

ปัจจัยที่มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อรถมอเตอร์ไซด์บิ๊กไบค์ ของคนไทยในจังหวัดภูเก็ต

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาปัจจัยที่มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อรถมอเตอร์ไซด์บิ๊กไบค์ของคนไทยในจังหวัดภูเก็ต เป็นการศึกษาเชิงปริมาณ ข้อมูลถูกจัดเก็บโดยการใช้แบบสอบถาม ใช้เวลาเก็บข้อมูลในเดือนเมษายน 2560 ในงานภูเก็ตไบค์วีคครั้งที่ 23 จำนวนผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามเป็นคนไทยทั้งหมดจำนวน 150 คน เป็นผู้ซึ่งกำลังใช้มอเตอร์ไซด์บิ๊กไบค์ขนาดเครื่องยนต์ 250 ซีซีขึ้นไป ผลจากการสำรวจพบว่า รายได้เฉลี่ยของคนไทยผู้ซื้อรถมอเตอร์ไซด์บิ๊กไบค์อยู่ระหว่าง 30,001-50,000 บาทต่อเดือน คนไทยในจังหวัดภูเก็ตไม่เพียงแต่ซื้อมอเตอร์ไซด์บิ๊กไบค์เพราะความสะดวกในการเดินทางไปทำงาน แต่ยังซื้อเพื่อการเดินทางท่องเที่ยว มอเตอร์ไซด์ขนาด 650 ซีซีเป็นรุ่นที่คนไทยในจังหวัดภูเก็ตเป็นที่ยอดนิยมที่สุด ยี่ห้อคาวาซากิเป็นยี่ห้อที่ได้รับความนิยมมากที่สุด มอเตอร์ไซด์ทรงสปอร์ตเป็นรูปแบบที่ต้องการซื้อมากที่สุด รูปลักษณ์ของมอเตอร์ไซด์มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อมากที่สุด และสาธารณรัฐประชาธิปไตยประชาชนลาวเป็นประเทศที่ได้รับความสนใจสูงที่สุดที่ผู้ตอบแบบสอบถาม

สนใจจะไปท่องเที่ยว งานวิจัยพบว่าความชื่นชอบในรถมอเตอร์ไซด์ในประเทศไทยเปลี่ยนไปอย่างชัดเจน คนไทยเริ่มซื้อมอเตอร์ไซด์ที่มีขนาดใหญ่ขึ้นนอกจากต้องการใช้เดินทางในชีวิตประจำวันแล้ว ยังมีเหตุผลเพื่อการเดินทางท่องเที่ยวอีกด้วย งานวิจัยนี้มีประโยชน์กับตัวแทนจำหน่ายมอเตอร์ไซด์บิ๊กไบค์ ธุรกิจการบริการด้านการท่องเที่ยว สำนักงานการท่องเที่ยวแห่งประเทศไทยสาขาภูเก็ต และสามารถนำไปพัฒนายุทธศาสตร์การท่องเที่ยวด้วยมอเตอร์ไซด์ภายในจังหวัดและภูมิภาค

คำสำคัญ: มอเตอร์ไซด์บิ๊กไบค์; การเดินทาง; พฤติกรรมการซื้อ

Factors Affecting the Decision to Buy a Big Bike Motorcycle of Thai People in Phuket

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Abstract

The research aimed to study the factors that affect the purchase of big bike motorcycles by Thais in Phuket province. It is quantitative research, where data were collected through questionnaires during April 2017 in the 23rd Phuket Bike Week 2017. 150 Thai respondents who are using motorcycles of 250cc or more answered the questionnaires. The findings demonstrate that the average income of a Thai who buys a big bike is between 30,001-50,000 baht per month. Thais do not only decide to buy a big bike for convenience in commuting around the city but also for touring purposes. The 650cc motorcycle is the most popular for Thais; the Kawasaki brand is the most preferred, and Sport-style motorcycle is the most sought after. For Thais, the features are the most significant items to be considered when making a buying decision. Most respondents are looking for touring abroad and the most interesting destination for them is the Lao People's Democratic Republic. As

a result, the motorcycle preference in Thailand has changed significantly. Thais start to buy bigger motorcycles for traveling purposes rather than mere commuting to work which is a basic need. Traveling overseas with a motorcycle is becoming more attractive for Thai motorcyclists. The implications are of significance for motorcycle dealers, hospitality and tourism related businesses, and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket Office to better understand these rising trends and formulate the motorcycle tourism strategies that will benefit the tourism industry within the province and region.

Keywords: Big Bike Motorcycle; traveling; Buying Behavior

Introduction

Big Bike is defined as a motorcycle with an engine of capacity of 250cc or more. As a consequence of globalization in commerce, Thai people are beginning to use this breath-taking machine not only for commuting around the city but also for traveling to destinations both domestics and overseas, as it provides a feeling of independence, friendship, enjoyment, and excitement.

Relevant Background

At present, there are very few studies which focus on Big Bikes in Thailand. This interesting vehicle is appearing on the streets of Thailand with increasing frequently. However, in Thailand the study about this new phenomenon is still challenging and unexplored academically. Therefore, related foreign researches and articles were reviewed and studied in order to better understand this new phenomenon which increasingly leads to a number of commercial events in the country such as the annual Motor Expo and Motorcycle events in different provinces.

Big Bike Motorcycles

A motorcycle is a two-or-three-wheel powered vehicle designed for on-road, off-road, or dual-purpose (on-and-off road) use (Morris, 2009). Kresnak (2008) suggested that Big Bike is a name for a 250 cc or more motorcycle, and which is widely recognized in six categories: cruiser, sport, touring, standard or naked, dual-purpose, and dirt bike. However, in this study we focus merely on Big Bike (on-road); thus dirt-bike will not be included as it is off-road.



Standard or Naked motorcycles are versatile, general purpose street motorcycle (Maher and Greisler, 1998). They are recognized primarily by their upright riding position,

partway between the reclining posture of the cruisers and the forward leaning sport bikes (Domino, 2009). Foot pegs are below the rider and handlebars are high enough to not force the rider to reach far forward, placing the shoulders above the hips in a natural position. Maher and Greisler (1998) suggested that Standards are often recommended to beginner motorcyclists because of their flexibility, relatively low cost, and moderate engine-size.

Standards usually do not come with fairings or windscreens, or if they have them, they are relatively small. Standard is often a synonym for naked, a term that became popular in the 1990s in response to the proliferation of fully faired sport bikes.



Cruisers are styled after American machines from the 1930s to the early 1960s, such as those made by Harley-Davidson, Indian, and Excelsior-Henderson.

Harley-Davidsons largely define the cruiser category, and large-displacement V-twin engines are the norm, although other engine configurations and small to medium displacements also exist. Their engines are tuned for low-end torque, making them less demanding

to ride because it is not necessary to shift gear frequently to accelerate or maintain control. Cruisers are sometimes called "custom" even in the absence of aftermarket modifications.

The riding position places the feet forward and the hands are up relatively high, so that the spine is erect or leaning back slightly. At low to moderate speeds, cruisers are more comfortable than other styles, but riding for long periods at freeway speeds can lead to fatigue from pulling back on the handlebars to resist the force of the wind against the rider's chest. Cruisers have limited cornering ability due to a lack of ground clearance.



Sport motorcycles

emphasize speed, acceleration, braking, and cornering on paved roads, typically at the expense of comfort and fuel economy in comparison to less specialized motorcy-

cles. Because of this, there are certain design elements that most motorcycles of this type will share. Sport bikes have comparatively high performance engines resting inside a lightweight frame. Inline-four engines dominate the sport bike category, with V-twins having a significant presence, and nearly every other engine configuration appearing in small numbers at one time or another. The combination of these elements helps maintain structural integrity and chassis rigidity. Braking systems combine higher performance brake pads and multi-piston calipers that clamp onto oversized vented rotors. Suspension systems are advanced in terms of adjustments and materials for increased stability and durability. Most

sport bikes have fairings, often completely enclosing the engine, and windscreens that effectively deflect the air at very high speeds, or at least reduce overall drag.

Sport bikes have high foot pegs that position the legs closer to the body to improve ground clearance when cornering, and a long reach to the hand controls, which positions the body and center of gravity forward, above the fuel tank. The rider leans forward into the wind, the force of which can comfortably support the rider's weight at speeds near 100 mph (160 km/h), but at lower speeds leaves too much weight on the arms and wrists, causing fatigue.



Touring motorcycles

are specifically designed to excel at covering long distances. They have large-displacement engines, fairings and screens that offer good weather and wind

protection, large-capacity fuel tanks for long ranges between fill-ups, and a relaxed, upright seating position. Passenger accommodation is excellent and expansive luggage space is the norm for this class. Large touring bikes are sometimes called dressers, especially those that are based on a cruiser platform. Such bikes can have wet weights of 850–900 lb (390–410 kg) and top 1,300–1,400 lb (590–640 kg) fully loaded with a rider, passenger, and gear.



Sport touring motorcycles combine attributes of sport bikes and touring motorcycles. The rider posture is less extreme than a sport bike, giving greater long-distance comfort. Accommodation

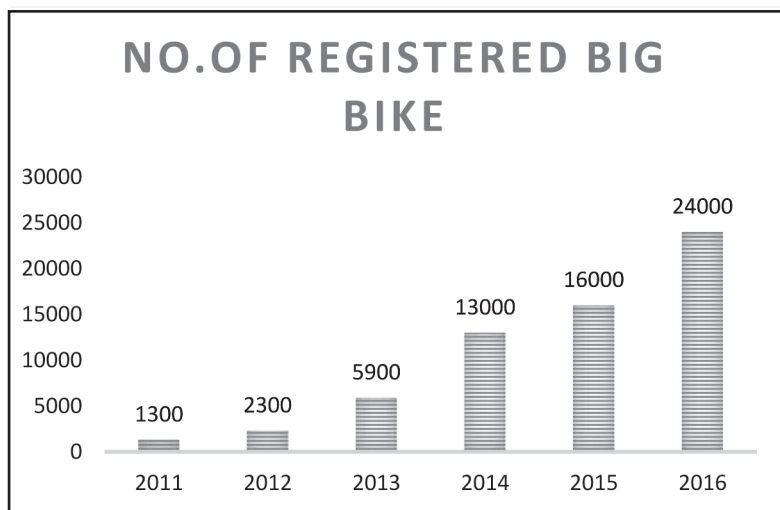
for a passenger is superior to a sport bike as well, along with luggage capacity. Being lighter, at 550–720 lb (250–330 kg) wet, than a pure touring bike and often having racier engines, suspensions, and brakes, sport tourers corner better and are more at home being aggressively ridden on curvy canyon roads. The distinction between touring and sport touring is not always clear as some manufacturers will list the same bike in either category in different markets. The Honda ST1300 Pan-European, for example, is listed by Honda as a sport touring motorcycle in the USA and Australia, but as a touring motorcycle in Europe.

Thailand and Big Bike Motorcycle Trend

AP Honda is one of the leading motorcycle dealers in the country. Mr. Suchart Arunsaengroj, CEO AP Honda Limited gave an interview for Thansettakij newspaper and indicated that the trend seems to be very positive with a sales volume in 2013 for all brands of about five to six thousand units, but in 2014 sales volume was more than 13,000 units which is more than 100% growth. Honda sold about 3,000 units or about 20% market share. Mr. Suchart suggested further that even while the economy is decelerating, the Big Bike market trend continues

to thrive.

Chart 1 Registered big bikes in Thailand 2011-2016



Source: Department of Transport, 2017

The diagram shows that the number of big bikes registered in Thailand has increased sharply since 2011 when it was only 1,300, but 4 years later the number has risen to 16,000 which is more than ten times higher. This shows that the popularity of big bikes has grown fantastically among Thai people.

Phuket and Big Bike Motorcycle Trend

As yet, there isn't any research that has studied big bike ownership in Phuket province. Noticeably, there are new big bike dealers such as Triumph, Harley Davidson, Suzuki, Ducati, Honda, Yamaha, and Kawasaki opening in this province.. There are more big bike acces-

sory stores opening in every corner of the island. Big bikes are found easily on the street more and more frequently. Furthermore, Phuket organizes a Phuket Bike Week as a tourism event that attracts thousands of tourists from different countries in both Asia and Europe. The logo of the 2017 Phuket Bike Week¹ held during 14-16 April 2017 at Patong beach is shown below. 10,000 motorcycles and 50,000 visitors from 30 countries are expected to participate (Phuketbikeweek.com, 2017).



Picture 1 Logo of the 23rd Phuket Bike Week 2017

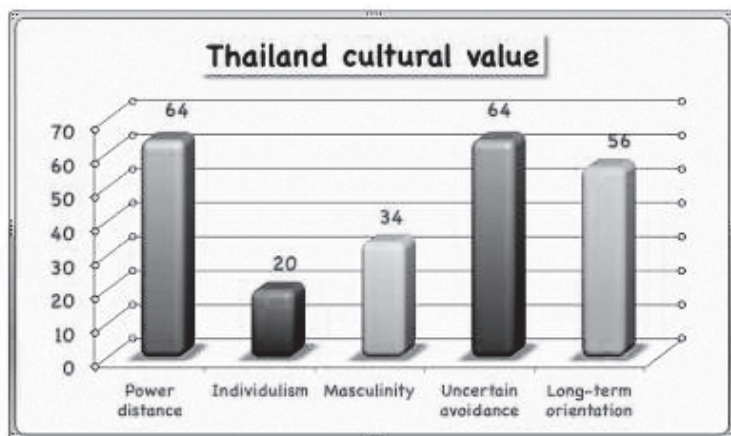
Thai Culture & Buying Behavior Theory

Thailand is a highly collectivist country where people prefer to group and socialize closely. According to Hofstede's Cultural Dimension, its IDV (Individualism Index) is only 20 which means that Thai people enjoy being a part of group and closely related rather than staying alone. Therefore, any product which is able to create the feeling of alliance among members would attract Thai buyers. Being recognized by others is also a part of collectivist society. Thus if there

¹ Phuket Bike week is a biggest annual motorcycle event in the South of Thailand that expects riders from over 30 countries. It began in 1995 when 300 riders gathered at Friendship beach in Rawai.

is a product that would bring attention from others' eyes, it will be considered as interesting for a Thai. The following chart shows Hofstede Cultural Dimension Index of Thailand.

Chart 2 Hofstede Culture Dimension Index of Thailand



Source: Hofstede, 2012

With Power Distance Index (PDI =64), Thailand is a hierarchical country. In the buying context, whenever Thai people decide to buy something, suggestions from older people are always considered. People who are older or have more experiences in the group are valuable to the young. For example, in Thai society, parents play an important role in a buying decision. They tend to influence their children's buying. Children must listen to what they say and most of the time they must obey. If they do not listen to their parents' advice, as a Buddhist they will feel guilty.

As mentioned above, Thailand is a collectivist country, and in the buying context. The product purchase decision is affected by the

group to which the buyer belongs. The buyer must listen to the suggestions and opinions from people such as friends, colleagues, relatives, family members and so on before making any decision. Even buying a product in order to be a part of the group is a great idea in Thailand as 'WE culture'. However, making a buying decision in Thailand sometimes takes time to ensure that it is the correct one.

With a Masculinity Index (MI=34), Thailand is a feminine country. In the buying context, feminine societies tend to buy things modestly and humbly. In addition, many times people lack self-confidence when buying a product. As a feminine country buyers always look for good service as a first priority. Good after sales service is also needed. As a result, Thai people worry about whether the seller will provide them with an efficient service whenever they need it. Thais also talk about how good the after sale services of a particular product may be. If their friends have experienced any uncomfortable experiences, they could change their mind and buy a competitor brand. In a collectivist country, word of mouth affects people's decisions.

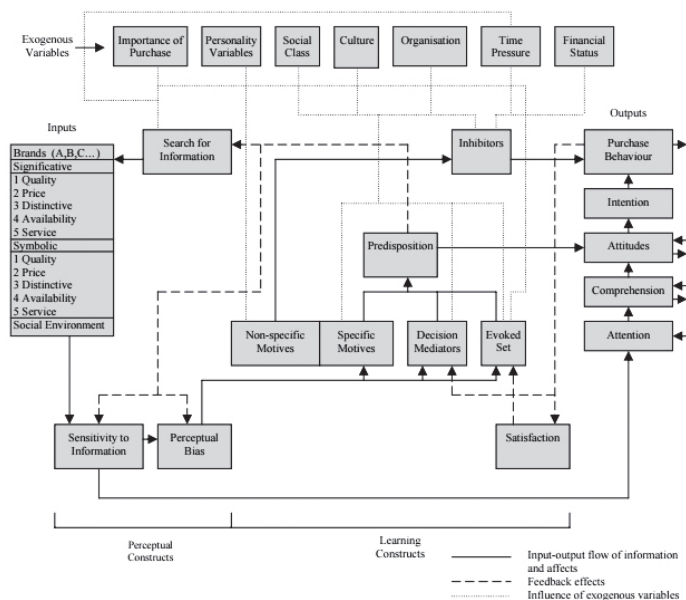
With an Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI=64), Thailand is a country that avoids uncertainty. In the buying context, a country that has a high UAI is always concerned about product reliability. Thai people love buying brands with which they are familiar and which they trust, in order to prevent any future worry. Changing brand is not easy to do for Thais as in a high UAI country; people are concerned about what is unknown. Therefore, Thais prefer to buy the same brand and stick with it. Whenever a new brand tries to compete in the market, it is not easy to change the Thai buyer's attitude – but it is possible!

With a Long-term Orientation Index (LTO=56), Thailand is a long-term oriented country. In the buying context, Thai people expect the product they buy to last a long time. Many TV commercials show products that have been sold since their grandparents' generation and still can be bought today. This marketing strategy shows that Thai customers believe in a brand that can pass from generation to generation. Moreover, buying a product that can bring them friends is interesting because, as a collectivist country, Thai people love to make new friends and socialize with a big group. This is a reason why many products (such as big bikes) regularly create events for full- or half-day trips to an attraction.

Buying Behavior

Solomon et.al.(2006, p.6) "Consumer behavior is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires." From the statement, understanding what affects purchasing is significant and therefore, the researcher further researches and discloses the following theory;

Diagram 1 Theory of Buying Behavior



Source: Howard and Sheth 1969, Loudon and Della Bitta 1993

The author used the theories of buying behavior of Howard and Sheth (1969) and Loudon and Della (1993) to identify the factors that affect buying and found that there are seven significant ones; importance of purchase, personality, social class, culture, social organization, time pressure and financial status.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate factors affecting Thai purchases of big bike motorcycles.
2. To understand the effect of national culture on the buying habits of Thais.

Research Questions

1. What factors affect the purchases of big bikes by Thais in Phuket province?
2. How do buyers use their big bike? Does the Thai cultural background influence their preferences?
3. How can dealers in Phuket improve their image, products, services and advice to prospective customers?

Research Scope

The study took place in Phuket town and Patong Beach (where the 23rd Phuket Bike Week event took place) as well as at some motorcycle dealer stores. The event was held in these two areas only. The researcher collected data from Thai big bikers living in Phuket. Thais who came to Phuket as temporary visitors were not included in this study.

Research Methodology

This research used purposive sampling with Thai 150 participants. The researcher selected only respondents who are Thai and living in Phuket. In Thailand, big bikes are not registered separately from common motorcycles at the Office of Transport in Phuket. The researcher could therefore not identify the exact number of big bikes in Phuket (population is unknown). As a result, the researcher decided to choose 150 as the sample size ($N=150$), divided equally between the Phuket Town and Patong areas (75 from each). Then the data were analysed using Microsoft Excel and the results described in tables and charts. The questionnaire was divided into three parts as shown below;

Part One: General profile of the respondent

Part Two: Factors that affect buying decision.

Part Three: Travel with motorcycle

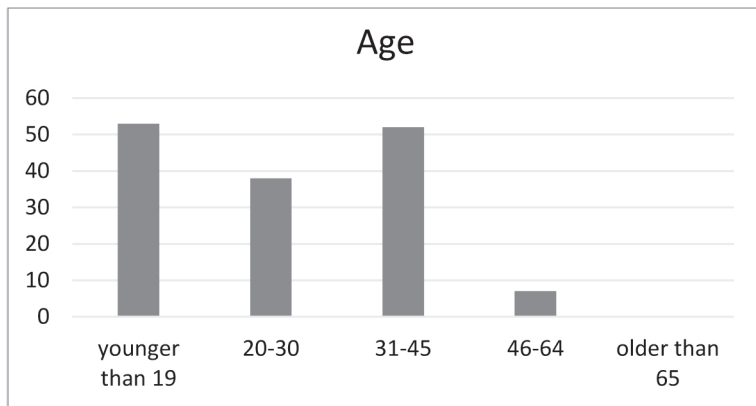
Results

After the data were analyzed automatically by Google Form program, the following nine bar charts were produced to show statistics of interest from the answers of the 150 participants (145 male 5 female). The 1st chart is Participant's age, 2nd is Participant's profession, 3rd is Participant's income, 4th is Brand Preference, 5th Style Preference, 6th Engine CC Preference, 7th Buying Reasons, and lastly, 8th Brand Awareness, and 9th Preferred Country to visit by motorcycle.

Table 1 Participant's Age

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
younger than 19	53	35.3%
20-30	38	25.3%
31-45	52	34.7%
46-64	7	4.7%
older than 65	0	0
Total	150	100%

Chart 3 Participant's Age

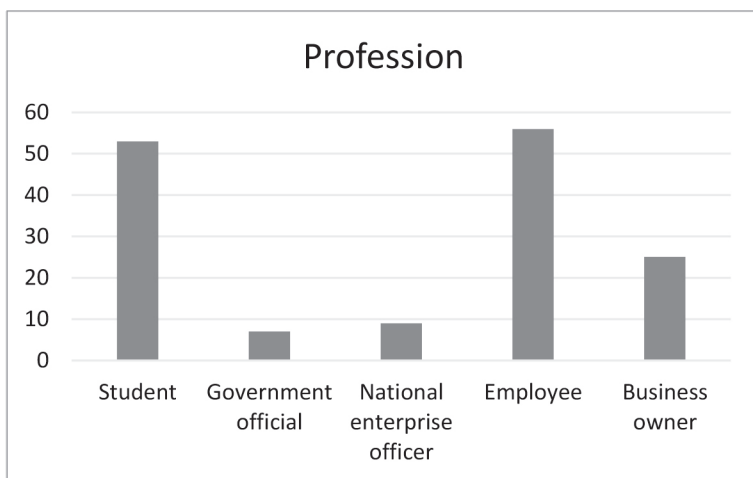


From the statistic, it shows that people who are younger than 19 years old and those who are 31-45 years old are two main groups of buyers. In contrast, those who are older than 65 could not be found. Interestingly, there are 53 people (35.3% of participants) who are younger than 19 years of age. They are able to own a big bike even though they are not working, since their parents bought the motorcycles for them.

Table 2 Participant's Profession

Career	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Student	53	35.3%
Government official	7	4.7%
National enterprise officer	9	6.0%
Employee	56	37.3%
Business owner	25	16.7%
Total	150	100%

Chart 4 Participant's Profession



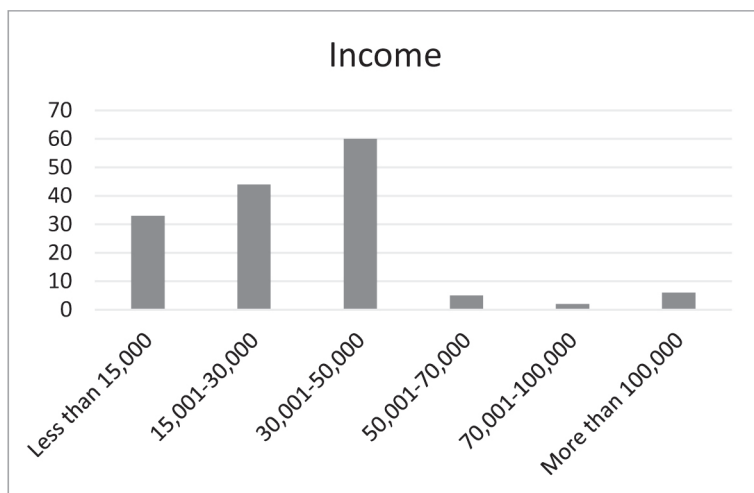
Referring to Chart One, 53 people or 35.3% are younger than 19 years of age. Researcher found that they are students from high school. And 56 people or 37.3% are employees. The researcher believes that these people are able to afford to buy a big bike as they have sufficient monthly salary. After work, these employees may have enough free time to ride.

Table 3 Participant's Income

Income THB/month	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 15,000	33	22.0%
15,001-30,000	44	29.3%
30,001-50,000	60	40.0%
50,001-70,000	5	3.3%
70,001-100,000	2	1.3%

Income THB/month	No. of Respondents	Percentage
More than 100,000	6	4.0%
Total	150	100%

Chart 5 Participant's Income

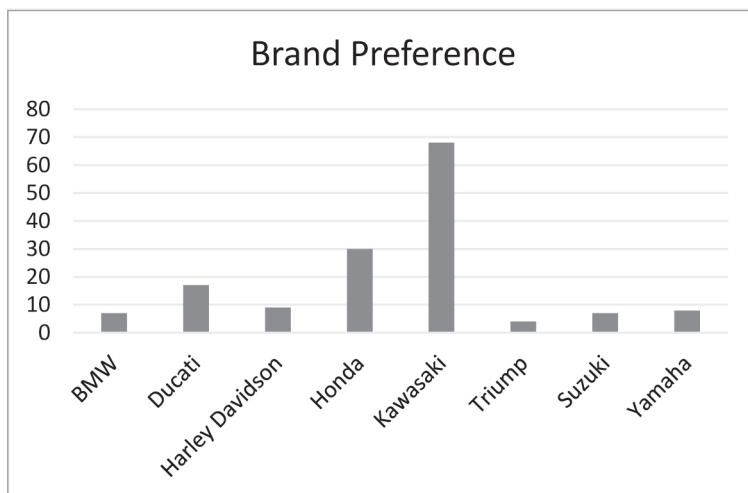


Participants who earn 30,001-50,000 baht per month are the major group who bought big bike or 60%. Then 15,001-30,000 baht per month or 29.3% participants ranks as the second. Next people who earn less than 15,000 baht; there are 33 people or 22% in this category. This shows that people who earn less than 50,000 baht but more than 30,000 baht is the largest segment of the sample.

Table 4 Brand Preference

Brand	No. of Respondents	Percentage
BMW	7	4.7%
Ducati	17	11%
Harley Davidson	9	6%
Honda	30	20%
Kawasaki	68	45.3%
Triump	4	2.7%
Suzuki	7	4.7%
Yamaha	8	5.3%
Total	150	100%

Chart 6 Brand Preference

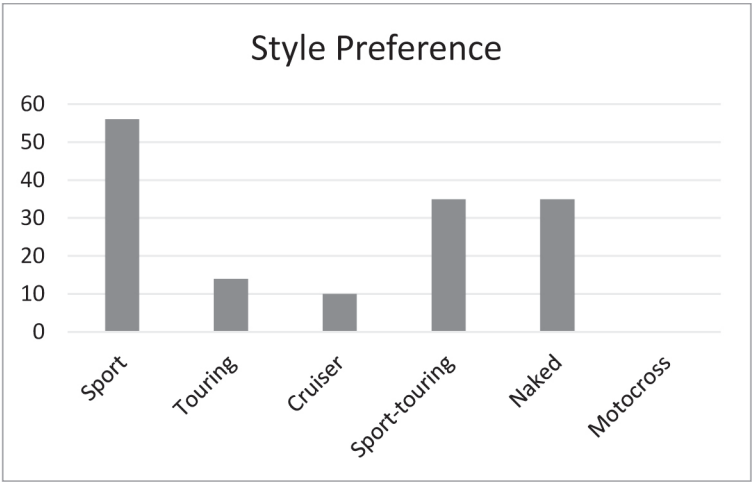


From the statistic, Kawasaki is the most popular brand among Thais; there were 68 participants or 45.3% are using them. Honda, with 30 participants or 20% was the second most popular brand, and Ducati is the third most popular brand with 17 participants or 11%.

Table 5 Style Preference

Style	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Sport	56	37.3%
Touring	14	9.3%
Cruiser	10	6.7%
Sport-touring	35	23.3%
Naked	35	23.3%
Motocross	0	0
Total	150	100%

Chart 7 Style Preference

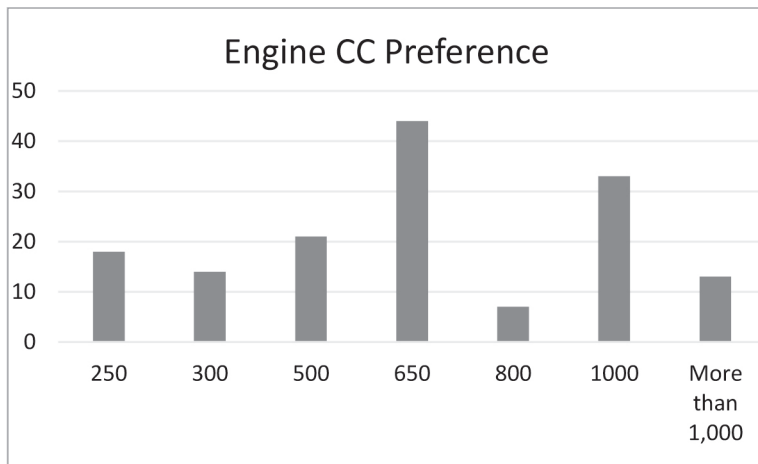


From the statistics, the Sport style is the most preferred style for Thais. There are 56 participants or 37.3% who selected this style. However the Sport-touring and the Naked styles are the second most preferred styles with 35 participants or 23.3% choosing each of these styles.

Table 6 Engine CC Preference

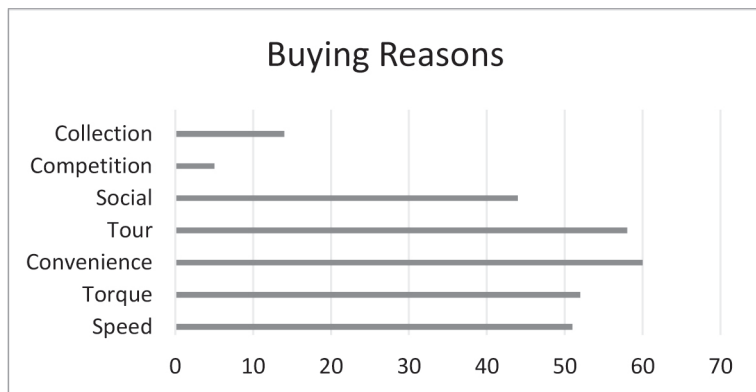
CC	No. of Respondents	Percentage
250	18	12%
300	14	9.3%
500	21	14%
650	44	29.3%
800	7	4.7%
1000	33	22%
More than 1,000	13	8.7%
Total	150	100%

Chart 8 Engine CC Preference



From Chart Six, 650 CC engine displacement is the most wanted by Thais. 44 participants or 29.3% selected this engine. Second is 1,000 CC preferred by 33 participants or 22%. Then 500 CC is the third most preferred engine displacement; 21 participants or 14% prefer this engine size.

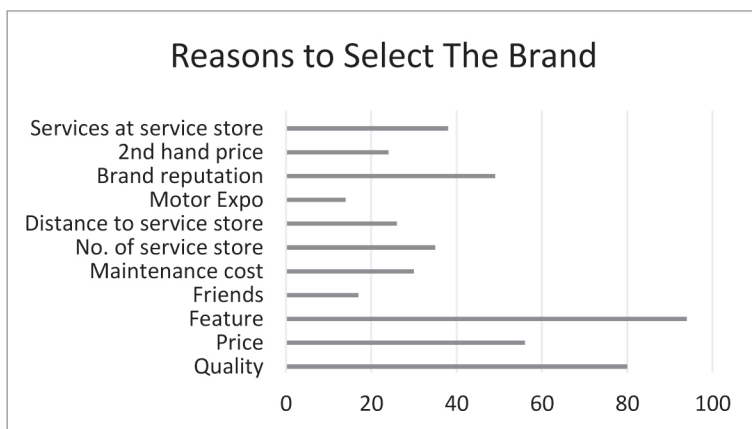
Chart 9 Buying Reasons



From the statistics, the convenience is number one reason why Thais buy big bikes. Touring and Torque are the second and third most important reasons. Surprisingly, one of the reasons that Thais buy big bikes is social relations, which is quite a different type of reason from others which describe the motorcycle itself but this reason stems from cultural effect as Thailand is a highly collectivist nation. Thais love to stay together. Many participants bought big bikes because they want to travel with their friends in a group and have the feeling of belonging to that group.

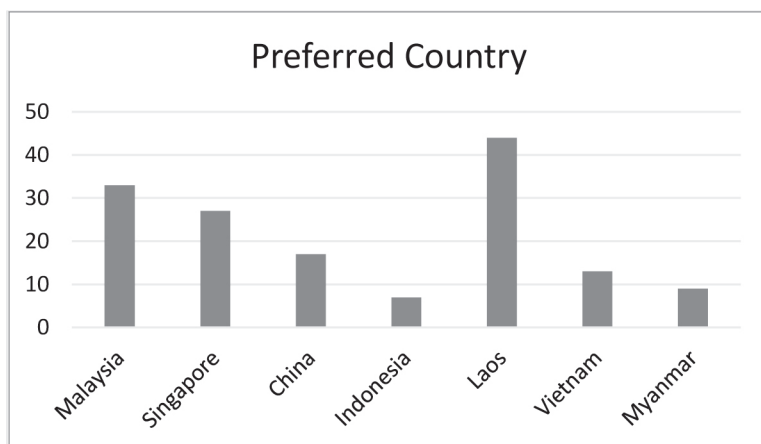
Furthermore, the data shows that there is a group of participants who bought big bikes for competition. This is interesting for further study relating to building a motorcycle tourism strategy for Phuket province. To have an International Circuit like the Chang International Circuit (CIC) at Buriram United could be highly attractive as long term investment to attract tourists. It could create a new landmark of Phuket and might generate high income for the province in the future.

Chart 10 Brand Awareness



From Chart Eight, we can say that Thai participants bought their big bikes because of the outlook for the motorcycle. In Asia, people tend to judge things by their features, since they believe that they can represent themselves through these items. Each motorcycle model shows the character of the owner. For example people who ride Honda are usually company officers who dress nicely, politely, and are well-organized. On the other hand, Kawasaki riders have high confidence, strong minds, are self motivated and masculine in appearance.

Chart 11 Preferred Countries for visits by motorcycle



From the chart, more Thais aim to travel with their motorcycle to Laos rather than other neighboring countries.. Future research will find the reasons why Laos is so popular among Thais in Phuket.

Discussion

From the study, there were more men who are looking to purchase big bikes than women. People who are working in a private company tend to be more interested to buy a Big Bike than any other categories of participants. Interestingly the features of the motorcycle affect the buying decision of the respondents the most. As Thailand is a collective society, people tend to be attracted to show off to others. Therefore to ride a eye-catching vehicle seem to be a significant option for Big bike motorcyclist. Obviously, the Sport-Style Motorcycle seems to be the favoured option for buyers as it looks extremely attractive. For the respondents, 650 cc provides adequate engine displacement for them as it is not too weak nor too powerful.

Traveling to other destinations is the stated main intention of buyers, as traveling activity seems to be more popular among Thai people wherever there is a road that a rider can access. Interestingly the People's Republic of Laos becomes the leading destination for riders to visit. Thailand and Laos have much in common such as language and culture, and therefore it might be easier for riders to visit. In addition, the distance is not too great.

Conclusion

Thai Motorcyclists tend to purchase bigger engine motorcycle not only for commuting to and from work, but also for traveling to further destinations, both domestic and foreign. Motorcycles with big engine displacement or Big Bike motorcycles have become a fashionable trend in Thailand. We will be able to witness this trend more frequently on the roads of this country. Without question, there

will be more brands and more models appearing throughout the country in the future. More Motorcycle Events will be organized to attract those new riders who are looking for a Big Bike or events for those riders. This phenomena could be a successful tourism strategy if the Thai Government recognizes and uses it effectively as a tourist attraction such as Phuket Bike Week which is organized annually and generates millions of baht revenue for the province.

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