

## FOREWORD

Looking ahead for 2024, the world does not look very bright, with the geopolitics of the conflicts in Russia-Ukraine and Palestine-Israel in the Middle East, just to name a few. Additionally, 2024 will see several general elections including Taiwan in January, and USA in November. Whatever the outcome of these elections, each has a potential global effect both politically and economically. At the same time, we are faced with the strong rise in AI and Chat GPT. Are we humans going to be replaced by an AI able to outsmart human beings? Or will we continue using AI as a tool? Read more about how AI will shape the future in <https://www.gatesnotes.com/The-Year-Ahead-2024>. Another prediction from the Economist, foresees 10 global trends in 2024, with the top 3 showing a similar prediction: the state of democracy; growing conflict and disorder; and coping with significant global challenges, such as climate change and rapid technological progress (<https://www.economist.com/the-world-ahead/2023/12/07/the-world-ahead-2024>).

At the national level, at the closing of 2023, we Thais have witnessed a mixture of notable achievements and significant drawbacks. On the bright side, Thai ‘soft power’ seems to acclaim global recognition, such as new Thai food dishes on the world’s top listed, Lisa Black Pink as a world top singer, impressive victories of the women’s volleyball team, the increasing popularity of Muay Thai, and more. However, two drawbacks that have been hurting Thailand are PISA scores and the low performance in English proficiency tests among Thai students. These two continued indicators have observably caused adverse effects in foreign investment decisions in Thailand over recent years. This is one strong reason why the ABAC Journal upholds education (or true learning) and English studies research as an essential backup bi-ingredient for the success of business leaders and entrepreneurs in this modern digital world. Well aware of these, I leave it to all involved and for those of us concerned, to ponder how to overcome these challenges.

For the ABAC Journal, it is definitely not an overstatement to say that the year 2023 has been a phenomenal year. According to the newly released TCI report in January 2024, qualitatively we continue to secure our place in Q1 (in Literature and Literary Theory) while quantitatively achieving 100% (62 articles) published as committed. Remarkably, the ABAC Journal has recently acquired a score of 2.99 in the FWCI (Field-Weighted Citation Index), which is considered world class, and a significant jump from the past CiteScore of 0.8 in 2022 to the present 2.2 (SciVal, as of January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024). This is essentially due to the outstanding performance of our most recent Special Issue (October-December 2023) which featured 22 high quality articles. After the launch of this issue, by mid-December 2023, we witnessed a sky-high citation tracking score, the highest in the history of the ABAC Journal. This remarkable achievement would never have happened without the initiative, commitment, and dedication of our Guest Editors, Guest Editorial Board, and valued contributors. **Hats off to you all.** This is very encouraging and we are highly motivated to continue our upwards progress. Last but not least, we honestly and deeply thank TCI, TSRI, and Scopus, for their continued constructive guidance, financial support, and all the training & sharing of ideas and experiences from the TCI Team and all editors in this inspiring project.

On this auspicious occasion, I am honored to announce our new Associate Editor:

– Asst. Prof. Dr. Dhanoos Sutthiphisal, Assumption University

and our new Editorial Board members:

– Assoc. Prof. Dr. Charoenchai Agmapisarm, Director of Tourism and Service Innovation Research, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA)

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Supawat Meeprom, Faculty of Business Administration and Accountancy, Khon Kaen University
- Dr. Puthipong Julagasigorn, Hospitality and Tourism Management Department, International College for Sustainability Studies, Srinakharinwirot University
- Dr. Sutthisan Chumwichan, GN Research
- Dr. Prarawan Senachai, Faculty of Business Administration and Accountancy, Khon Kaen University
- Dr. Jinawat Kaenmuang, Institute of Thai Studies, Chulalongkorn University

**We welcome on board each of these seven distinguished scholars.** We are excited and looking forward to more great achievements to come under their leadership and collaboration in the years ahead.

I could not end this heartwarming message without an expression of my deep gratitude towards Asst. Prof. Dr. Bing Zhu, our previous Associate Editor, who just graciously completed her dignified duty due to completion of the service term. At this time, I would also like to offer my sincere appreciation to our continuing editorial board and editorial advisers for their unfailing support and guidance.

### **Articles in This Current Issue**

In this January-March 2024 edition, we are proud to present 8 high quality articles with the usual variety, including 4 invited articles, and a book review.

The first article, Talawanich and Pongwat (2024) explore the core concept of patriotism during crisis in the context of domestic tourism to minimize the crisis damages from the loss of international tourists. This research investigates the implementation of patriotism and nationalism in strategic communication during the crisis of Covid pandemic in efforts to resume target levels of domestic tourists in Phuket, Thailand. The justification for targeting domestic tourists during crisis is their visits to local or domestic destinations for the purpose of supporting their own country's economy. Interestingly, two of the research findings are (1) suggestions on how to design and enhance the patriotism and nationalism messages to ensure a high level of visit intentions and (2) intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication.

The second paper, is in alignment with the first article. Senachai et al. (2024) identify responsive restaurant attributes that satisfy their customers' needs, using mixed methods in an attempt to solicit new insights from field work beyond a literature review of established theories and previous studies. As a result, a conceptual model was developed with 3 constructs as components: satisfaction, trust, and behavioral intentions, and with 10 attributes from literature and 7 attributes from in-depth interviews. Needless to say, this study essentially informs managers and restaurant owners to remain competitive in their business.

Third, Phromket et al. (2024) addresses a most popular concept of job enthusiasm for excellence and job effectiveness among employees using the context of the Thai telecommunication sector as a research sample. Using quantitative data collected via questionnaire, interesting findings include that promotion of learning, enhancing skills, technology adoption, knowledge skills for change, and fair rewards, all had a significant effect on job enthusiasm for excellence and proactive job effectiveness.

In the fourth article, Panbamrungskij et al. (2024) focuses on the issue of small beef cattle farming and the reduced interest in younger generations to carry on their family farming business in Thailand. Based on GAP (good agricultural practices), the study explored factors influencing beef herd productivity and willingness of the next generation to sustain their family business. Findings reveal that beef herds with higher calving rates had better herd, reproductive, and health scores. In addition, experts emphasized the importance of recording

systems, heat detection, pregnancy diagnosis, feeding type, qualified water supply, and mineral supplements. The study also pointed out key factors pivotal for the economic sustainability of beef farming.

Fifth, still in the field of family business but in the context of Switzerland, Schreier, et al. (2024) uses a qualitative method to examine whether trusted relationships between owners, management, and employees were changed by the work from home policy (WFH) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Offering insights from 13 in-depth interviews with owners or management of SMFB (small and medium-sized family businesses), the study reveals that WFH affects the quality of the relationship between leaders and their employees. It is beneficial for family business to include WFH as long as (1) all parties can count on well-established, trusted relationships; and (2) that the business has motivated and open-minded leaders capable of maintaining well-balanced interpersonal communication with their employees.

Continuing with the family context, using an empirical study with SEM analysis, Peng et al. (2024) examined the effect of work-family conflict on turnover intentions along with the mediating roles of job stress and burnout of white-collar workers in the context of private organizations in Thailand. Findings reveal an association between work-family conflict and turnover intentions, job stress, and burnout, respectively. In addition, job stress and burnout were associated with turnover intentions while job stress appeared to partially mediate the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions.

In a different area of business, the seventh article relates to cryptocurrencies and the financial market. Detthamrong et al. (2024) examines the causal relationship between cryptocurrencies and other major world economic assets, such as gold, stocks, oil, and bonds, using Granger causality and correlation analyses during 2018-2022 (represent over 90% of the market during the observed period). The results reveal that there is Granger causality between the cryptocurrencies (Tether, USD Coin, and Binance USD) and the other major world economic assets (BOND, SP500, and GOLD). Other specific interesting findings are reported in the study which provides valuable information of interest to investors, e.g. the frequent change nature of the stock market, and that volatility spill overs increase sharply.

The final article also relates to finance. Interestingly, in this paper, Dheera-aumpon and Changwatchai (2024) investigate the connection between political connections and stock returns in Thailand using data from the stock returns of companies listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand which are included in the SET100 index, combined with an event study of the Thai general election year 2019. Findings include that the abnormal returns of companies connected with members of parliament elected under the first-past-the-post system do not differ from those of firms with no connection around the election date, but significantly differ when election results are officially announced. Companies connected with party-list members of parliament are slightly higher than those of firms not connected around the election date but not different when the results are announced. Companies with connections to candidates for prime minister are significantly higher than those of companies without a connection. The difference, however, dissipates after a few days.

Last is a book review. Here Zhu (2024) presents an interesting review of the book titled “*For the Culture: The Power Behind the World’s Most Successful Brands, from Apple to Beyonce*”. The book is a well-articulated account of the role of culture in successful marketing, written by an authority in the business world, Marcus Collins utilizes his extensive experiences of world-famous brands in real-world.

### **Selected Articles from our Previous Issue: 9 with Application of Methodological Advancement**

As noted earlier regarding the grand success of **our most recent special issue (October-December 2023 Vol.43 No.4)**, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce some articles

from this issue for our readers' attention. Central to the parameter of this issue was a call to the advancement of research methodology in the social sciences: **Application of Structural Equation Modelling in Business, Sports, Tourism, Marketing, Education, and Language Studies**. In the past 5 years (since 2018), there have been several notable movements in research methodology in a search for better business models as well as in the Social Sciences and Arts & Humanities. Some of these movements have sparked powerful and genuine interest into new issues and notions, such as factor vs composite-based analysis, how to identify and observe latent and emerging variables, Bayesian, network psychometrics with R, and propensity score analysis. In this special issue we were fortunate to publish 22 quality articles due to the dedication and professional guidance of our guest editors and guest editorial board.

The first two articles in tourism address the issue of a mismatch of factor-based and composite-based analysis. Leruksa et al. (2023) and Rasmidatta (2023) both clearly point out that SEM can be broadly classified into two main approaches: factor-based (or covariance-based) and component-based (or variance-based), each of which is suitable for its own type of constructs, and if mismatched will result in bias in parameter estimates. Historically, this practice has been prevalent in past research. To investigate whether this practice is still ongoing, Leruksa et al. (2023) examined articles published in the world's top-tier journals finding that this practice has indeed persisted even in top-tier tourism journals. Interestingly, to illustrate the point, the researchers present a hypothetical example related to cannabis tourism, using it as a model of mixed constructs based on IGSCA-SEM.

Rasmidatta (2023) states that the majority of past research in tourism has favored composite-based SEM, particularly Partial Least Squares (PLS), for analyzing factors, which can introduce biases into the analysis. To illustrate the point, this study presents illustrative examples from the tourism and hotel management domain by analyzing hypothetical constructs in two scenarios: one where the constructs are treated as factors and another where they are treated as composites. To clarify the confusion between factor VS composite in SEM, these two articles provide valuable information with clear examples.

Third, Rungroueng and Monpanthong (2023) address the research gap of a lack of up-to-date knowledge on fundamental variables as factors influencing perceived cruise-port quality. They examine the confirmatory components of those factors in reflective and formative terms in order to develop a set of perceived port quality (PPQ) variables. The collected data were analyzed using GSCA-SEM. The findings reaffirm the elemental factors of perceived port quality (PPQ), constructed from five categories as first-order constructs, namely cruise terminal facilities, port service encounter performance, port location, ground port transportation, and physical port environment quality. Assessed through the 36 observed variables, which included significant reflective and formative constructs, the study offers a valuable set of guidelines for designing policies and strategies to develop cruise tourism in the port area.

Fourth, still in the area of tourism & hospitality, Ru-Zhue et al. (2023) addressed the pressing issue of eco-friendly business on the hotel industry after COVID-19. The study examines the effect of eco-friendly hotel practices on customer feedback in the post-COVID-19 era, that is, the relationships between green practices, customer satisfaction, and loyalty to green hotels, and the effect of customer feedback on sustainability through intentions to revisit and word-of-mouth. In particular, the role of customer satisfaction and loyalty to green hotels are considered as mediators, while the role of gender in these relationships is also explored, using PLS-SEM and PLS-MGA. These analysis methods were used to create a cross-sectional descriptive and analytical design, making a significant contribution to methodological advancement in tourism research. Moreover, one interesting finding is that women are more loyal to green hotels than men.

#### **Four articles in the field of education**

First, similar to the above article in terms of methodological advancement, Chumwichan et al. (2023) use an integrated generalized structured component analysis (IGSCA) with multigroup analysis, to develop and validate a casual relationship model of the RTE and RI, mediated by research self-efficacy (RSE) and research engagement (RE), examining the differential RTE effects in years 1-3 of a doctoral program. As the research training environment (RTE) is an important factor for enhancing doctoral students' research intentions (RI), findings are: there was no mediation effect of RE or RSE between the RTE and RI in the first year. In contrast, mediation effects of RE and RSE were found in the second ( $\beta = .097$ ) and third years ( $\beta = .723$ ) of the doctoral program. It is therefore interestingly suggested that 1<sup>st</sup> year students should be allowed to engage with their projects early and minimally, while encouraging students to share research ideas with others in the second and third years.

Second, Sukkaew and Chumkaew (2023) employed quantitative methods to address two research objectives: (1) to compare the quality of 5-choice and 4-choice multiple-choice tests, and (2) to evaluate the discriminant power of these formats using test response theory with kernel smoothing. Four test configurations were analyzed: the Initial Case utilized the original 5-choice format; Case 1 randomly omitted one option from the 5-choice test, excluding the correct answer; Case 2 randomly omitted one option, including the correct answer; and Case 3 adapted the options based on the test-taker's proficiency level. Interesting findings show that the highest reliability was observed in Case 3, there were no differences in the difficulty values or discriminatory power across all cases, and the mean scores indicated that students performed better on the 4-choice tests in Cases 1-3 than the original 5-choice tests. These findings have significant implications for test design.

Third, in line with the second article, Harth et al. (2023) developed an instrument for measuring student learning, establishing a learning index for high school students. The instrument consists of two key components: "Learning to Know" and "Learning to Do", each further broken down into 'Process' and 'Outcome' elements. Each of these sub-components were represented by three distinct indicators. The instrument demonstrated good content validity and excellent construct validity. The instrument also showed high internal consistency. The criterion-related validity was confirmed through known-groups validation. Two methods—criterion-related and norm-related—were used to determine students' learning index levels, where the norm-related method was chosen. The learning index was categorized into four levels: low, medium, relatively high, and high. Percentile ranks were also given as learning indices.

Unlike the previous three quantitative studies, the fourth article in education employed a qualitative approach. Chumkaew (2023) presents an interesting R&D project in chatbot design and development for student use (providing registration information services) in distance learning for STU, a Thai open university. Data were collected and triangulated via document analysis (of e.g. university regulations), focus group discussions, interviews, empirical observations, and user experience metrics. The research method was divided into 3 phases: (1) Registry Information Synthesis, (2) Chatbot Design and Iterative Development, and (3) Chatbot Evaluation. This is a well design and well tested R&D research project using a qualitative approach.

#### **One article in language studies**

Last but certainly not least is an article on language research. Here Kaenmuang (2023) presents an interesting article connecting culture and language in the context of Thai language and culture examining 2 fundamental Thai verbs, kraab (กราบ) and waaj (ไหว้ or wai), linked with the acts of paying respect. Like the last article in education, this study employed content analysis of the language rooted in natural occurrences. Given the central role that the gestures

of *kràap* and *wâaj* occupy within the communication framework, metonymy emerges as a critical factor underpinning the development of pragmatic functions. By shedding light on the interplay between language and culture, this study enhances our understanding of the inherent role of culture in linguistic concepts, thereby deepening our appreciation of how culture permeates language.

In conclusion, these highlighted articles all exhibit methodological advancement and rigor in their chosen research methods, as well as providing new insights, practical implications, new perspectives, theoretical confirmations or extensions to the current theory. I wish to thank all authors for their high-quality contributions to the ABAC Journal.

As ever, I wish to wholeheartedly thank Rev. Bro. Dr. Bancha Saenghiran; President of Assumption University, for his guidance and unfailing support. My deep thanks and appreciation to our continuing Editorial Board and the new Editorial Board members, all contributors, reviewers, and last but not least our readers, and the editor team of the ABAC Journal who have been working so hard behind the scenes.

Enjoy and indulge yourself in reading this issue and let us know your feedback.

Have a Prosperous and Productive Year 2024!

Dr. Absorn Meesing  
Editor-in-Chief  
ABAC JOURNAL  
Assumption University

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