

# **FACTORS MOTIVATING CHINESE CONSUMERS TO PURCHASE THAI AMULETS IN BANGKOK**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In recent years, Thai Amulets began to enter the life of Chinese people and gradually formed a certain scale market. Now, more and more Chinese people come to Thailand to buy Thai Amulets.

This research mainly studies the Demographic Profile and Motivation factors (celebrity endorsement, online social media tool) of Chinese people who bought Thai Amulets in Thailand and its influencing of the purchase decision of Chinese consumers. This study collect data from the 100 Chinese consumers who ever purchase Thai Amulets in Bangkok. This research's independent variable included Demographic Profile (Age ,Gender ,Occupation ,Monthly Income ,Residence City in China ,Education Level and Belief) and Motivation Factors (Celebrity endorsement and Online social media tool) The dependent variable is Decision to purchase Amulets of Chinese in Bangkok. Data were analyzed descriptive and Chi-Square (X<sup>2</sup>-Test) and correlation analysis

This study found partial effect of demographic profile and the motivation factors on decision to purchase Thai Amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok

**Keywords:** Chinese consumers in Bangkok, Thai Amulet

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## **Introduction**

Since the establishment of ASEAN, the trade relations between China and Thailand have been growing year by year, The people's Republic of China is Thailand's largest export partner, accounting for 11.7 percent of Thailand's total exports. The people's Republic of China is Thailand's second largest import partner, accounting for 14.9% of Thailand's total imports , and the dissemination of culture has become more and more extensive. In recent years, more and more Chinese people choose to travel to Thailand, shopping, or study (Wikipedia). In 2015, 8 million of Chinese tourists travel to Thailand (Embassy of the people's public of China in the kingdom of Thailand, 2016) in 2016, the number of Chinese tourists arrived in Thailand is 8.77million. In 2017, 9 million Chinese tourists visited Thailand according to Gentlemen Marketing Agency.

Chinese outbound tourists went on 71.31 million person trips in the first half of 2018 (H1 2018), up by 15% over last year. This market is expected to maintain its double digit growth in the whole year of 2018. Thailand, Japan, Vietnam are among the most visited overseas destinations. (China Internet Watch)

Because of the spread of culture , some Thai TV dramas, Thai ornaments, Thai Amulets and so on are deeply loved by the Chinese, among which the Thai Amulets is undoubtedly the most concerned. However, due to the fact that the sales of the Thai Amulets have not yet formed a large-scale market in China, most of the sales are distributed on WeChat and Taobao, so it is impossible to provide the corresponding sales growth figures data.

Among these, the Thai amulets also appear frequently in Chinese life now. Chinese consumers learn about Thai Amulet through advertising, WeChat moments, newspapers, travel to Thailand, star effect and so on. Most consumers buy Thai Amulet because they want to make a fortune, want to change their destiny, and want to be healthy. And someone want to do whatever they want, but now many customers and consumers are young people. They buy Thai Amulet because they want luck, health, peach blossom, wisdom, money, power, etc.

Buddhism is the religion of the majority of Thai people. But in Thai life, people's beliefs reflect multiple faiths and cultures. The value of amulets is an example of the influence of different faiths in Thailand. When the Thais feel insecure because of economic worries or instability in their lives, amulets are one source of solace for them to bring back their confidence. Some receive positive outcomes from worshipping such amulets, and their popularity has greatly increased which adds value to such amulets. The author hopes to understand the reason why Chinese people buy Thai amulets through this study , Help the Chinese better understand the Thai amulets, and promote the Thai amulets trade between China and Thailand.

This study aims to test whether there are relationship between demographic profile, between motivation factors (i.e. celebrity endorsement and online social media tool) and the decision to purchase Thai Amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok. Therefore, this study proposed two hypotheses as follows:

H1: Demographic profile has effect on decision to purchase Thai amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok

H2a: Motivation factor (celebrity endorsement) has effect on decision to purchase Thai Amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok.

H2b: Motivation factor (online social media tools) has effect on decision to purchase Thai Amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok.

## Investigating constructs

This study aims to test whether there are relationship between demographic profile, between motivation factors (i.e. celebrity endorsement and online social media tool) and the decision to purchase Thai Amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok. The definitions of key terms in this study are described as follows:

- Motivation factors
  - Celebrity endorsements are used by countless businesses of all shapes and sizes as a marketing strategy. This paper also studied the consumers of Thai amulets through celebrity endorsements.
  - Online social media tool means “activities, practices and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media” In this study, Several Social media by the research included: Wechat, Taobao, Weibo and whatsapp.
- Demographic
  - Traditional demographic profiling has been centered around gathering information on large groups of people in order to identify common trends (GfK. 2016). This paper also studied the consumers of Thai amulets through demographic characteristics. This paper mainly studies customer characteristics through several aspects, such as Age, Gender, Occupation, Monthly income, Residence city in China, Education level, Belief.
- Purchase decision
  - Consumer behavior refers to the psychological characteristics and behavioral rules of consumers in the process of purchasing, using and dispositions of products and services. In this study , purchase decision by the research included: what, when, where, why, how

To future understand the relationship between demographic profile, motivation factors and purchase decision, the following relevant studies have been reviewed. Norazah (2014) Does celebrity credibility influence Muslim and non-Muslim consumers' attitudes toward brands and purchase intention? The study revealed that consumers are influenced by stars when they purchase goods.

Prasad (2016) Social media usage, electronic word of mouth and purchase-decision involvement. The study revealed that Social media usage have positive impact on purchase-decision involvement and online trust plays a vital mediating role in this context.

## Methodology

Population: consumers all Chinese who purchase Thai amulets in Thailand

Sample : Chinese who purchased Thai amulets in Bangkok

Sample number: 100 respondents

Sample size : Because the number of population is inexplicitness, the researcher use Taro Yamane table to calculate the appropriate sample size at 95% of confidence level, 0.05% sampling error.

Data collection method

This study collected 2 types of data which are:

1. Primary Data – using the questionnaire to collect the data from Thai amulets' Chinese customer in Bangkok
2. Secondary Data – using the documentary research to collect the data from text books, article and related research to develop the conceptual framework of the study.

Data analysis

1. Descriptive Statistic – Frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.
2. Inferential Statistics—Chi-Square was used to test the relationships between demographic profile, motivation factors and decision to purchase Amulets of Chinese in Bangkok. .The confidence level of 95% or  $< 0.05$  was adopted to test the hypotheses of the Study

## Results and Discussion

Chi-square analysis was used to test the hypothesis 1

### **H1: Demographic profile has effect on decision to purchase Thai amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok**

Demographic profile data described by the Age, Gender, Occupation, Monthly income, Residence Area in China, Education level.

This study found a partly support of H1 as follows:

**Table 1:** Result of testing relationship between demographic profile and Decision to purchase

	Gender	Age	Occupation	Monthly income	Education level	Belief	Residence city in China
Qa	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*	0.001*	0.19	0.001*	0.000*
Qb	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.042	0.000*	0.000*
Qc	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Qd	0.014*	0.000*	0.000*	0.093	0.026*	0.000*	0.000*
Qe	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.105	0.000*	0.000*
Qf	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.066	0.013	0.000*
Qg	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.04*	0.000*	0.000*
Qh	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.008*	0.001*	0.13	0.000*
Qi	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$  ("\*\*" means data is valid)

There was an effect between demographic profile and the decision to purchase Thai amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok, Table 1 showed that gender, age, occupation, monthly income and residence city have great effect on the decision to purchase, except

education level and belief have partial effects on purchase decision. Chi-square analysis was used to test the hypothesis 2a

**H2a: Motivation factors (celebrity endorsement ) has effect on Chinese consumers' Thai amulets purchasing decision in Bangkok**

**Online social media tool data described by the following questions:**

- Q1) They often focus on their favorite star and buy his or her clothes or accessories or not
- Q2) They usually like what their idol likes or not (e.g. Thai Amulets)
- Q3) Their favorite star's visit to Thailand prompted them to travel there or not.
- Q4) They think everything a star wears will become a trend and wear it makes them feel good or not
- Q5) Their idols purchase Thai accessories or not (e.g. amulets, Thai amulets)

This study found a partly support of H2a as follows:

**Table 2: Result of testing relationship between celebrity endorsement and Decision to purchase**

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$  ("\*" means data is valid)

Table2 showed that celebrity endorsement has partial effect on the decision to purchase Thai amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok.

**H2b: Motivation factors (online social media tool ) has effect on Chinese consumers'**

**Table 3: Result of testing relationship between online social media tool(Wechat) and Decision to purchase**

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Qa	0.000*	0,000	0.000*	0.000*	0.008*
Qb	0.000*	0.000*	0.101	0.34	0.744
Qc	0.000*	0.000*	0.339	0.047	0.052
Qd	0.008	0.004*	0.107	0.021	0.069
Qe	0.385	0.789	0.017	0.019	0.000*
Qf	0.198	0.392	0.957	0.042	0.000*
Qg	0.000*	0.000*	0.651	0.363	0.007
Qh	0.129	0.08	0.002*	0.507	0.000*
Qi	0.000*	0.000*	0.048	0.227	0.179

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$  (“\*” means data is valid)

**Table 4:** Result of testing relationship between online social media tool (Taobao) and Decision to purchase

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Qa	0.355	0.136	0.000*	0.351
Qb	0.182	0.756	0.000*	0.408
Qc	0.115	0.039*	0.000*	0.006*
Qd	0.913	0.609	0.371	0.218
Qe	0.025*	0.000*	0.989	0.28
Qf	0.004*	0.246	0.716	0.426
Qg	0.014*	0.481	0.000*	0.65
Qh	0.000*	0.405	0.587	0.17
Qi	0.907	0.000*	0.307	0.095
	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Qa	0.77	0.000*	0.000*	0.001*
Qb	0.149	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Qc	0.008*	0.023	0.942	0.000*
Qd	0.349	0.118	0.556	0.002*
Qe	0*	0.045*	0.129	0.621
Qf	0.598	0.027	0.005*	0.112
Qg	0.1	0.017*	0.083	0.000*
Qh	0.579	0.049*	0.261	0.55
Qi	0.000*	0.017*	0.638	0.000*

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$  (“\*” means data is valid)

**Table 5:** Result of testing relationship between online social media tool(Weibo) and Decision to purchase

	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
Qa	0.008	0.001*	0.103	0.000*
Qb	0.000*	0.022	0.000*	0.000*
Qc	0.000*	0.001*	0.079	0.000*
Qd	0.015*	0.205	0.874	0.125
Qe	0.104	0.036	0.000*	0.000*
Qf	0.542	0.005	0.000*	0.046
Qg	0.000*	0.504	0.001*	0.000*
Qh	0.032*	0.197	0.000*	0.001*
Qi	0.000*	0.157	0.329	0.499

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$  (“\*” means data is valid)

**Table 6:** Result of testing relationship between online social media tool (Whatsapp) and Decision to purchase

	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
Qa	0.004*	0.02*	0.011*	0.005*
Qb	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Qc	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*	0.003*
Qd	0.07	0.455	0.093	0.254
Qe	0.037	0.019	0.143	0.000*
Qf	0.082	0.319	0.763	0.913
Qg	0.000*	0.184	0.000*	0.001*
Qh	0.138	0.134	0.591	0.054
Qi	0.475	0.001*	0.000*	0.214

\*Level of significant  $\alpha = 0.05$  ("\*" means data is valid)

There was an effect between motivation factors ( online social media tool)and the decision to purchase Thai amulets of Chinese consumers in Bangkok, Table 5 and 6 showed social media tool( weibo and whatsapp) have strong effect on the purchase decision, Table 3 and 4 showed social media tool (wechat and Taobao) have partial effect on the purchase dicision.

### Implication of the study

1. From the study, the majority of respondents chose to purchase Thai buddha amulets, and most of them decided to purchase a Thai Amulets for their marriage. According to the study, most of the respondents who purchased Thai Amulets were 18 to 24 years old, so choosing some Thai buddha amulets for marriage had a competitive advantage in the market, and the Thai Amulets for sale needed to look good outside because consumers were young.
2. From the study, the majority of respondents were more affected by wechat and Taobao when deciding to purchase an Thai amulets, but Weibo and WhatsApp was found to show least effect on purchasing decision of customers compare to other onlion social media tools. As a result, businesses using Wechat and Taobao channels when marketing Thai Amulets can achieve greater results
3. Compared with other motivation factors, celebrity endorsement has the least effect on customer purchasing decision. The results show that customers do not seem to believe that the celebrity endorsement is an important factor in the purchase of Thai Amulets. Therefore, the marketing of Thai Amulets should not focus on the celebrity endorsement.

### Limitations and Recommendations for Future Study

The future study may replicate this study and extend sampling frame to other districts in different city, such as Pattaya, Chiang Mai. The larger sample size may help to increase the explanation power of the finding.

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