

## Tourism Service Management and Senior Foreign Travelers's Behavior in Thailand

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### Abstract

This quantitative research studied factors in the management of the quality of life, received from tourism services by senior foreign travelers and their influence on reutilizing the services. A questionnaire was used, with a sample size of 400 senior foreign travelers. The statistics used were frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. In addition, multiple regression statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were also used. The results showed that overall, tourism management of senior foreign travelers in Thailand is of the highest level. The study found that the issue of medical/public health is of the highest level, followed by geography, service quality and the potential of tourist destinations. Travel experiences, and returning to use the service are of the highest level. Tourism management and satisfaction of travel experience positively influence senior foreign travelers's behavior on revisit intention at the statistical significance level of 0.05. The development of tourism management focusing on senior foreign travelers is one of the foci of Thai tourism policies. The age group is expected to expand and are a target age group with tourism potential in the future.

**Keywords:** Tourism service management, Tourism behavior, Senior foreign travelers, Quality of life, Revisit intention

## Introduction

Recently, with the growth of tourism for recreation, adventure or learning the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) was established to gather information on the business of tourism. The organization has several tasks, 1) stimulating governments to provide suitable policies for tourism promotion leading to economic development, 2) promoting the expansion of the tourism market whilst being environmentally friendly, and 3) eradicating obstacles blocking the growth of the tourism industry.

In addition to UNWTO, there are several associations, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), Caribbean Tourism Association (CTA), and ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) etc. which promote, service, and develop the tourism industry among the member states. At a national level the Tourism Industry Council of Thailand, The Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA), are responsible for inbound tourist-relevant regulations, setting targets for the development of the tourism industry. (ATTA, 2019).

Thailand is one of the countries, with a strong focus on tourism which generates a significant level of national income. Thailand has a great variety of tourism products and services, further facilitated by the Thai Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Industry Council of Thailand, and the Thai Tourism Board, all involved with the tourism industry variously, based on the policies of the Tourism Authority of Thailand as follow 1) promoting and persuading visitors to come to Thailand; 2) expanding the distribution of tourist attractions. 3) conserving and restoring cultural treasures and natural resources 4) develop tourism facilities and services of a high standard 5) increasing tourists' safety, 6) promoting domestic travel by Thais, 7) increasing the number of Thai workers in the tourism industry and, 8) encouraging people to widely participate in activities related to tourism development (Wanthanom, 2009).

Although, 2017 – 2018, was a good year for the tourism industry, generating income for Thailand, the sector still faces many problems and obstacles such as, the tourist boat sinking in Phuket and violence against travelers at entertainment venues, which affects tourism negatively and foreign travelers' confidence. The government tries to solve such problems by policy measures to build the confidence of foreign travelers, especially travelers from China. The data collected in 2018 showed that travelers to Thailand were 32.28 million people, with growth rate of 7.54%, most of them from China, 10.54 million people, with growth rate of 3.86%. The total revenue was 2 trillion baht, with growth rate of 9.43 percent and GDP share of 18.80 percent (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2018).

However, currently, the world is still experiencing problems with the outbreak of COVID-19 since 2020, which has severely affected tourism, because people are unable to travel to other countries freely. Consequently, the income generated by tourism around the world has decreased significantly. However, entrepreneurs involved in tourism business must find solutions to sustain their tourism business. Focusing on a new target group of travelers with potential is senior citizens, increasingly important to the tourism industry. This group of people are retired, have free time and the money to travel, also this group tends to stay at

tourism destinations longer than other travelers. The senior travelers traveling to Thailand, have a positive image of Thailand, Thais are nice and friendly to travelers. In addition, when compared with other countries, Thailand has low-cost tourism, has beautiful nature, beaches, and a distinct culture and history. However, increasing travel experience results in higher expectations for the creation of memories and good life experiences, and once in a lifetime events. Amnuay-Ngoentra (2016) and Sirgy et al. (2010) assert that travelers' quality of life is an outcome created by recreation, affecting well-being, when positive results in revisiting. In order to create a good quality of life and meet the needs of travelers, tourism should be developed as "Value with economic value" (Winyarat & Rimpranee, 2010) which gives travelers satisfaction with their travel experiences positively affecting their quality of life and thus repeat business.

Tourism is like an elixir and makes for relaxation, stress reduction, satisfaction, comfort, and happiness, associated with the concept "Tourism for the quality of life". COVID-19 has created the circumstance in which tourism can change to responsible tourism, a new form aiming for quality, inclusiveness and sustainable growth. Needing to develop the potential and strength of Thai SMEs, in the digital economy, to enable sustainable economic growth and solve the weakness of SMEs, through the concept of 3s strategies. Firstly, "Start," development should focus on new entrepreneurs, start-up, and small enterprises to be strong and of an international standard. Secondly, "Strong," the development should focus on existing entrepreneurs to be able to adjust their business plans and competencies, systematically under government policies of competitiveness. And thirdly, "Sustainability," the development should focus on value creation of resources and energy, as much as possible with the least negative impact on the environment and promotion of development, innovation, and technology for sustainable benefit of society. This concept is also in line with the 3rd National Tourism Plan (2023-2027) that focuses on preparedness for change and risks, to meet sustainable growth, as well as the creation of internal strength by promoting domestic tourism, developing modern tourism through use of technology and innovation, scaling up the level of tourism-related staff and entrepreneurs understanding and adapting to the context of new normal tourism, as a break from the past.

These changes will lead to the development of a specific management plan for senior foreign travelers in order to comply with their lifestyle patterns and the behavior when using various services in the new normal after the COVID-19 recovery phase, and to cope with the expansion of the senior foreign travelers market which will become the main potential target of the Thai Tourism Industry in the future.

### **Objective**

1. To study factors in tourism management for senior foreign travelers in Thailand
2. To study senior foreign travelers' quality of life as received from tourism services in Thailand
3. To study senior foreign travelers' s behavior and intention of revisiting Thailand

## Literature

The United Nations held a meeting in 1963 related to international travel and tourism in the city of Rome, Italy, and gave the definition of the word "Tourism" as " a journey to entertain and enjoy, visiting relatives, attending meetings. It is not an occupation and is not a permanent residence," while Jittangwattana & Srikampa (2014, 24) said that tourism management is facilitating services in accordance with the objectives and purpose of tourism and is consistent with goals, considering the real conditions. Including creating social and environmental guidelines, measures, and action plans that consider the conceptual framework of tourism that has been successful. Subsequently, The Office of Tourism Development (2003) described tourism as a trip for stress relief, seeking new experiences, provided that the journey is temporary and the traveler must not be forced to travel. While the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2009, 20) has said that tourism is a relational activity, with the movement of people from permanent residence to temporary residence for non-earning purposes and such activities may create a relationship between the people who travel and the people that service them, while Mill (Mill, 1990, 359) explains that tourism means organizing, all activities related to the service and creating satisfaction for tourists by giving meaning to tourism. The World Tourism Organization (W.T.O) (2015, 16) has concluded tourism means a person's journey from their normal place of residence to another place temporarily for not more than 1 year, to keep in touch, travel is voluntary, can be for recreation, business and other purposes, but not for making a career or earning money.

### 1. Travelers's satisfaction

"Satisfaction" is one of the main factors influencing the decision-making and behavior of tourists, especially their future behavior. Researchers in the past often used tourist satisfaction to reflect the quality of service at tourist attractions (Yoon & Uysal, 2005, 45 - 56), Maslow (Maslow, 1970, 112), describes how people use purpose-seeking pursuits to get something meaningful for oneself. Maslow asserts that humans are "animals with wants" and it is difficult to reach the point of complete satisfaction, because when a person is satisfied with one thing, the demand for other satisfactions continues, never ending. These are innate needs, which are arranged in order of demand from a First step, then up the hierarchy of needs, noting that the lower tiers must be filled before they can advance to the higher tiers respectively.

Figure 1



**Figure 1** Applying Maslow's concept of needs to satisfy tourists  
(Source: Maslow, 1970, 112)

## 2. Service quality

Kotler (2003, 438); Rust et al. (2004, 109 - 127) and Zeithaml et al. (2013, 89) have defined service quality similarly, in that it is the ability to meet the needs of a business or customers, and relates to the Marketing Mix, (1) Product (2) Price (3) Distribution channels, Sales (Place) (4) (Promotion) (5) Personnel (6) Process (7) Physical Environment and (8) Productivity and Quality. 1) A product is something that meets a human need, the seller offers to the customer and customer receives the benefits and value of the product 2) Price is a factor that shows the value of the product in money The customer is able to compare the value of the product and the price of the product, if the value is higher than the price the customer will decide to buy, so setting the price for the product, should be appropriate to the level of value of the product. 3) Distribution channel (Place) is a factor related to the ambiance when presenting products which effects customer perception of value and the benefits of the products offered. Marketing promotion is one of the factors that are important in communicating with customers, with the stated purpose to influence attitudes and behaviors in the decision to purchase the product; 5) People, staff are an important factor that alerts customers to the quality of service. Tourism and Hotel Business recruit conscientious personnel with a readiness to serve. 6) Process is the designing, planning, and provision of business service so as it does not cause confusion, works well, quickly and efficiently. 7) Physical environment is a criterion that helps in decision making in the use of services such as the beauty of tourist attractions, cleanliness, accommodation, the availability of equipment and facilities that can impress and build confidence in senior foreign travelers. 8) Productivity and quality is a success indicator that emphasizes both quantity and quality of goods and services, good value, and exceeds expectations.

### 3. Quality of life

Flanagan (1978); Cummins et al. (1998, 103) and Campbell et al. (2010) have described today tourists as traveling to meet their own satisfaction, escaping from the daily life to find new experiences, including visiting relatives or friends, relaxation, comfort, enjoyment, happiness and a better quality of life. Fekete et al. (2006, 299) and Puezko & Smith (2012, 218) argue that quality of life is an integrated component. The important components of quality of life are health and standard of living, Health being a multidimensional concept that relates to specific types of tourism, for example, emphasizing emotional well-being, yoga, spas, meditation. Health tourism that will positively affect the quality of life, when planning to travel to tourist attractions with the image of relaxed body and mind, reduced stress, a feeling of ease, relieved of aches and pains, happier and healthier. Quality of Life (QOL) can be studied at the level of individuals, families, communities, and regions and country. Quality of life relates to tourism activities. How does the experience of tourism affect the Quality of life? It has a positive impact on life in areas such as family life, social life, leisure life and cultural life. Tourism activities and its relationship with quality of life engages with all stakeholders, starting from the manufacturer, the supplier of the goods and services, leading to the concept of development tourism, with the aim of attracting tourists to return and there by generate income.

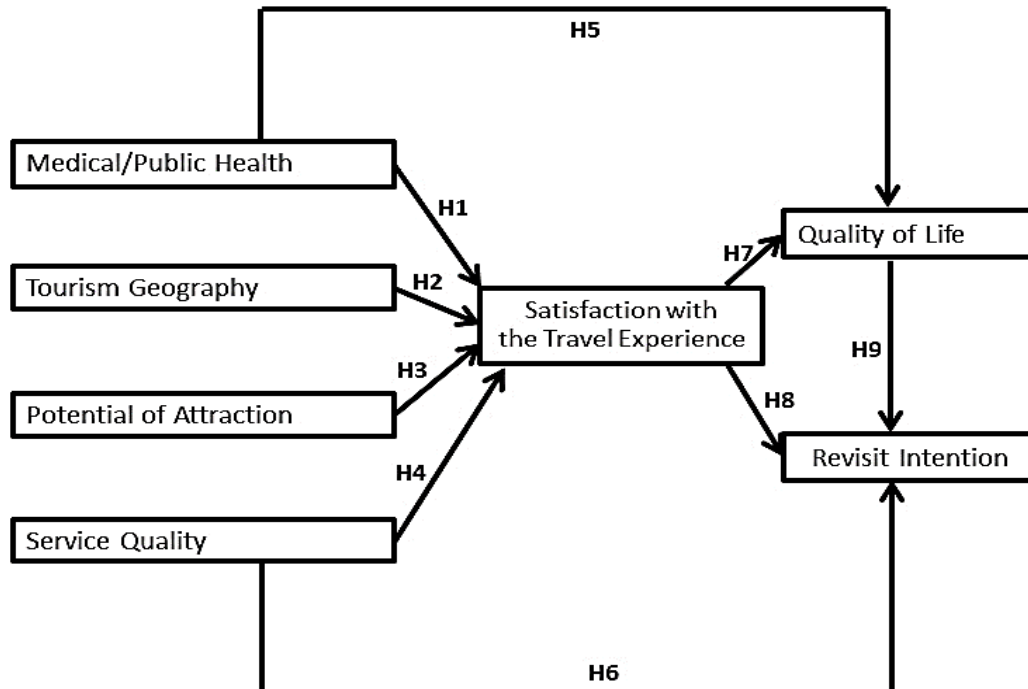
### 4. Senior travelers

Lohmann (1999, 54 - 64) notes the travel behavior of the elderly places importance on health, nutrition, quality of life, and care. Social activities of the elderly and routines are similar to other groups. Studies and forecasts are for travelers to become older and more significant. Senior travelers are approximately 55 - 75 years old. Sangpikul (2007, 39) in a study on tourism incentives for senior Japanese travelers in Thailand used the concept of motivating factors in tourism, focusing on internal factors, that is the needs of tourists searching for novelty, relaxation, and acquiring knowledge. The external factors that attracted attention were the charm of history, culture, tourism management, facilities, shopping, activities, recreation, safety and cleanliness of tourist attractions, etc., while Cathy et al. (2007, 1262) studied the social, economic, cultural and environmental conditions for senior travelers in two of China's major metropolises, Beijing and Shanghai. It was found that Chinese seniors attach great importance to frequent vacations and retirement tourism. The Thai Ministry of Tourism and Sports (2009, 63) collated information on the number of tourists that traveled around the world in 2008. There were 922 million tourists, 53% of total global travelers were in the European region, followed by the Asia-Pacific region, accounting for 20 percent of the world's travelers. The growth and expansion of tourists in the Asia-Pacific region will come from senior travelers. There will be about 700 million senior travelers. According to a study by Inthachak (2009, 84) domestic travel for senior Japanese found that tendency to expand more as a group tourism interested in cultural tourism.

Having gathered relevant information and conceptual frameworks (Figure 2 and 3) assumptions can be formulated:

- 1) Factors of medical/public health tourism management impacts the satisfaction of senior foreign travelers in Thailand. Statistically significant.
- 2) Factors of tourism geography management impacts the satisfaction of senior foreign travelers in Thailand at a statistically significant level.
- 3) Factors of tourism potential management impacts the level of satisfaction of senior foreign travelers in Thailand. Statistically significant.
- 4) Factors of service quality management impacts the satisfaction of senior foreign travelers in Thailand. Statistically significant.
- 5) Factors of medical/ health tourism management impacts the level of satisfaction of senior foreign travelers in Thailand. Statistically significant.
- 6) Factors of service quality management impacts the revisit intension by senior foreign travelers in Thailand at a statistically significant level.
- 7) Satisfaction with the travel experiences by senior foreign travelers in Thailand has a statistically significant effect on their quality of life.
- 8) Satisfaction with the travel experience by senior foreign travelers in Thailand affects the revisit intention at a statistically significant level.
- 9) The quality of life as related to health had a statistically significant effect on the revisit intention by senior foreign travelers in Thailand at a high level.

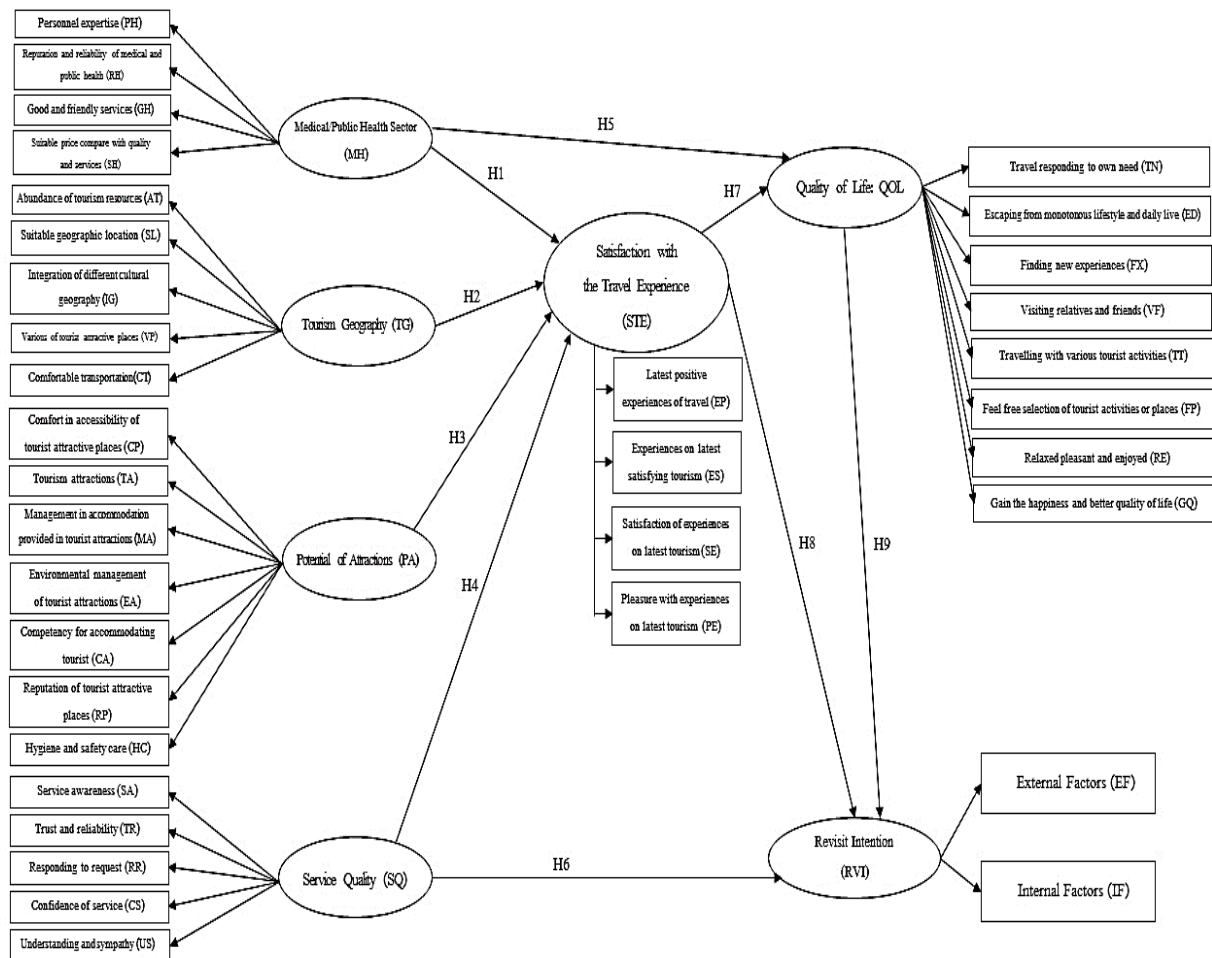
10)



**Figure 2** Research Hypothesis

(Source : Researcher, 2023)





**Figure 3** Conceptual framework used in research  
(Source : Researcher, 2023)

## Methodology

The population used in this research is senior foreign travelers aged 55 years and over (WHO, n.a.), who come from East Asia, Europe, America, South Asia, Oceania, the Middle East, and Africa and have traveled to Thailand at least once. The sample group is based on the criteria of the number of variables in Hair et al. (2010) and is calculated from the ratio between the sample group and the number of variables. For the appropriateness of sampling, therefore, one variable should have at least 10 samples while total number of variables in this research is 36, the samples used for analyzing and collecting data are at least 360 people. The researcher, therefore, randomly selected another 40 people, resulting in increasing numbers of sample up to 400 people. The data were collected by using an online system that has been verified for the validity of the questionnaire by experts. This technique was selected based on the respondents' convenience, speed and safety, given the situation of the COVID-19 outbreak. It also allows the sample to receive questionnaires quickly and can get results in a short time. However, before doing the official data collection, the questionnaire has been tested as prior to data collection the questionnaire was assessed with 30 persons. The collected demographic data



were analyzed by the statistical software, to find percentage, mean and standard deviation. Multivariate analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis are applied to find the relationship among several variables, meanwhile Multiple Discriminant Analysis is applied to study several independent variables that directly or indirectly influence the creation of a structural equation model (SEM).

## Results

The preliminary data analysis is the majority of foreign senior travelers come from East Asia, are male, aged between 55 - 60 years old, graduated with a bachelor's degree are married and have visited Thailand more than once. Table 1.

**Table 1** Numbers and percentage of general information regarding respondents (n=400)

Personal information	Grouping	Number	Percentage
Travelers' regions	East Asia	173	43.3
	Europe	56	14.0
	America	32	8.0
	South Asia	74	18.5
	Oceania	3	0.8
	Middle Asia	13	3.2
	Others	49	12.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Sex	Male	198	49.5
	Female	194	48.5
	LGBT	8	2.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Age	55 - 60 Years	326	81.5
	61 - 65 Years	49	12.2
	66 – 70 Years	9	2.3
	Over 70 years	16	4.0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>100.0</b>
Highest Educational Attainment	Less than Bachelor Degree	70	17.5
	Bachelor Degree	192	48.0
	Higher than Bachelor Degree	138	34.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Marital Status	Single	101	25.3
	Married	255	63.7
	Separated	9	2.2
	Widowed	28	7.0
	Divorced	7	1.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Experiences of travelling Thailand	1 time	38	9.5
	More than 1 time	362	90.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The factors that the senior foreign travelers in Thailand were most satisfied with were medical/public health “Because I was impressed with the good and friendly service.” Factors in tourism geography, “I was impressed with variety of tourist attractions.” Factor of the potential of tourist attractions, “I was impressed with the reputation of a tourist attractions and the quality of service.” Service quality, “I was impressed with the understanding and empathy of service providers.” Table 2.

**Table 2** The overall level of opinions about tourism management factors of Foreign Senior Travelers in Thailand

<b>Tourism management factors of senior foreign travelers in Thailand</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>The overall level</b>
Medical/Public Health	4.51	0.63	The most
Tourism Geography	4.48	0.64	The most
Potential of Attractions	4.26	0.71	The most
Service Quality	4.27	0.67	The most
<b>Total average</b>	<b>4.38</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>The most</b>

In terms of satisfaction with trip experience impressed with having a full rest. Receive positive service and attitude from the attraction, including the great deals of the attraction, generate positive satisfaction and delight with the recent travel experience which can be described as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3** The overall level of opinion about satisfaction with trip experience

<b>Satisfaction with the travel experience</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>The overall level</b>
Latest positive experiences of travel	4.27	0.71	The most
Experiences on latest satisfying tourism	4.39	0.68	The most
Satisfaction of experiences on latest tourism	4.37	0.69	The most
Pleasure with experiences on latest tourism	4.04	0.55	High
<b>Total average</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>The most</b>

Senior foreign travelers are highly satisfied with their overall quality of life during their travel experience in Thailand. Especially in terms of relaxation, comfort, and enjoyment. With gaining new experiences, traveling whilst meeting their own needs, having the freedom to choose activities/attractions, getting enjoyment from escaping the monotony of everyday life. Table 4.

**Table 4** The overall level of opinion about quality of Life of senior foreign travelers

Quality of life of senior foreign travelers	Mean	S.D.	The overall level
Travel responding to own need	4.34	0.59	The most
Escaping from monotonous lifestyle and daily live	4.27	0.83	The most
Finding new experiences	4.35	0.74	The most
Visiting relatives and friends	3.80	1.01	High
Travelling with various tourist activities	4.15	0.91	High
Feel free selection of tourist activities or places	4.31	0.71	The most
Relaxed pleasant and enjoyed	4.46	0.66	The most
Gain the happiness and better quality of life	4.28	0.73	The most
<b>Total average</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>The most</b>

Regarding the likelihood or return visit by senior foreign travelers, the overall satisfaction was the highest. Especially as it related to external factor, the price of products and services being appropriate. Building interest with attractive sales promotions and well-placed advertising and publicity. In addition, there was the great satisfaction as it related to internal factors, creating the desire to return in the future. Including being willing to incur additional expenses from tourism and would recommend telling others to travel more in the future to Thailand. Table 5.

**Table 5** The overall level of opinion about senior foreign travelers on revisit intention, on external and internal factors

Revisit Intention	Mean	S.D.	The overall level
<b>External Factors</b>			
Access to advertising and continuous public relations	3.99	0.83	High
Interested in sales promotions	4.04	0.83	High
Product pricing and service is appropriate	4.14	0.74	High
<b>Internal Factors</b>			
Wanting to travel again and again in the future	4.42	0.59	The most
To recommend and tell others to come and travel	4.35	0.73	The most
Being willing to spend more	4.16	0.80	High
<b>Total average</b>	<b>4.18</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>High</b>

From the confirmatory factor analysis, it was found that the medical/public health factors, tourism location, the quality of service and satisfaction with recent travel experiences is positive. Wanting to travel again and again in the future, revisiting to use the service again is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Table 6 and 7.

**Table 6** Correlation coefficient of the latent variable

	MH	TG	PA	SQ	STE	QOL	RVI
<b>Mean</b>	4.51	4.48	4.26	4.27	4.28	4.28	4.29
<b>SD</b>	0.63	0.64	0.71	0.67	0.55	0.69	0.61
<b>MH</b>							
<b>TG</b>	0.140**						
<b>PA</b>	0.197**	0.171**					
<b>SQ</b>	0.225**	0.191**	0.256**				
<b>STE</b>	0.147**	0.222**	0.270**	0.287**			
<b>QOL</b>	0.106*	0.115*	0.144**	0.207**	0.354**		
<b>RVI</b>	0.164*	0.134**	0.153**	0.115*	0.239**	0.161**	

\*\*p-value <0.01, \*p-value <0.05

**Table 7** Relationship between external and internal variables positively affecting intention to return for quality of life by senior travelers in Thailand

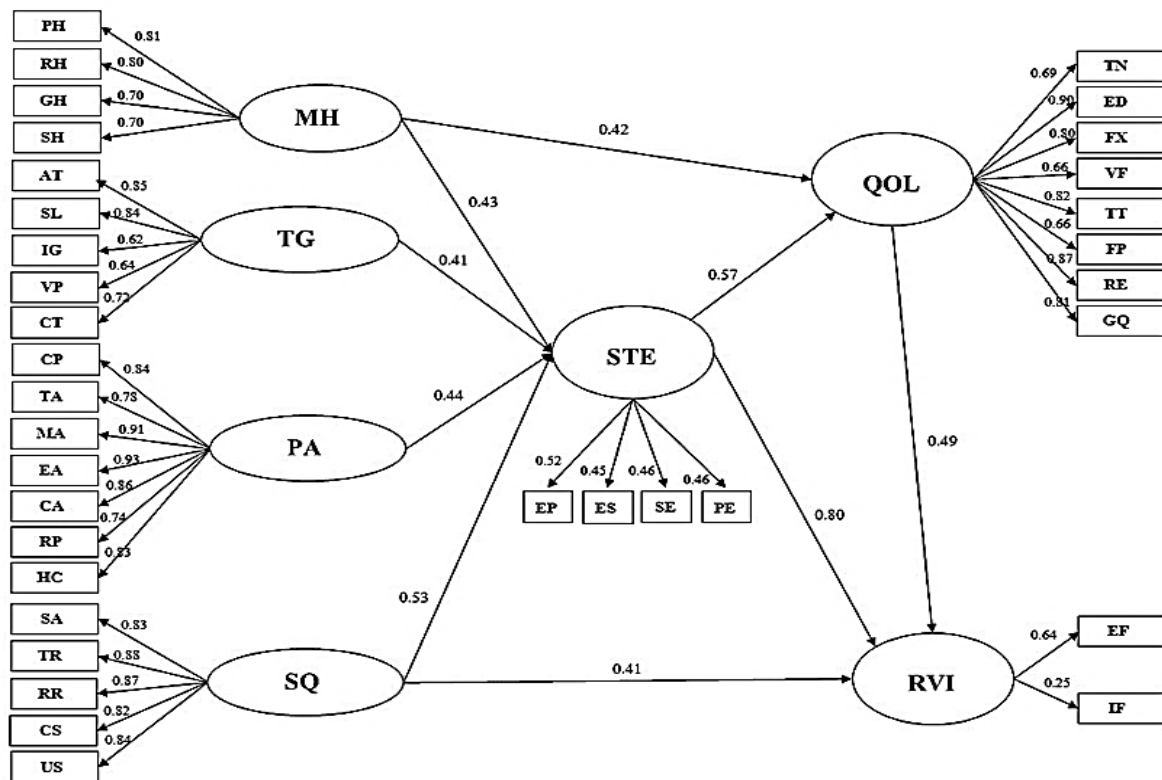
Latent Variable		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
external	(Constant)	2.522	0.352			7.162	0.000**
	MH	0.002	0.049	0.002	0.200	0.039	0.000**
	TG	0.067	0.048	0.071	0.150	1.397	0.000**
	PA	0.069	0.045	0.079	0.290	1.526	0.000**
	SQ	0.014	0.048	0.015	0.300	0.288	0.000**
	STE	0.251	0.050	0.170	0.600	5.033	0.000**
internal	QOL	0.069	0.046	0.078	0.529	1.501	0.000**
	RVI	0.108	0.043	0.123	0.630	2.530	0.000**

\* p-value <0.05, \*\* p-value <0.01

From the analysis of the model based on the research and comparing the consistency between the developed model and the empirical data the statistical values used to check the concordance consisted of chi-squared values ( $\chi^2$ ), relative chi-squared values ( $\chi^2/\text{df}$ ), relative conformity index (CFI), and statistical values. harmoniousness (GFI), adjusted harmoniousness index (AGFI), and root mean square of error of estimation (RMSEA). The results of the analysis showed that there is a consistency between the developed model and the empirical data. The researcher has adjusted the model (Model Modification) by considering the recommendations for parameterization in the model with Model Modification Indices: MI. (after model adjustment) Table 8 and Figure 4.

**Table 8** Model consistency index causal and outcome relationship of returning behavior for quality of life of senior foreign travelers in Thailand (after model adjustment)

Statistics used in inspection	Criteria used for consideration	Calculated value	Result of consideration
$\chi^2$	There was no statistical significance at the 0.05 level	326.50	-
df	-	180	-
p-value	$p > 0.05$	0.21	-
$\chi^2/df$	$\chi^2/df < 2$	1.81	pass the criteria
CFI	$\geq 0.95$	0.97	pass the criteria
GFI	$\geq 0.95$	0.97	pass the criteria
AGFI	$\geq 0.95$	0.96	pass the criteria
RMSEA	$< 0.05$	0.02	pass the criteria



Chi-square = 326.50, df = 180, P-value = 0.21, RMSEA = 0.02

**Figure 4** Results of the causal and correlational model analysis of the service with intention to revisit for the quality of life of senior foreign travelers in Thailand. (After modifying the model)

## Discussions

Tourism management factors of senior foreign travelers in Thailand are of 4 levels of importance: medical/public health, tourism location, the potential of a tourist attraction, and quality of service. This is consistent with the senior foreign travelers in Thailand wanting cover in medical/public health (Medical/Public Health), Thailand has applied forms of treatment and health promotion to increase the variety of health care services and tourism entrepreneurs have brought natural and alternative medicine for health tourism. This is in line with the principles of medical theory that emphasize health prevention rather than disease treatment integrating alternative medicine in private hospitals, nursing centers or spa establishments, For receiving the service travelers will mostly likely choose health tourism activities or rehabilitation in natural attractions. to further a feeling of relaxation of the whole body and promote better health (Erfurt-Cooper & Cooper, 2008, 5) list factors that induce foreign travelers to choose health services in Thailand: 1) expertise, 2) services, 3) reasonable prices, 4) tourism, and 5) available information. (Lau & Mckercher, 2004, 41)

Prueksikanon et al. (2008, 94 - 95) studied the competitiveness of medical tourism industry. The study found that currently, Thailand is a center for medical care and medical tourism in Asia with a higher market share than other countries in the region. Thailand's important foreign patient markets are Asia-Pacific countries such as Australia, ASEAN, Japan, etc., although medical tourism is a relatively small market compared to other foreign patient markets. It is mainly driven by the private sector. Pattharapinyophong & Sukpatch (2019, 5 - 12) Studied the opportunities and challenges of Thailand becoming a center of medical tourism in the ASEAN region. The study found that Thailand has many capabilities and resources. The tourist infrastructure as well as the natural and cultural attractions available in Thailand are world-class and attract travelers from around the world. And the growth of the medical tourism industry has been an economic phenomenon, resulting in many countries in Southeast Asia such as Singapore and Malaysia being interested in and competing in the medical tourism sector. But Thailand has several competitive advantages, Thailand is known as a popular tourist destination and its reputation has promoted medical tourism to the extent that tourism is partially the basis for medical tourism (Burkett et al., 2007, 223; Kelly & Connell, 2013)

Satisfaction with the travel experience is positive. Thailand has managed tourism factors appropriately to meet the needs of tourists by utilizing the concept of "satisfaction" one of the main factors influencing tourists' decisions, especially the future decisions of tourists to return, with tourist satisfaction reflecting the quality of service provided by tourist attractions. (Yoon & Uysal, 2005, 45 - 56) by Maslow (Maslow, 1970, 112) has explained that people search for the meaningful experiences in life and where there is a need, desire, gain something meaningful to oneself there is motivation to achieve 1) physical satisfaction, 2) safety, 3) needs satisfaction, and 4) self-esteem 5) Satisfaction with true self-understanding. This is in line with research by Devesa et al. (2010, 547), which examined tourism incentives affecting tourist satisfaction in local tourist destinations in Spain. The study found that local tourist attractions

in Spain attract foreign elderly tourists of which there are 4 categories: tourists looking for natural recreation, cultural tourists, nature tourists, and tourists who return for other reasons or purposes such as meeting friends, relatives, family, etc., Satisfaction directly correlated with tourism incentives and the service provided at the tourist attractions. Those that responded to the needs of tourists the most both in terms of attractions and service is had the highest level of tourist satisfaction.

The quality of life of senior foreign travelers is very important. It also influences the decision to return Subjective QOL uses social science indicators, such as life satisfaction, happiness, physical well-being, quality of life, etc. Currently, traveling on their own to escape from the monotonous lifestyle daily life to find new experiences visiting relatives or friends and doing business, etc. When satisfied, they will be happy and consider a return visit. Having a better life and quality of life is the heart of tourism management, including perceived overall feelings of well-being, The 3 important elements of quality of life are health, living standards and well-being (Cummins et al., 2012). Living standards, senior foreign travelers must have income to some degree to travel. Most of them are people with a good financial status and live in the western hemisphere. Tourism also improves the quality of life of senior foreign travelers on many levels. (Puezko & Smith, 2012). Combining personal success self-development and social responsibility in the quality of life. The Global Wellness Institute (2007) also proposed that the overall quality of life includes physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and occupational dimensions.

Kotler et al. (2006, 121) states that the structure of the world's population has changed. into an aging society as a result, long stay tourism or tourism with long-term stays whose purpose is recreation is very popular in the 21st century due to the "Baby Boomer" era entering retirement age from work This population has very high purchasing power. ability to spend money No worries about costs because they are experienced in life, they are careful when choosing to buy various products and services. Therefore, the tourism patterns and behaviors that are characteristic of retired or elderly tourists are: (1) emphasizing tourism and good quality services; (2) considering the value of buying the service (3) wanting confidence in safety (4) wanting confidence in the service. (5) Need activities that are suitable for age and health.

Senior foreign travelers' behavior on revisit intention is very important. It is a situation where a person uses the product more than once. The patterns of reusing the service are diverse. Factors for reusing services consist of external factors arising from the tourism business, such as advertising, public relations, promotions, setting prices of products and services. transportation of goods, etc., in order to create a market. Internal factors of tourists, namely consumer attitudes towards a brand, the number of purchases per person and duration of purchase per time and demographic characteristics, using the service repeatedly arises from the satisfaction of tourists, which, according to Lennon et al. (2001, 51 - 62), Internal sources of information, including personal experience. or learning from the experiences of others This is derived from collecting word-of-mouth information about services provided by other organizations to consumers. and external sources of information such as advertising, various publications, with knowledge and understanding of that information consumers will be able to



decide what they should buy or use. Loyalty that arises from the behavior of consumers who have the intention or want to come back again and again may be regarded as a commitment to return to use the service or purchase again. Therefore, customer loyalty is a valuable asset. by returning to use the service repeatedly and by word of mouth to friends and family members businesses save on the cost of acquiring new customers. According to Lovelock et al. (2005, 37) and Chen & Tsai (2007, 1115). Especially nowadays word of mouth is important. In business competition, whether it is a business service, recipients are not just an individualized service, but is a service to the network of service recipients. The reason why word of mouth is very important in today's travel services (Rosen, 2000, 72) is due to 1) tourists cannot receive news 2) tourists must communicate with each other. By defining the key factors to measure tourist loyalty (Robinson & Etherington, 2006, 6-8) are 1) repeat travel, 2) recommendation and 3) willingness to pay more. Therefore, to create tourism satisfaction of senior foreign travelers. which is an emerging market that has high growth potential in the future. Because it is a quality market and has higher purchasing power than tourists in the general market, the senior travelers have different travel styles and behaviors from general tourists. The focus must be on travel and services that are of good quality, worthwhile, focusing on buying for reasons, not emotions, giving priority to satisfaction. Senior stay longer than other groups of travelers, have the ability to purchase services at high prices from having saved money from working hard all their lives, They choose activities that are appropriate for age and health.

Senior people often have more travel requirements than young people. Therefore, preparation to support this market group needs to be studied in detail. At the same time, many ASEAN countries, such as Singapore, are accelerating their overseas marketing efforts to attract and increase their capacity to support the expansion of the senior traveler market. Because they see business growth opportunities and trends from behavioral changes of consumers who turn to pay attention to health care to prevent disease, including anti-aging for beauty The Malaysian government grants senior citizens from Japan the right to enter the country without a visa. And get other privileges like Malaysian old people to attract old people into the country, etc. (Bangkok Business, 2014, 62) and in line with the research of Choi (2007) to study and search for information on the leisure travel behavior of Chinese people. The study found that behavior of mainland Chinese people who come to travel in Macau. Most travelers decide to travel by searching for attractions on the website. Most Chinese travelers go online to search for tourist attractions. According to a survey of 3,220 Asian travelers traveling between July and September 2005, 1,725 travelers chose to visit Macao for the reason.

### **Conclusion and suggestions**

Most of the incoming senior foreign travelers come from East Asia, and they prioritize Thailand's tourism management in terms of medical/public health. Senior foreign travelers choose to use health services in Thailand, because there are doctors with expertise, good service and reasonable price.

The diverse and dynamic locations of tourism in Thailand gives a very positive contribution to the recent travel experiences of senior foreign travelers and makes travel very popular and delights senior foreign travelers with their latest travel experiences.

Quality of life of senior foreign travelers in Thailand is improved by giving satisfaction through relaxation, comfort and enjoyment, and new experiences from traveling that meet their needs. Having the freedom to choose activities and attractions brings more happiness, making senior foreign travelers feel that they have a better quality of life especially to escape the daily way of life, while some of them can be visit relatives or friends at the same time.

When satisfied with the impressive travel experience, it is not difficult for senior foreign travelers to have the desire to return to use the service again in the future for sure. Because they are satisfied with the pricing of products and services that are appropriate.

In order to have a positive effect on the Thai tourism industry after the COVID-19 situation it is necessary for government and private sectors to accelerate their strengths and improve the weaknesses in tourism management in terms of service quality, the potential of a tourist attraction, create incentives for senior foreign travelers. In addition, it must help strengthen business operators in the tourism industry to have liquidity and increase channels to expand more target groups especially the development of tourism management methods in a specific format for the senior foreign travelers. To be consistent with their life choices and behavior when using a variety of services under the new normal tourism, and to support the expansion of the senior foreign travelers market, which will be the main target that will generate income and has potential for the Thai tourism industry in the future.

### **New knowledge and the effects on society and communities**

This research found that senior foreign travelers who come to travel in Thailand will pay attention to the factors of medical tourism management/public health and is an incentive to come back to use the service again and again. Therefore, all sectors involved in the tourism industry must study the forms and methods to integrate operations across agencies that promote tourism, such as tourism by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports with entrepreneurs working together to organize tourism activities for senior foreign travelers. Including coordinating with other regions to promote tourism in little known regions, both in terms of marketing and public relations. There should be a study to prepare tourist guides for senior foreign travelers.

The final take away is that Thailand is well placed to become a destination of choice by senior foreign travelers due to a world standard health care system, an open and friendly people, the high quality of life it offers to the tourists and diverse natural and cultural attraction that can be incorporated into any travel arrangements. Such a combination of factors, along with the push for the development of the sector will ensure senior foreign travelers will return again and again.

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