

# Community branding and community product branding for the competitive business of historical and cultural tourism in Udon Thani Province

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## Abstract

The current study examined the relationship between community branding, tourist attraction, community product branding and competitive business performance of historical and cultural tourism. This relationship is examined in relation to the historical and cultural tourism. The objective of this study is to examine the role of community branding in competitive business performance in Thailand. Survey questionnaire is developed to collect data from Thailand in relation to the historical and cultural tourism in Udon Thani Province. 260 responses are used for data analysis. Results of the study shows that community branding has positive effect on competitive business environment. Community branding also has positive role to influence tourist attraction and community product branding which lead to the competitive business performance in historical and cultural tourism. It is observed that tourism attraction also playing an important role to promote community product branding which has influence on business performance of tourism activities. Therefore, the current study has significant implications for historical and cultural tourism in Udon Thani Province Thailand.

**Keywords:** Community branding, tourist attraction, community product branding, competitive business performance, historical tourism, cultural tourism.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's business environment, the competition in business activities related to the tourism is increasing (Mottaghi, Ansari, & Delalat, 2021). The competition in tourism industry among various nations is increasing significantly due to the major benefits of tourism industry. The nations are trying to foster tourism activities with the help of different tourism strategies to enhance the business. Therefore, due to the focus of most of the nations to develop tourism in the country is the competition in tourism business is

increasing significantly. The increase in competition in tourism activities lead to the decrease tourism performance in various nations. In different countries where tourism is not on a higher level and performance of tourism is low the survival of companies is quite tough. Therefore, competitive business performance is most important to achieve in tourism industry (Seow, Choong, & Ramayah, 2021). Within the tourism market the competition between countries is increasing which require competitive business strategies to enhance the tourism performance.

Although, the tourism industry of Thailand is one of the top industries globally (Chantanee, Chaikham, & Maruekarajtinplaeng, 2021; Wongsawat & Deebhijarn, 2019). Thai tourism industry is a famous industry worldwide due to various opportunities related to the tourism. This industry has achieved the higher performance in tourism activities due to the several tourism related opportunities in Thailand. The tourism opportunities in Thailand (Sirichareechai, 2018) include religious tourism, sports tourism, historical tourism and cultural tourism. All these tourism opportunities are contributing to the tourism industry and achieving the higher performance. However, with the high performance in tourism activities, still this industry facing competition globally. Number of various other countries are trying to promote tourism activities and these nations are also competing globally. Due to the higher tourism opportunities in various other countries tourists are dividing in various other countries to avail the tourism activities which causes to effect adversely on Thai tourism industry. Better opportunity is related to the tourism business in other country causes to decrease the performance in Thailand. Therefore, to handle this issue the competitive business performance is most important. The competitive business performance of Thailand tourism industry is required to sustain the business performance in tourism.

The current study proposed that competitive business performance in tourism industry can be achieved with the help of community branding (Chunhabunyatip, Chuaysook, & Aromrucks, 2020). Community branding is one of the most important instruments to promote tourism activities. Most importantly, community branding is related to the historical tourism and cultural tourism. Therefore, the cultural tourism and historical tourism can be promoted with the help of community planning which has significant relationship with the competitive business performance. There are number of opportunities related to the historical and cultural tourism in Thailand which can be improved through community branding. There are opportunities in Udon Thani Province of Thailand related to the historical and cultural

tourism. The competitive performance within Udon Thani Province (Sritalalai, 2020) can be achieved with help of community branding. According to this study the community branding has the potential to affect the tourism business with the help of direct effect as well as indirect effect. Indirectly, community branding effect on tourist attraction and community product branding. The promotion of community product branding with the help of community branding can have the possibility to achieve higher business performance. Additionally, the community branding effect on the tourist attraction which causes to promote both business performance and community product branding. The community branding has major role in tourism activities as reported by several previous studies.

The objective of this study is to examine the role of community branding in competitive business performance in Thailand. The relationship between community branding, tourist attraction, community product branding and competitive business performance of historical and cultural tourism is examined. Community branding is discussed several times in the literature; however, it is not discussed in relation to the Udon Thani Province, Thailand. Udon Thani Province has important opportunities for tourism (Chitthanom, 2020; Phukamchanoad, Ditchareon, & Yordchim, 2014) which are needed to investigate. Although the role of community branding is investigated in tourism business, but community branding is not considered with the help of tourist attraction along with the community product branding. Thus, this study proposed the effect of community branding on competitive business performance with the help of tourist attraction and community product branding.

## 2. Literature Review

In any community, the heritage tourism has significant importance in tourism industry (Cheng & Chen, 2022; Megeirhi, Woosnam, Ribeiro, Ramkissoon, & Denley, 2020). Due to the unique nature of this tourism type among

the nations, it is one of the popular tourism destinations for the tourists. In heritage tourism, people travel to different areas to see the places as well as various cultural elements. Tourist travel to see different historic homes along with the eating food of local community as well as to take participation in various festivals in local area. Although every nation has their own heritage which has importance for their tourism industry and to represent the specific national heritage is most important. However, Thailand is a nation which has unique heritage having significant influence in tourism industry. The unique heritage of any nation is always the point of attraction for the people. Although number of nations has their unique heritage, however, community attracting several tourists globally to visit their heritage. It is important to promote competitive business position in heritage tourism of Thailand. As competition is increasing in heritage tourism along with the other types of tourism, therefore, it is needed to promote competitive position in heritage tourism.

Along with the heritage tourism, cultural tourism also has a significant importance among nations (Chunhabunyatip et al., 2020; Glückstad, Wiil, Mansourvar, & Andersen, 2021). Cultural tourism is based on the tourism activities that allowed the tourists to take part in various activities related to the culture of a local community (Megeirhi et al., 2020; Tambunan, Sibarani, & Asmara, 2021). Generally, it involves various festivals based on the unique culture of the people in any area. Culture represents the nation and attract the people from various parts to see their culture. The nations having unique culture always attract tourists to visit their culture. Similarly, the culture is important in those nations which

has unique and very old cultural history which is always remain the point of attraction for the people in various nations. In each year hundred thousand of tourists visit Thailand and various local communities of Thailand to see their culture. The cultural values of people always have significant importance to promote tourism industry in Thailand. Generally, cultural tourism includes various traditions, religion, art, crafts and different types of dress, language and architecture. Therefore, both the tourism types cultural tourism and historical tourism has a significant importance for Thai tourism industry. In both these types of tourism the achievement of competitive business performance is most important. In this direction to achieve higher business performance (Chowdhury, Prayag, Orchiston, & Spector, 2019) in cultural and historical tourism, this study proposed the relationship between variables. According to the current study, community branding (Chunhabunyatip et al., 2020) has the potential to promote business performance in tourism. The community branding in various areas of Thailand, most importantly Udon province of Thailand is important to promote community tourism. Community branding has the potential to promote tourism activities with the help of tourist attraction and it also has the ability to enhance community branding products. Therefore, the relationship between community branding, tourist attraction and community product branding can lead to the competitive business performance in Heritage and cultural tourism. The relationship between community branding, tourist attraction, community product branding and competitive business performance is given in Figure 1 as framework of the current study.

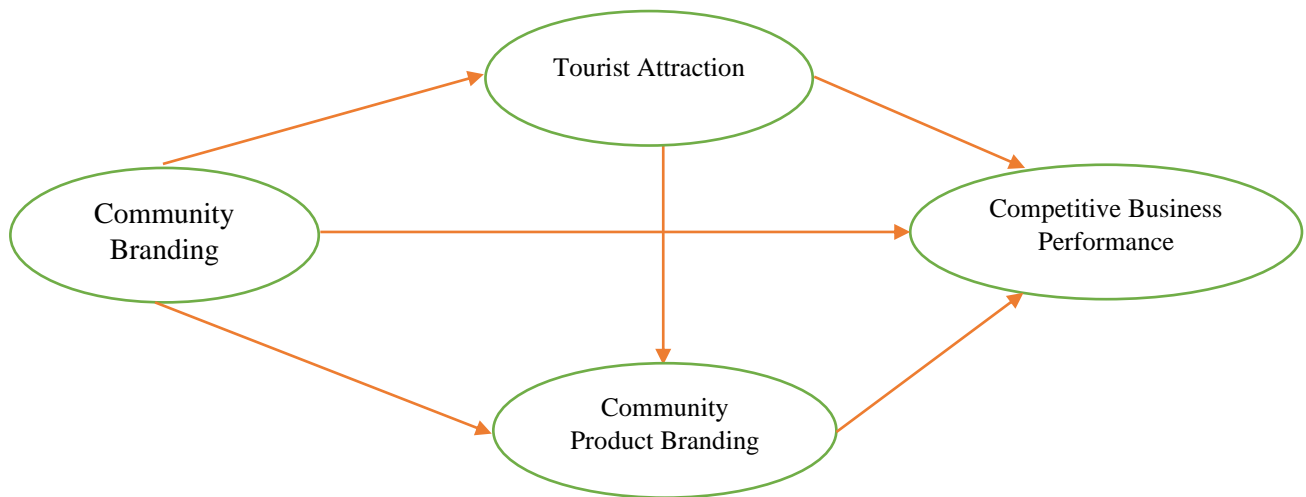


Figure 1. *Conceptual framework of the study*

## 2.1 Community Branding

A brand community is a community formed on the basis of attachment to a brand. Community branding is most significant as compared to the financial incentive to the community. Along with the importance of branding in various other businesses, it is also important in tourism (Deffner, Psatha, & Karachalis, 2022; Kurniawan, Lestari, & Airlangga, 2022). A brand name given to the community always promote the attraction among the people which has significant benefits. Giving city, town or community a brand name represents the values as well as beliefs of that certain community. The brand name to the values as well as beliefs has more attraction for the tourist. Therefore, in the recent tourism industry development, the community branding concept has major importance for the tourism activities. Brand name given to the community adds value for the people instead of various other benefits. A brand name given to the culture as well as their values norms and history leave to the attraction of tourism in the certain area. Therefore, community branding is more beneficial for the tourism activities related to the cultural and heritage tourism.

Community tourism has importance in business of tourism activities. The business-related activities of tourism can be promoted with the help of community planning. Most importantly, a competitive position in historical and cultural

tourism activities can be achieved through community branding. As the business performance is most important in tourism activities (Purwanto, Novitasari, & Asbari, 2022) which can be achieved through branding related to the specific communities. This study highlighted that community branding has positive role to promote competitive business performance. As value addition to the communities with the help of branding lead to the business performance. In various other industries, branding also lead to the business performance (Ben Youssef, Leicht, Pellicelli, & Kitchen, 2018), therefore, in a similar way, branding in community is also helpful to promote business performance in tourism industry. Thus, it is proposed that;

Hypothesis 1. Community branding has positive role to enhance competitive business performance.

## 2.2 Customer Attraction and Community Product Branding

In the highly competitive tourism market, the role of tourist attraction is most important to promote higher business performance. Customer attraction is always have major importance for the business industries because the attractive customers always try to avail various services and products from the company (Agolla, Makara, & Monametsi, 2018). Tourist attraction can be defined as the

place which people visit with interest and pleasure regularly. In the context of historical and heritage tourism, tourism attraction can be described as the culture history, norms, values and beliefs of any local community which attract the tourist. Tourist attraction is similar with the customer attraction as the importance of customer interaction for business can play a significant role. Similarly, the importance of tourism attraction is also most important in historical cultural and heritage tourism. The attraction among tourists can be generated with the help of community branding. Community branding is one of the instruments which can enhance the attraction of the tourist. Brand name given to the community represent the community beliefs and values which causes to attract the people. Therefore, the community branding has positive role to promote tourist attraction.

Furthermore, community product branding is also most significant in tourism industry (Chunhabunyatip et al., 2020). The community always produce various products as well as services for the tourist and the branding of these products and services is most important to promote the business performance. The culture of various communities is one of the important community products which can be promoted by giving a brand name. Similarly, the values and beliefs of any society is the product of community which can be promoted through branding. Various other services provided by the community to the tourist can be promoted through branding opportunities. Therefore, community branding also involves community product branding which has effect on the tourism activities. In a similar way, community branding also led to the community product branding. Increase in community branding in any nation can promote the product branding in communities which has influence on historical cultural and heritage tourism. Furthermore, it is also observed that tourism attraction is most important (Hongnual, Leelapattana, Thongma, Trakansiriwanich, & Sitthikun, 2021; Wiweka, Indrajaya, Wachyuni, Adnyana, & Hanorsian, 2019) which has influence on community product branding. To promote community product branding, it is most important to

promote tourist attraction as the tourist attraction has positive role to influence community product branding. Thailand is also working on community branding in which the community product branding is promoted with the help of various strategies. In this way the community product in Thailand can be promoted through tourist attraction strategies. Therefore, this study highlighted that community branding has positive role to enhance tourist attraction and community product branding. Furthermore, tourist attraction has positive role to enhance community product branding. Finally following hypotheses are proposed;

Hypothesis 2. Community branding has positive role to enhance tourist attraction.

Hypothesis 3. Community branding has positive role to enhance community product branding.

Hypothesis 4. Tourist attraction has positive role to enhance community product branding.

The above discussion shows the important role of community branding in tourist attraction and community product branding. The current section shows the important role of tourist attraction and community product branding in competitive business performance. Tourism attraction is always important in business performance as highlighted by previous studies (Retnosary & Anggela, 2019). The attraction of tourist is most significant element in tourism industry (Operinde & Praise, 2020) to promote competitive business performance. Because in the competitive business market related to the tourism, the attraction of the tourist is important. The attracted tourists towards cultural tourism and heritage tourism always contribute positively to the business performance. To visit a specific place or to visit a culture to see the beliefs and norms of the people in a specific local community, tourist attraction is required. More the tourist attraction more will be the performance of heritage and cultural tourism in Thailand. Along with the tourist attraction, the community product branding also has influential role to enhance competitive business

performance in tourism. Due to the high competition, it is needed to promote community tourism with the help of branding. The products of different community are needed to value with the help of branding, as the branding gives a unique identity to the community which causes to attract the tourist in any specific area. Therefore, community product branding always has significant influence to enhance competitive business position in tourism market. Both the tourist attraction and community product brand name have positive influence on business performance competitiveness. The above discussion also shows that tourist attraction is playing a mediating role between community branding and competitive business performance. Similarly, community product branding also playing a mediating role between community branding and competitive business performance. Therefore, following direct and indirect hypothesis are proposed;

Hypothesis 5. Tourist attraction has positive role to enhance competitive business performance.

Hypothesis 6. Community product branding has positive role to enhance competitive business performance.

Hypothesis 7. Tourist attraction mediates the relationship between community branding and competitive business performance.

Hypothesis 8. Community product branding mediates the relationship between community branding and competitive business performance.

### 3. Research Methodology

There are number of research methodologies are available to examine the effect of community branding on competitive business performance in tourism industry. The current study is based on the hypotheses in relation to

the cultural and heritage tourism. The previous studies on cultural and heritage tourism are considered in relation to the primary data. The hypotheses developed to examine the cultural and historical tourism was based on the primary data which is tested by collecting data with the help of survey. Similarly, it is suitable to test the hypotheses with the help of primary data. Therefore, the relationship between community branding, tourist attraction, community product branding and competitive business performance in cultural and heritage tourism, the primary data is collected with the help of survey instrument. Therefore, it is decided to design a survey questionnaire to measure all the variables and to examine the relationship between variables. This study explores the literature to find scale items related to the community branding, tourist attraction, community product branding and competitive business performance. The scale items are adopted from previous studies to measure this relationship.

After the development of survey questionnaire, this study distributed the questionnaires among the tourism companies in Thailand Udon Thani province. The questionnaires were distributed among the staff of tourism companies in Udon Thani, Thailand. This study estimated that 550 sample size is sufficient to collect data from tourism companies. Consequently, this study distributed 550 questionnaires to the staff of tourism companies in Thailand. From this sample size 310 respondents responded to the questionnaire. It was found that 8 questionnaires are not completely filled. Hence, total 302 questionnaires were used to examine the relationship between variables with the help of statistical tool. Finally, this study used structural equation modelling to examine the relationship with the help of measurement model and structural model. Additionally, Smart PLS is employed to assess the structural model and Measurement model. Data statistics are reported in Table 1 which shows that data is free from error.

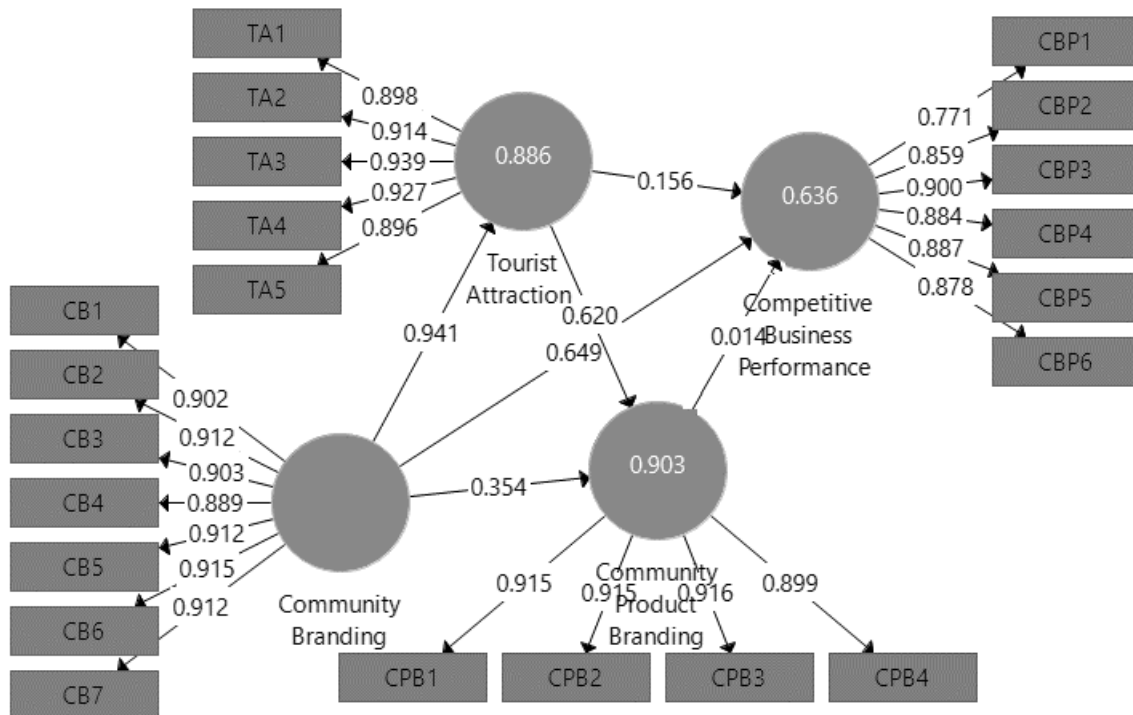
Table 1. *Data Statistics*

	No.	Missing	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
CB1	1	0	3.26	3	1	7	1.495	-0.53	0.097
CB2	2	0	3.193	3	1	7	1.734	-0.53	0.455
CB3	3	0	3.464	3	1	7	1.843	-0.76	0.343
CB4	4	0	3.503	3	1	7	1.926	-0.846	0.429
CB5	5	0	3.492	3	1	7	1.703	-0.511	0.312
CB6	6	0	3.486	3	1	7	1.783	-0.698	0.268
CB7	7	0	3.459	3	1	7	1.84	-0.963	0.158
TA1	8	0	3.635	4	1	7	1.871	-0.807	0.24
TA2	9	0	3.68	3	1	7	1.814	-0.707	0.329
TA3	10	0	3.602	3	1	7	1.874	-0.686	0.388
TA4	11	0	3.503	3	1	7	1.891	-0.748	0.408
TA5	12	0	3.53	3	1	7	1.804	-0.541	0.383
CPB1	13	0	3.552	3	1	7	1.846	-0.733	0.325
CPB2	14	0	3.365	3	1	7	1.759	-0.54	0.427
CPB3	15	0	3.508	3	1	7	1.9	-0.901	0.246
CPB4	16	0	3.442	3	1	7	1.763	-0.55	0.344
CBP1	17	0	3.619	3	1	7	1.828	-0.796	0.243
CBP2	18	0	3.072	3	1	7	1.527	-0.093	0.666
CBP3	19	0	3.232	3	1	7	1.535	0.236	0.825
CBP4	20	0	3.26	3	1	7	1.473	0.598	0.913
CBP5	21	0	3.177	3	1	7	1.491	0.339	0.742
CBP6	22	0	3.144	3	1	7	1.438	0.459	0.724

#### 4. Data Analysis and Findings

Findings of the study are based on partial least square (PLS), a most popular software to analyze the data (Chairatana, 2021; Khan et al., 2019). Number of previous studies related to the competitive business performance are considered the relationship between variable through PLS. Additionally, PLS is most

recommended tool for data analysis and it is one of the latest tools to examine the relationship among constructs (Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, & Thiele, 2017; Hair et al., 2019). In this process of data analysis, factor loadings were examined which must not be less than 0.5. Figure 2 shows the factor loadings and Table 2 shows the reliability along with the factor loading.

Figure 2. *PLS Outer Model*Table 2. *Factor Loadings*

Variables	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Community Branding	CB1	0.902	0.889	0.895	0.725
	CB2	0.912			
	CB3	0.903			
	CB4	0.889			
	CB5	0.912			
	CB6	0.915			
	CB7	0.912			
Community Branding	CBP1	0.771	0.932	0.951	0.821
	CBP2	0.859			
	CBP3	0.9			
	CBP4	0.884			
	CBP5	0.887			
	CBP6	0.878			
Competitive Business Performance	CPB1	0.915	0.886	0.889	0.799
	CPB2	0.915			
	CPB3	0.916			
	CPB4	0.899			
Tourist Attraction	TA1	0.898	0.855	0.888	0.801
	TA2	0.914			
	TA3	0.939			
	TA4	0.927			
	TA5	0.896			

To examine the reliability, this study must be above 0.7. The average variance considered composite reliability (CR) which extracted (AVE) must be above 0.5. According



to results given in Table 2, all the variables such as community branding, tourist attraction, community product branding and competitive business performance has CR above 0.7 and AVE above 0.5. Therefore, this study achieved convergent validity and reliability. Moreover, discriminant validity (Nasution, Fahmi, &

Prayogi, 2020) is also another important measure of outer model which needed to examine. In this process the discriminant validity is considered for cross loading which are given in Table 3. Finally, this study achieved reliability and validity which confirmed to proceed further.

Table 3. *Cross-Loadings*

	<b>Community Branding</b>	<b>Community Product Branding</b>	<b>Competitive Business Performance</b>	<b>Tourist Attraction</b>
CB1	0.902	0.837	0.742	0.838
CB2	0.912	0.836	0.682	0.845
CB3	0.903	0.843	0.685	0.854
CB4	0.889	0.837	0.735	0.867
CB5	0.912	0.849	0.759	0.862
CB6	0.915	0.837	0.73	0.867
CB7	0.912	0.844	0.714	0.84
CBP1	0.838	0.874	0.771	0.84
CBP2	0.599	0.886	0.859	0.584
CBP3	0.666	0.797	0.59	0.618
CBP4	0.624	0.847	0.784	0.588
CBP5	0.637	0.853	0.787	0.594
CBP6	0.658	0.893	0.778	0.639
CPB1	0.743	0.615	0.862	0.768
CPB2	0.822	0.615	0.844	0.759
CPB3	0.88	0.516	0.892	0.876
CPB4	0.834	0.799	0.912	0.833
TA1	0.865	0.847	0.677	0.898
TA2	0.859	0.89	0.708	0.914
TA3	0.881	0.875	0.711	0.939
TA4	0.871	0.865	0.714	0.927
TA5	0.83	0.836	0.696	0.896

PLS inner model is given in Figure 4. PLS inner model is used to examine the relationship between variables (Ali, Rasoolimanesh, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Ryu, 2018). In this process, the results obtained are given in Table 4 and Table 5. Table 4 shows the direct effect and Table 5 shows the indirect effect. It is found that community branding has positive effect on community product branding with the t-value 4.8 33. It is evident from the results that community branding has significant effect on community business performance with t-value 3.829. Additionally, community branding has significant effect to promote tourist attraction with t-value 113.665. Community product branding has also significant relationship with

competitive business performance with the t-value 1.965. It is also evident that tourism attractions have effect on community product branding with t-value 8.61. Finally, it is found that tourist attraction has significant effect on competitive business performance with the t-value 3.61. Hence, the results of the study highlighted that all the direct hypotheses are supported. After the direct effect, this study examined the mediating effect of tourist attraction and community product branding. The mediation effect of tourist attraction between community branding and competitive business performance is not significant. Furthermore, the mediation effect of community product branding between

community branding and competitive business

performance is significant with t-value 1.999.

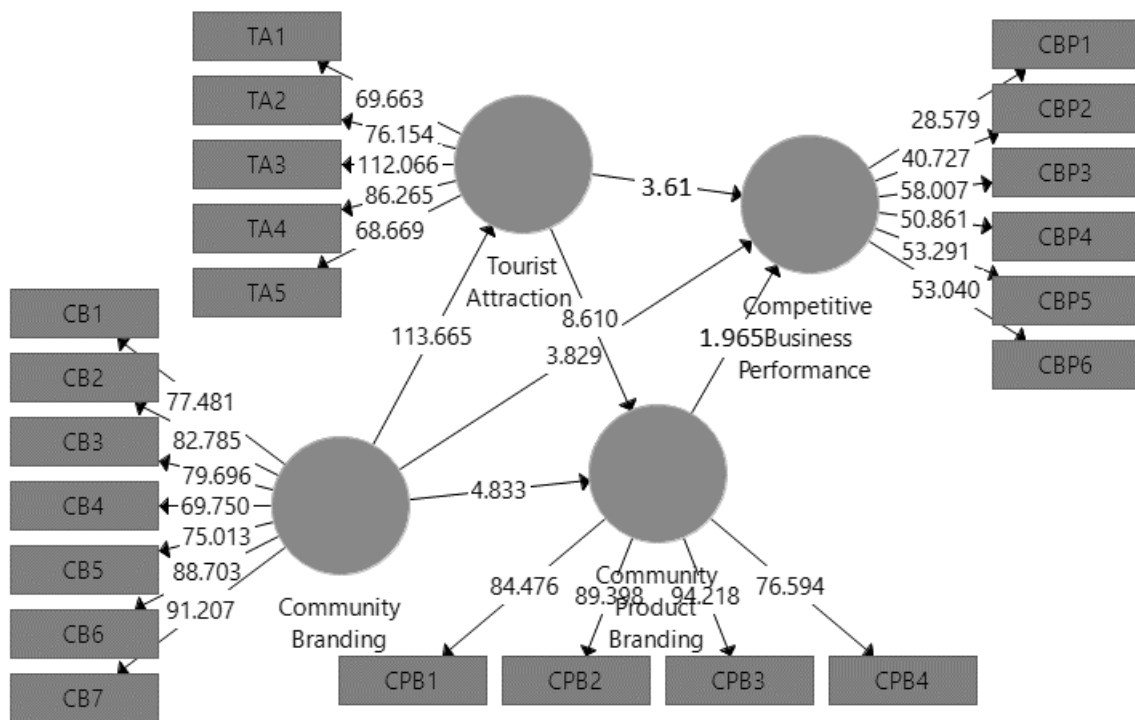


Figure 3. PLS Inner Model

Table 4. Direct Effect

	Beta	M	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Community Branding -> Community Product Branding	0.347	0.345	0.072	4.833	0
Community Branding -> Competitive Business Performance	0.673	0.676	0.176	3.829	0
Community Branding -> Tourist Attraction	0.941	0.941	0.008	113.665	0
Community Product Branding -> Competitive Business Performance	0.063	0.068	0.032	1.965	0.05
Tourist Attraction -> Community Product Branding	0.616	0.618	0.072	8.61	0
Tourist Attraction -> Competitive Business Performance	0.188	0.19	0.051	3.61	0

Table 5. Mediation Effect

	Beta	M	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Community Branding -> Tourist Attraction -> Competitive Business Performance	0.177	0.179	0.165	1.071	0.285
Community Branding -> Community Product Branding -> Competitive Business Performance	0.022	0.025	0.011	1.999	0.46

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the study found that community branding is one of the major instruments to promote competitive business performance. As findings of the study highlighted that community branding has positive effect on competitive business performance of cultural tourism and heritage tourism. In Udon Thani

province, Thailand, the business performance of cultural tourism and heritage tourism can be promoted with the help of community branding. Community branding has direct as well as indirect effect on the business performance. Community branding has significant role to influence the tourist attraction. The increase in tourist attraction due to the community branding can lead the business performance in the competitive

market. Furthermore, community branding has positive effect on community product branding. The various products of community can be promoted through giving the name which has a unique importance in the society and causes to increase business performance, therefore, along with the direct effect, community branding indirectly affect the competitive business performance with the help of tourist attraction and community product branding. Additionally, this study addressed that tourist attraction has the ability to influence community product branding. Better the level of tourist attraction can have a positive role to enhance community product branding. Nevertheless, this study proved that community product branding has direct effect on competitive business performance. Furthermore, it is true that tourist attraction also has influential role to enhance business performance of cultural tourism and heritage tourism. Therefore, both the elements namely; tourist attraction and community product branding have direct influence to promote competitive business performance. Finally, results of the study also proved that community product branding has the ability to transfer the positive effect of community branding on competitive business performance.

## 6. Implications

This study has important contribution to the literature as this study considered the cultural tourism and heritage tourism of Udon Thani province of Thailand which is rarely considered by previous studies. As this study considered the effect of community branding on competitive business performance in Thailand, therefore, this relationship is unique relationship which is less considered in Udon Thani province. Other studies considered community branding in different perspectives, however, this study addressed community branding in relation to the competitive business performance. This study also has unique elements in the framework such as study considered the mediating role of tourist attraction and community product branding. This study proved that community product branding is a mediator between community

branding and competitive business performance which is very rare in previous studies. In this way, the current study has important implications for the management of tourism companies. As this study highlighted the community branding has influential role in comparative business performance of cultural tourism and heritage tourism. Therefore, the management of community tourism companies should enhance community branding to promote business performance. Additionally, this study proved that tourist attraction and community product branding have influential contribution to the business performance. Hence, it is also suggested to the management as well as practitioners of tourism companies to promote tourist attraction and community product branding with the help of various strategies.

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