

Window Display Design of Thai Craft Product Affecting Perceptions of Thai and Foreign Tourists

Kanokwan Somoon, Chumporn Moorapun

Abstract—A product's perceived value may increase purchase intention. Value perceptions may differ among cultures. Window displays can be used to increase products' information and value. This study aims to investigate the relationship between window display design elements and value perceptions of local products between two different cultures. The research methodology is based on survey research. Several window displays in favorite of tourist spots were selected as a unit of study. Also, 100 tourists (56 Thai tourists and 44 foreign tourists) were asked to complete a questionnaire. T-Tests were used to analyze the comparison. Then, the results were compared to Thai and foreign tourists. Finally, the results find that Thai and foreign tourists have different perception towards three design elements that are size of the window, props and colour lighting. The differences of their perceptions signify the different cultural values they adhere to.

Keywords—Cross-culture, Window display, Thai craft product, Environmental perception.

I. INTRODUCTION

A shop's window display is the first thing that consumers see. It not only shows the character of the shop and showcases new products, but also helps increase sales. An excellent window display can motivate customers' purchase decisions [1]. In the past, studies related to window displays were usually in the context of clothing displays for customers in the same cultural group. Studies in the context of unique Thai crafts for customers from many cultural groups are lacking. It is entirely possible that people from different cultures perceive a window display differently. Taking the cultural notion as the starting point aims to investigate the relationship between window display design elements and value perceptions of Thai crafts and to compare the differences in the perceptions of people from a different culture.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical framework of this study was based on Stimuli-Organism-Response Model [2]. It aims to investigate the effects of a shop window display for Thai craft products on value perceptions and shopping intention, comparing between Thai and foreign tourists (Fig. 1). The following review aims to establish the theoretical basis, on which the conceptual

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framework of relevant variables and their relationships is developed (Fig. 1).

A. Window Display Relates to Shopping Decisions

The shop window display is an element of a store's atmosphere that affects consumers' behavior [3], [4]. A window display not only provides product information to consumers and defines the store's character [5], [6], but also gives the store a competitive advantage. There also have been reports that a good window display is likely to positively affect customers' shopping decisions [1]. For these reasons, marketers have been using window displays as a marketing tool to promote sales. Window displays' design elements are a mannequin, prop, lighting, color, background, composition, and graphic [7].

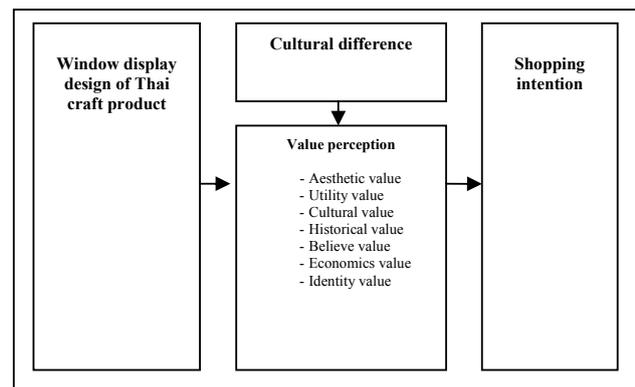


Fig. 1 Research Framework

B. Thai Craft Perceptions and Evaluation

Local Thai handicraft, such as houseware and kitchenware have a unique identity that has been passed along from ancient times [8]. Today, these local products and their marketing schemes have been continuously developed. Traditional and modern designs are both produced to satisfy domestic and overseas consumers. Before committing to buy a product, consumers usually evaluate it first [9]. Customers may assess its utility or its beauty, and it is usually easier for them to make a decision to buy a familiar or well-known product than an unfamiliar or lesser-known one such as a unique local craft. A few research studies have shown that customers are more likely to buy a local product when they recognize its function and appreciate its value.

C. Cross-Cultural Perceptions

Culture is another factor that makes people perceive the environment differently. Each individual accrues an

accumulated cultural background from living in a distinct environment. Modern researchers have widely adopted the concept and theory of cultural differences originated by [10] and [11].

According to the framework regarding cross-cultural perception and cognition proposed by [12], different cultures are separated broadly into two groups: western and eastern [12]-[14]. Different perceptions and cognitions between people from western and eastern cultures were studied by having participants draw and match pictures, describe the environment, and take photos of a person [14].

D.Environmental Behaviour and SOR Model

In architectural terms, an environment has a meaning and this meaning leads to a response. An environmental design should convey the meaning of the elements [15] inside it such that it will give rise to the desired response both regarding aesthetics and utility. Several research studies on sales environments have explained the relationship between consumers and the environment based on the stimuli organism response model or S-O-R model [2]-[4]. According to this model, consumers' behaviors stem from stimuli (product, service, physical environment, atmosphere, etc.) that create perceptions in the minds of the consumers [3], [4]. There have also been studies on physical environment evaluation to test people's perceptions of designs [16]-[18]. These studies have been conducted steadily in different contexts in efforts to explain the relationship between physical environment and people's behaviors.

To conclude, the result has shown that the physical environment is meaningful. The window display, a sales environment, can affect the perceptions and responses of consumers and cultural differences can affect their perceptions and responses as well. As mentioned, these variables (Table I) are interrelated; however, there is a relationship that still needs to be investigated. In the form of a research question, the question is, "how different do people from different cultures perceive and respond to a window display of local handicraft?"

As discussed earlier, this paper aims to investigate the effects of a shop window display for Thai craft products on value perceptions, comparing between Thai and foreign tourists. Elements that affect each variable of value perception will be classified.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was a quantitative study of cross-cultural perceptions of window displays.

The research question is how shop window displays for Thai craft products can differently affect value perceptions between Thai and foreign tourist. It consists of three important variables, namely window display for Thai craft products, value perceptions and Thai and foreign cultures.

Window display for Thai craft products means that a window display was shown of Thai craft product in a Thai shop in Thailand.

Value perception is measured by aesthetic value, utility

value, cultural value, historical value, believe value, economic value, and identity value. Thai and foreign tourists were defined by their nationality.

The sample groups were 56 Thai tourists and 44 foreign tourists; they gave responses via the Internet. The study is divided into four steps as follows.

TABLE I
VARIABLES OF WINDOW DISPLAY AND 10 PICTURES FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

No.	Picture	Picture	Elements
1			Mannequin
2			Size
3			Props
4			Lighting
5			Colour

TABLE II
SCALE MEASUREMENT FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

		5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5
1	Aesthetic value											
2	Utility value											
3	Cultural value											
4	Historical value											
5	Believe value											
6	Economics value											
7	Identity value											
8	Enter the shop											
9	Desire to purchase											

First, window displays and displayed items in shops and department stores in Thailand were surveyed. Then, the selected design elements (mannequin, size of shop window, props, lighting, and colour) were grouped on our object of study. Next, the five design elements were chosen for variables because they were proven to be able to evoke distinguishingly clear responses from respondents [19], [20].

Second, five pairs of pictorial models of window displays (a total of 10 pictures, shown in Table I) were created. Each pair differed only in one design element variable. One good reason the study is not conducted based on real window displays is that the design element variables in them could not be strictly controlled, and there could be many confounding variables.

Third, a questionnaire was created. It consists of 2 parts. The first part deals with personal information while the second part contains questions for the respondents to specify which picture of a pair of window display pictures they like and their level of preference. The score was on a semantic differential scale: 1 means lowest level of preference and 5 means the highest level of preference [21]. A score of 0 indicated that neither picture is preferred over the other. (Table II)

Fourth, the scores were statistically analyzed with mean and t-test analyses to find out whether people from different cultures perceived window displays differently. Lastly, the result was explained regarding each design element. By using said methodology, we expected to find out a definite answer to our research question.

IV. RESULTS

In order to answer the research question, there are two important steps. First is to explore responsive design elements of shop window displays which attracted both Thai and foreign tourists. The second step is to compare the significant differences of the value perceptions of each responsive design feature between Thai and foreign tourists. The value perception was divided into 7 indicators such as 1) aesthetic value 2) utility value 3) cultural value 4) historical value 5) belief value 6) economy value and 7) identity. Means were calculated for each indicator affected by each element of a shop window display. Also, each value of indicator was divided into Thai and foreign tourists to compare the value perceptions by using t-tests.

A. Design Features

The findings about what design features affected perceptions were that lighting was the most influential to both the Thais and foreign tourists.

For the foreign tourists, the second most influential feature was colour, followed by props, and background. The least influential was graphic and text. For the Thais, props were as influential as lighting, followed by colour, theme, and background, and the least influential were seasonal design and mannequin (Fig. 2).

As for the differences in their perceptions of design features, quantified by the T-Test of their responses, the Thais and the foreign tourists clearly perceived the use of text and graphics differently.

B. The Differences in Perceptions of Thai People and Foreign Tourists

As for the differences in their value perceptions, quantified by the T-Test of their responses, the Thais and the tourists clearly perceived the use shop window displays made of props, size, and colour differently.

The findings about how their value perceptions were affected by size were that the Thais and the tourists clearly had different perceptions about the use of the utility value (sig. 0.063), cultural value (sig. 0.085), believe value (sig. 0.095), economics value (sig. 0.049), identity value (sig. 0.081) (Fig. 3).

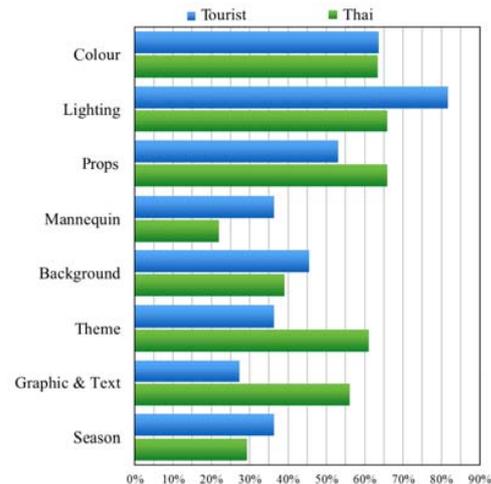


Fig. 2 Percentile of elements of window display influence Thai and foreign tourists

The findings about how their value perceptions were affected on the props variable were that the Thais and the tourists clearly perceived the use of cultural value (sig. 0.086) and historical value (sig. 0.010) differently (Fig. 4).

The findings about how their value perceptions were affected by the colour variable were that the Thais and the tourists clearly perceived the use of Aesthetic value (sig. 0.051), utility value (sig. 0.057), cultural value (sig. 0.064), historical value (sig. 0.032) and economics value (sig. 0.040) differently (Fig. 5).

As for the differences between Thai and foreign tourists in their perceptions of Identity, quantified by the T-Test statistic of their responses, these were non-significant (Fig. 6).

V. CONCLUSIONS

The research focuses on how window display design affects the perceptions of both Thai and foreign tourists. In the present study, only the window displays design of Thai craft products were focused on.

According to the study, it can be concluded that the window display design can reflect the perception of the cultural and historical value of tourists. Regarding design, lighting and colours turned out to be the two most influential factors for both Thai and foreign tourists. Apart from these two components, mannequins, the size of the window and props are features that tourists will take into account.

The results obtained from the study will significantly contribute to the development of window display design. Not limited to Thai craft stores, the results of the study could also be beneficial for designing window displays in different types of stores as well.

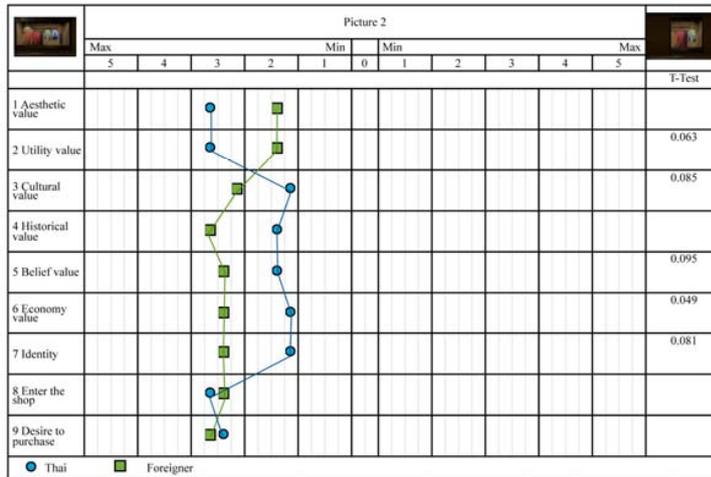


Fig. 3 Difference perception in size variable of shop window display

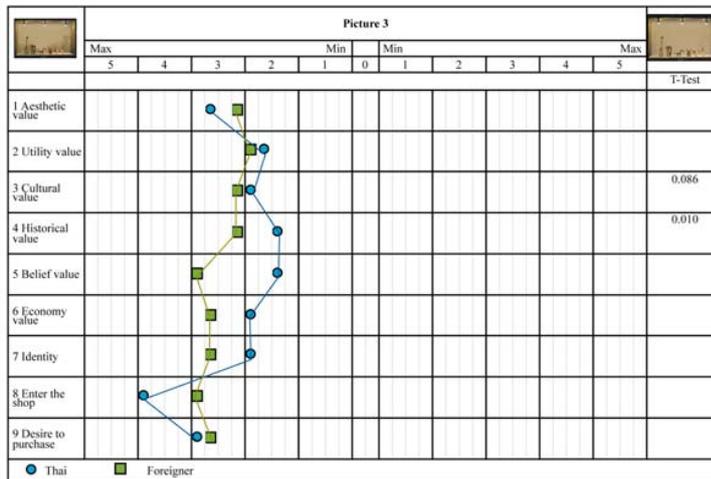


Fig. 4 Difference perception in props variable of shop window display

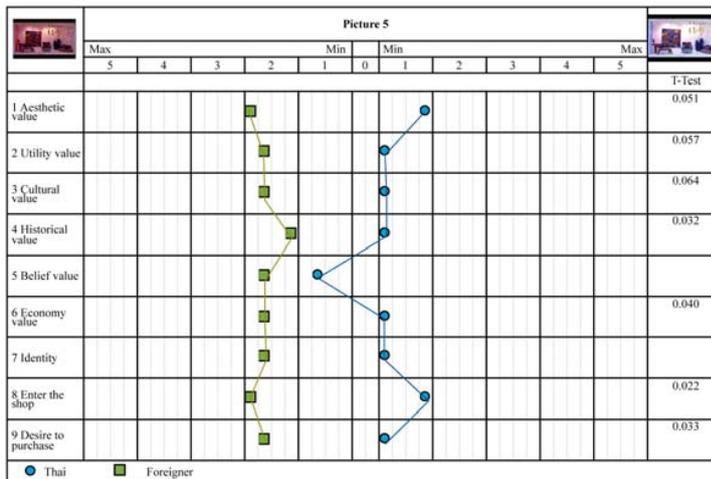


Fig. 5 Difference perception in colour variable of shop window display

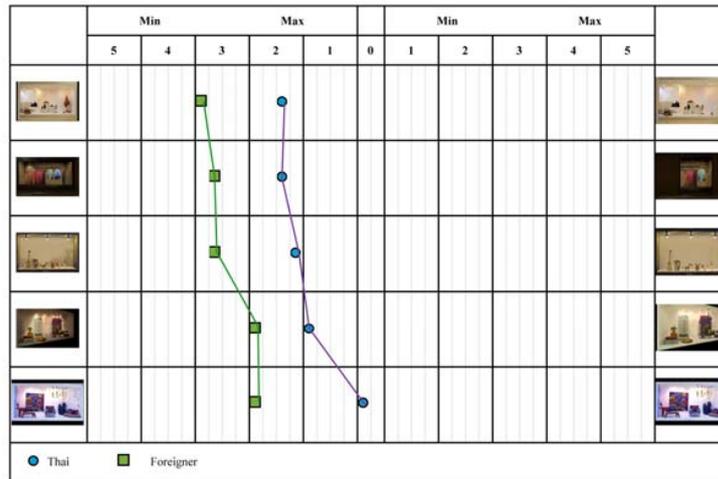


Fig. 6 Differences in their perceptions of design features

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