多选题] \* (you can select one or more than one choices)

- TV broadcasts                      Newspapers and magazines                      Radio  
 broadcasting                      Travel guide books                      Travel agencies                      Thai  
 drama    Weibo, WeChat    Thailand celebrity recommendation  
Introduction from relatives or friends    Internet/travel website  
Others (please specify) -----

25. If you travel to Thailand, which souvenirs will you buy during your travel?

[多选题] \* (you can select one or more than one choices)

- Cosmetics                      Brand-name clothing    Electronic  
 products    Thailand traditional crafts  
Special Thai food products                      Merch of Thai BL  
 TV dramas    Endorsement products of Thai celebrity                      Others  
 (please specify) -----

26. If you travel to Thailand, which of the following activities in Thailand are you interested in? [多选题] \* (you can select one or more than one choices)

- Visit the filming location of Thai drama    Participate in Thai celebrity  
 activities  
Chasing Thai BL celebrities                      Thai cultural experience  
View of historical sites                      Visit natural scenery  
Medical treatment, beauty and health                      Travel and shopping

- Rest and entertainment                       Festival activities
- Others (please specify) -----

27. If you travel to Thailand, what will you do about your favorite Thai celebrities?

[多选题] \* (you can select one or more than one choices)

- Go to places where Thai celebrities grow up and work.
- Taste the food that Thai celebrities like or recommend.
- Buy products related to Thai celebrities.
- Participate in Thai celebrities' activities  
(concert, fan meeting, signing, press conferences, etc.)
- Look for the places related to photos of Thai celebrities
- Others (please specify) -----

## 问卷调查 II

中国粉丝对于泰国腐剧及腐剧演员的态度和赴泰旅游意向之间的关系

粉丝朋友们好！本研究是朱拉隆功大学传媒艺术学院，战略传播管理硕士专业项目的一部分。这份问卷旨在了解中国粉丝对泰国腐剧和赴泰旅游偏好。更重

要的是研究中国粉丝对腐剧和泰国腐剧中演员的态度与粉丝赴泰国旅游意愿之间的关系。

本次问卷调查大约需要您 5 分钟的时间。请您根据您自己的经验完成下列所有问题，以尽可能准确地反映您的态度和答案。本问卷是自愿填写的，收集的数据将保密。所有收集到的数据只用于教育目的。

### 第 1 节：滤型问题

说明：请选择最能代表您的选项。

1. 您的年龄范围？ [单选题] \*

18-25

26-35

36-45

都不（请在此处结束调查。）

2. 您是女性吗？ [单选题] \*

是

否（请在此结束调查。）

3. 您有一个或多个喜欢超过三个月的泰国腐剧演员吗？ [单选题]\*

是

否（请在此结束调查。）

### 第 2 部分：人口学信息

说明：请选择最能代表您的选项。

4. 您的最高学历是？ [单选题] \*

高中以下      高中      本科学历      硕士以上

5. 您的年收入是多少（单位：元）？ [单选题] \*

50,000 以下      50,001 ~ 100,000

100,101 ~ 200,000      200,001 以上

6. 您目前的职业是什么？ [单选题] \*

学生

企业主

在政府服务/国有企业工作

私人公司员工

退休

失业

### 第 3 部分：中国歌迷对泰国 BL 电视剧的曝光度和偏好

说明：本小节是中国粉丝对于泰国腐剧的态度调查，请选择最符合您的选项，并且根据您的自身情况对下列陈述进行评分，从非常不同意（1 分）到非常同意（5 分）

7. 您每周观看多少天泰国腐剧（包括幕后片段、粉丝自制视频、相关新闻发布会视频等）？ [单选题] \*

1 天

2-3 天

4-5 天

6-7 天

8. 基于前一个问题，您每天大约看多少小时的泰国腐剧（包括幕后片段，粉丝制作的视频，相关的新闻发布会视频）？ [单选题] \*



- 少于 1 小时      ○1-3 小时      ○4-6 小时      ○7-9 小时
- 超过 9 小时

| 9 | 我喜欢看泰国腐剧，因为： | 非常不同意 <input type="checkbox"/> 非常同意 <input type="checkbox"/> |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|--|---|---|---|---|
|   |              | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|   | 剧情吸引人        |  |   |   |   |   |
|   | 主题曲好听        |  |   |   |   |   |
|   | 拍摄场景优美       |  |   |   |   |   |
|   | 大导演制作        |  |   |   |   |   |
|   | 有我喜欢的明星      |  |   |   |   |   |

#### 第 4 节：对名人的态度

说明：本小节是为了调查粉丝对待喜欢的名人的态度，请选择最符合您的选项，并且根据您的自身情况对下列陈述进行评分，从非常不同意（1 分）到非常同意（5 分）

|    | 陈述句                                 | 完全不同意 <input type="checkbox"/> 非常同意 <input type="checkbox"/> |   |   |   |   |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
|    |                                     | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | 我对明星保持兴趣的主要原因之一是这样做可以让我暂时逃避生活中的问题。  |  |   |   |   |   |
| 11 | 我喜欢的明星在各方面都是完美的。                    |  |   |   |   |   |
| 12 | 我和我喜欢的明星之间有无法用语言形容的特殊联系。            |  |   |   |   |   |
| 13 | 了解我喜欢的明星就是爱他（们）。                    |  |   |   |   |   |
| 14 | 当我喜欢的明星经历失败，我觉得就像我自己也失败了一样。         |  |   |   |   |   |
| 15 | 我着迷于我喜欢的明星的生活细节。                    |  |   |   |   |   |
| 16 | 我喜欢与和我喜欢同一个明星的人进行交谈。                |  |   |   |   |   |
| 17 | 关于我喜爱的明星的消息让我在残酷的世界中得到愉快的解脱。        |  |   |   |   |   |
| 18 | 我喜欢看，阅读或者听和我喜欢的明星相关的东西，因为这意味着一段好时光。 |  |   |   |   |   |

#### 第5节：前往泰国的意向。

说明：本小节是为了调查粉丝对泰国的旅游意向，请选择最符合您的选项，并且根据您的自身情况对下列陈述进行评分，从非常不同意（1分）到非常同意（5分）

|    | 声明                     | 非常不同意 <input type="checkbox"/> 非常同意 |   |   |   |   |
|----|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    |                        | 1                                   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19 | 您觉得去泰国追星这个想法很好。        |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| 20 | 您相信您的其他粉丝朋友都会同意您去泰国旅游。 |                                     |   |   |   |   |
| 21 | 您有去泰国追星的意愿。            |                                     |   |   |   |   |

#### 第 6 节：出行习惯偏好

说明：在本节中，请回答您的出行偏好。

22 . 如果您去泰国旅游，您最想和谁一起？ [单选题] \*

- 家人
  其他腐剧粉丝
  同事  
 独自一人

23. 如果您去泰国旅游，您会花多少比例的时间在和泰国腐剧相关的活动上？

[单选题] \*

- 少于 25%
  25%-50%  
 51%-75%
  76%-100%

24 . 您一般从什么渠道获得泰国旅游的相关信息？ [多选题] \*

(可以选择一种或多种选项)

- 电视           报纸杂志           广播           旅行指南  
旅行社           泰剧           微博，微信           泰国名人推荐  
亲戚朋友的介绍           互联网/ 旅游网站  
其他（请注明）-----

25. 如果您去泰国旅游，您会购买什么类型的商品？ [多选题] \*

（可以选择一种或多种选项）

- 化妆品   名牌服装   电子产品   泰国传统工艺品  
泰国特色食品   泰腐周边   名人代言产品  
其他（请注明）-----

26. 如果您去泰国旅游，您对哪种活动感兴趣？ [多选题] \*（可以选择一种或多种选项）

- 参观泰剧的拍摄地点   参观历史遗迹   探索自然风光  
节日活动           参加泰国名人活动  
追星（追 cp）           体验泰国文化   休闲娱乐  
医疗旅游           购物           其他（请注明）-----

27. 如果您去泰国旅游，您一定会做的和泰国明星相关的事是什么？

[多选题] \*（可以选择一个或多个选项）

- 去看明星曾经去过或者工作的地方。
- 品尝泰国名人喜欢或推荐的食物。
- 买泰国明星的周边。
- 参加泰国明星的粉丝见面会，音乐会，媒体采访等。
- 寻找泰国明星照片中的景点，并进行打卡。
- 其他（请注明）-----

## VITA

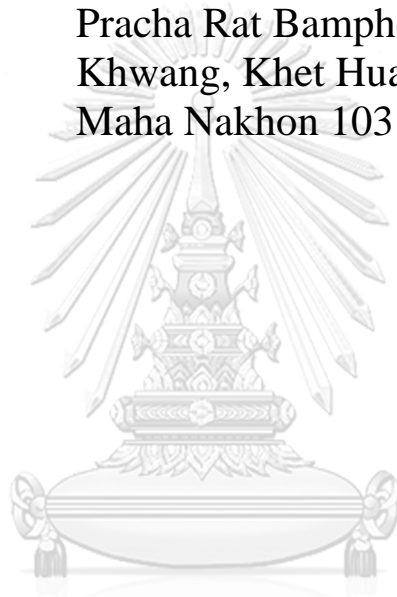
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