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## How does the Risk Perception of COVID-19 Affect Thai Consumers' Travel Intention? การรับรู้ความเสี่ยงของ COVID-19 ส่งผลต่อความตั้งใจในการเดินทางของผู้บริโภคชาวไทยอย่างไร?

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ของผู้บริโภคชาวไทยอย่างไร?

- An Introductory Question to Understand During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- คำถามเบื้องต้นที่ต้องทำความเข้าใจระหว่างการระบาดของ COVID-19

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Received : May 3, 2021 Revised : May 17, 2021 Accepted : May 20, 2021

## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic took place within a short time and affected all countries. Thailand is one of the countries that rely on the tourism industry. The pandemic impact of COVID-19 has severely affected travelers' travel. The Thai government has encouraged Thai people to travel through tourism promotion programs, of course it rarely contributes to the growth of the tourism industry. This academic paper explores Thai consumers' travel intentions and travel behaviors through the lens of the concepts of risk perception and planned behaviour theory. The discussion results on this academic paper help marketers understand the in-depth behaviour of the travel intentions of Thai travelers so that they can lead to a more effective marketing plan.

**Keywords :** COVID-19; Risk Perception; Intention Behavior; Thai Consumer; Thai Traveller

## บทคัดย่อ

การแพร่ระบาดของ COVID-19 เกิดขึ้นภายในระยะเวลาอันสั้นและส่งผลกระทบต่อทุกประเทศ ประเทศไทยเป็นหนึ่งในประเทศที่พึ่งพาอุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยว ผลกระทบจากการแพร่ระบาดของ COVID-19 ส่งผลกระทบต่อการเดินทางของนักท่องเที่ยวอย่างรุนแรง รัฐบาลไทยสนับสนุนให้คนไทยเดินทางท่องเที่ยวผ่านโครงการส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวซึ่งแน่นอนโครงการดังกล่าวไม่ค่อยมีส่วนช่วยในการเติบโตของอุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยว บทความวิชาการฉบับนี้สำรวจความตั้งใจในการเดินทางและพฤติกรรมการเดินทางของผู้บริโภคชาวไทยผ่านมุมมองของแนวคิดการรับรู้ความเสี่ยงและทฤษฎีพฤติกรรมตามแผน ผลการอภิปรายในเอกสารวิชาการนี้ช่วยให้นักการตลาดเข้าใจพฤติกรรมเชิงลึกของความตั้งใจในการเดินทางของนักเดินทางชาวไทยเพื่อนำไปสู่แผนการตลาดที่มีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น



**คำสำคัญ :** COVID-19; การรับรู้ความเสี่ยง; พฤติกรรมความตั้งใจ; ผู้บริโภคชาวไทย; นักท่องเที่ยวชาวไทย

## Introduction

According to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was established that the disease would spread to all continents within a short period and most likely affect all countries. In order to be able to manage infectious diseases and keep them under control, the Thai government try to take a solution to be able to identify infectivity, development of vaccines, contact tracing and isolation, which it believes that much of the above is due to human behaviour. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of Thai people in the risk zone following behavioural recommendations from authorities to prevent infections through precautionary measures such as wearing masks, hand hygiene and insulation. In connection with all decisions and measures introduced during the ongoing pandemic, individuals in society are affected. Okoi, et al. (2021) noted that events such as natural disasters significantly impact people's thoughts and feelings. It could explain that many individuals also tend to react with emotions and make emotional decisions on such occasions. It can explain that individuals must review their actions in a situation like COVID-19, contrary to what they would typically do. As this is not a normal situation, it is not easy to know how to act and think. In connection with COVID-19, various questions arise in individuals, for example, whether it is acceptable to go out or travel to another destination. Heydari et al. (2021) further demonstrated that the emotions evoked during such a situation could affect ones daily decisions, for example, deciding to stay at home due to worrying feelings. The prevailing circumstances

in the world have led to the Thai government introducing a dissuasion from unnecessary travel to other countries. This, in turn, leads to individuals having to rethink their decisions whether to travel or stay at home. There are also other consequences resulting from the current situation that people cannot influence, such as the cancellation of flights and the closing of borders by countries.

Many factors can negatively affect tourism and the hospitality industry. Rajitha & Santhosh (2021) mentioned that events such as terrorist attacks and outbreaks of infectious diseases reinforce the public's concern about safe travel. Trifiletti et al. (2021) demonstrated that the terrorist attacks had had a significant impact on our view of travel safety and security. The whole world has been affected by the ongoing pandemic, COVID-19. Youn & Ha-Brookshire (2021) determined that strict restrictions on travel have been introduced in connection with the pandemic, especially regarding international air travel. The viral disease has also affected the business community globally where, among other things, entertainment, tourism, transport and services have been affected (Ammar, et. al, 2020). All measures taken have contributed to changes in social behaviour, economic activities and the environment (Prasetyo et al., 2020). Wang et al. (2021) also exposed that the pandemic affects the general state of health, social relations and the economy.

As the previous research on human behaviour and attitudes during a pandemic is limited, it is interesting, just as Lehberger, Kleih & Sparke (2021) exposed, to study the effects of such a situation on society. They believe that it is essential to investigate and document what happens during this pandemic from the perspective of many different groups. Partly because it gives lessons and experiences from



such a time of crisis and that during this pandemic should be documented to be then able to reflect on its actions. The consequences of a pandemic lead to people's behaviour being affected by several different factors such as personal finances, perceived health risks, and changed consumption capacity. Since the pandemic COVID-19 is relevant at the time of writing, the author believes that this paper is relevant for investigating the behaviour of Thai consumers.

Thailand is one of the countries that rely on the tourism industry (Atcharee Manakij & Prasopchai Pasunon, 2020). The epidemic effect of COVID-19, which severely affects the travel of tourists. The Thai government has encouraged Thai people to travel through a tourism promotion project called “We Travel Together” (in Thai โครงการเราเที่ยวด้วยกัน) which has been operated by Ministry of Tourism and Sports (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2021). The project aimed to stimulate public spending through domestic tourism. It is expected to increase liquidity for hoteliers and related businesses and support creating jobs and the country's overall economic recovery. For this project, the government contributed 40% of the hotel price per room per night, no more than 3,000 baht per room per night, limited to a maximum of 15 rooms or 15 nights, do not cancelled or changed later. Moreover, the government supports food and travel coupons worth 900 baht per room per night to the public when the hotel check-in is booming, but only on Monday - Thursday people will receive 900 baht and Friday - Sunday receive 600 baht for food and travel once a day after 5 a.m. of the check-in in the date. Coupons will expire at 11:59 p.m. of the check-out in the date which including food/travel coupons can be used at restaurants and attractions. The

Participating in the project will pay 60%, and the government supports the other 40% through coupons. Of course, the more popular program will encourage more Thai consumers to travel to help out with the COVID-19 outbreak, but Thai consumers are at risk from the COVID-19 outbreak. It rarely results in the growth of the tourism industry.

This paper state how the risk perception of COVID-19 affects Thai consumers' travel intentions and travel behaviours? Also, the purpose of this academic paper is to gain an insight into how Thai consumers view travel during COVID-19 and their attitudes about travelling, which this paper has been seen through the lens of the concepts of crisis and risk, risk perception and the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). To understand Thai traveller behaviours, it was also considered essential to study consumers' perceptions of risk. As there is a lack of knowledge about consumer behaviour in widespread viral diseases, the intention is to contribute new knowledge in the business and marketing area.

The following section presents previous research and the theoretical framework that has been relevant to the purpose of this paper. The following section begins with a review of the concepts of crisis and risk and their connection to each other. Furthermore, crises and risks, individuals' perception of risk and the role of the mass media in crises are presented. Finally, the theory TPB for understanding Thai consumers' travel intentions and travel behaviours under COVID-19 is presented.

## **Risk Perception of COVID-19 impact on Thai consumers' travel behaviours**

Events such as the crises mentioned above impact individuals'



thoughts and feelings (Chou, Chi & Yao, 2008). The human intellect has developed in such a way as to be able to survive everyday activities and adapt to activities of the human environment that can be risky. Zhang et al. (2021) described that risk is about the knowledge about the probability of something happening, which further contributes to how man will act. Nevertheless, because human is not wholly rational, it can be challenging to concretize the actual probabilities. Individuals interpret the concept of risk in different ways (Elias & Shiftan, 2012) (Arslanca, et al. 2021).

Tardivo et al. (2020) stated that individuals behave differently depending on how the risks are perceived. Age is a factor that can also affect the individual's perception of risk. Aydin, Arica & Arslanturk (2021) argued that the risk behaviour of adolescents is often considered to be characterized by excessive feelings of invulnerability, suggesting that these feelings are more prevalent in adolescents than in adults. Fletcher, Higham & Longnecker (2021) described that adolescents and young adults understand the risks at least somehow and wise but can still choose to carry out risky behaviour. However, Okoi et al. (2021) exposed that older people appreciate the risk of COVID-19 being less than young people. When individuals feel that they are at risk of becoming infected with infectious diseases, individuals tend to change their behaviour in such a way that they, among other things, improve their hygiene, distance themselves socially and are susceptible to being vaccinated (Huang, Nie & Zhu, 2021). Heydari et al. (2021) described that individuals act based on the perceived advantages and disadvantages from information related to a contagious viral disease, such as the spread of the viral disease and how serious it is. Nagai, Tkaczynski & Benckendorff (2020)

expressed that risk perceptions are often biased in such a way that they can be positive or negative. Excessively positive attitudes towards health risks often have a close connection to familiar risks to the individual and over which one has control. This can lead to precautionary measures not being taken, and one can feel a type of security that is untrue. Excessively negative attitudes arise more often with new risks that are unknown and are considered to be less controllable. These extreme negative attitudes towards risks can create a collective fear (Morakabati, Fletcher & Prideaux, 2012). Increased risk awareness of a virus and protective measures occur through the collection of information by the individual via various types of sources.

According to Morakabati, Fletcher & Prideaux (2012), there are two types of emotions that are important for risk perception; expectant and expected emotions. Expectant emotions mean immediate internal emotions that arise when someone is exposed to risk, the emotions can consist of anxiety and fear. The expected emotions are about the consequences the individual is expected to feel from a decision. Elias & Shiftan (2012) mentioned that the physical distance between the individual and the danger is an example of is a factor that affects the individual's perception of risk. However, the perception of risk changes in the spread of pandemics as they are considered invisible in addition to media reports (Tardivo et al. 2020). Most countries rarely discover what the actual spread of infection looks like and how great of a threat it poses. Individuals react and act differently according to how information is presented, whether the information is interpreted positively or negatively by the recipient.



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Based on the compiled concept and theory shown above, this paper can state that most Thai travellers may perceive risk as something negative. In this paper, it was clarified that risk was considered a situation where there is a probability that something undesirable may occur, which is in line with Okoi et al. (2021) described the risk the possibility that an event will have consequences. In this paper's view, most Thai travellers will mention the concepts negatively and undesirably when asked what risk meant to them. However, some Thai traveller may mention that risk does not always have to be negative and refers to the context of high risk, high reward. It was also mentioned that risk is the probability that a particular event occurs, as Huang, Nie & Zhu (2021) also took about the risk to measure how likely a consequence of an action is. Although it appeared in the Thai traveller perspective that risk was considered something negative, COVID-19 was perceived as more severe by some and less severe by others. The Thai traveller perceives risks in different ways and is also confirmed by Nagai, Tkaczynski & Benckendorff (2020) which means that risk is interpreted in different ways by individuals.

Because some young Thai travellers may perceive that the risk perception of COVID-19 may be overly optimistic, as Fletcher, Higham & Longnecker (2021) described, adolescents more often tend to have an inflated sense of invulnerability to adults. Arslanca et al. (2021) also described that young adults can understand the risks but still choose to perform risky behaviours. The Thai traveller' perspective may point that they can follow with recommendations and restrictions which have been introduced are followed in order to avoid risks that may arise in connection with COVID-19. The majority considered that Thai traveller follows the guidelines by keeping their distance,

improving their hygiene and distancing themselves socially. Since individuals of all ages have taken the measures, the Thai traveller's young age may seem insignificant, even though Zhang, et al. (2021) claimed that older people estimate the risk of COVID-19 to be less than young people. According to Aydin, Arica & Arslanturk (2021), a behaviour change pointed that it is common when individuals feel that the traveller is at risk of becoming infected with infectious diseases. The changed behaviour may include improved hygiene, social distancing, and susceptibility to the vaccine. The excessively positive attitudes towards COVID-19, which according to Okoi et al. (2021), may lead to precautionary measures not being taken and that one can feel a type of security that is untrue. These some travellers do not fully follow the guidelines because the information received based on the information received is greater than the disadvantages of COVID-19. Zhao et al. (2018) stated that travellers would act based on their perceived advantages and disadvantages from information related to a contagious viral disease. Nagai, Tkaczynski & Benckendorff (2020) also mentioned that excessively positive attitudes to health risks might be due to the individual being familiar with similar risks and feeling that he or she has control over it, which in this case may be a factor as to why precautionary measures are not taken seriously. However, the Thai traveller who considered COVID-19 as life-threatening and tried to isolate themselves at home may indicate excessively negative attitudes, which expressed arise from new unknown risks not considered to be controllable in the same way. As previously pointed out, COVID-19 is currently a new virus; hence these excessively negative settings can arise. How Thai traveller perceive the risk of COVID-19 may have to do with their physical



distance to the hazard. As COVID-19 is a pandemic, the viral disease is close to everyone, especially for those who live in Thailand, which all Thai traveller do, where the spread of infection has been at its worst. It may also be a reason why the majority perceive the risk with COVID-19 as more significant. Heydari et al. (2021) described that the perception of risk changes with the spread of pandemics as they are considered invisible in addition to mass media reports.

Furthermore, it is also possible to see a clear pattern among Thai travellers; most Thai travellers may think they did not consider COVID-19 a risk to themselves because they are not included in the risk group. This case means that individuals tend to act in different ways depending on the type of risk involved. It is possible to see that these Thai travellers do not perceive COVID-19 as a risk to themselves. It is also possible to see a pattern among the remaining Thai traveller who will express that they considered a risk to existing because they could be potential carriers and thus infect their relatives who are part of the risk group. Fletcher, Higham & Longnecker (2021) pointed an individual's tendency to change their behaviour when traveller experience that there may be a risk of becoming infected. This paper can explain that some Thai traveller expressed concern about their relatives. Hence, they have made sure to be extra careful, which Arslanca et al. (2021) described that individuals' expected behaviour to take more precautionary measures such as social distancing and improving hygiene during a risk period. Expectant and expected emotions are two different emotions that Huang, Nie & Zhu (2021) claimed are essential for risk perception, which described expectant emotions as immediate internal emotions that arise when someone is exposed to risk. When these some Thai traveller were analyzed

that their emotions consist of anxiety and fear, it can explain that the expected emotions are often about the consequences the individual is expected to feel from a decision.

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### **The theory of planned behaviour of COVID-19 impact on Thai consumers' travel behaviours**

Ajzen (2020) described that the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) had become a very influential and popular framework for studying human actions. The theoretical framework continues to be one of the frameworks most used in behavioural studies on COVID-19 pandemic (Ammar et al., 2020) (Kamkankaew, 2020) (Lucarelli, Mazzoli & Severini, 2020) (Prasetyo et al., 2020) (Das et al., 2021) (Lehberger, Kleih & Sparke, 2021) (Rajitha & Santhosh, 2021) (Trifiletti et al., 2021) (Youn & Ha-Brookshire, 2021) (Wang et al., 2021). The theory of planned behaviour was created by Ajzen (2011) and is a further developed theory of the theory of deliberate behaviour (TRA) (Ajzen & Madden, 1986). The theory of planned behaviour explained the relationship between the individual's attitudes and behaviour. In contrast, the theory of planned behaviour assumes that an individual's intentions and perceived behavioural control predict the individual's behaviour and is the theory applied in the study. The intentions indicate how much an individual is willing to perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). The stronger the individual's intentions, the more likely the behaviour will be performed (Ajzen & Madden, 1986). According to the theory of planned behaviour, two independent factors determine the individual's intentions (Ajzen, 2020). The factors are attitude and subjective norm. Ajzen (2011) described that despite the theory of planned behaviour's success, it does not consider essential aspects



as there are claims that an individual's intention is the determining factor for whether the behaviour is performed. This means that the factors attitude and subjective norm will be insufficient in situations where control over the behaviour is not complete when the behaviour is dependent on external factors such as time, money, and other people in situations where the individual does not have voluntary control over the behaviour.

Therefore, the theory of planned behaviour may be insufficient in contexts where control over behaviour is less (Prasetyo et al., 2020). Ajzen (2002) added perceived behavioural control to the theory of planned behaviour, which, together with attitude and subjective norm, shapes the theory of planned behaviour (Ammar et al., 2020). These three factors constitute the theory of planned behaviour and are decisive for the individual's intentions (Ajzen, 2011). Attitude towards the behaviour reflects the individual's positive or negative perception of the behaviour (Lehberger, Kleih & Sparke, 2021). The subjective norm includes the environment's view of behaviour, a presence of social pressure to act or not to act (Ajzen, 1991, 2002) and the individual's perception of the environment's expectations of following institutionalized norms (Das, et. al, 2021). Perceived behavioural control represents how easy or difficult the individual feels to perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 2002, 2011, 2020).

The theory of planned behaviour has been applied in this paper to understand Thai consumers' travel intentions and travel behaviours during ongoing pandemics. Das et al. (2021) determined that attitudes towards how serious COVID-19 have to do with the belief that COVID-19 is a common flu; hence, some preventive and behaviours do not consider the virus. Since the attitudes towards COVID-19 are

polarized, this paper considered it interesting to study these different attitudes in order to be able to understand consumers' travel intentions and travel behaviours. Ammar et al. (2020) determined that the mass media tends to shame individuals' behaviours. Behaviours such as going out, travelling and staying out if a person has reached a certain age (Youn & Ha-Brookshire, 2021). Hence, the subjective norm is also interesting to start from when it comes to studying COVID-19 to investigate whether the consumer's environment influences the consumer's actions. Since the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has introduced a dissuasion from carrying out unnecessary trips to other countries (Trifletti et al., 2021), it is also interesting to see how consumers react to this and how perceived behavioural control plays a role. Furthermore, many countries have introduced different types of restrictions, which also prevents individuals from travelling (Wang et al., 2021).

### **The attitude of COVID-19 impact on Thai consumers' travel behaviours**

Based on the compiled concept and theory shown above, this paper can state that most Thai travellers have a negative perception of COVID-19. The Thai traveller perceives the viral disease negatively may have to do with the Thai traveller's behavioural beliefs. As previously mentioned in the theory section, behavioural beliefs are about what the individual believes the behaviour and influences the individual's attitude towards the behaviour. The Thai traveller believes that travellers currently pose a risk to those as they may be infected with the viral disease, which is in line with what Ajzen and Madden (1986) Ajzen (2002, 2011, 2020) determined, that how the individual



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believes that the behaviour can result in determines the individual's attitude towards the behaviour. In this paper, travelling is currently perceived as something negative. Occurring concepts in the Thai traveller perspective are anxious, at risk, infected and contagious, which indicates a negative perception of COVID-19. Most Thai travellers also mention potential consequences from making a trip in the current situation, which Ajzen and Madden (1986) determined shape attitudes. Some Thai traveller may think that COVID-19 did not affect them, which may mean that they do not have a negative perception of the viral disease and can then lead to choosing to travel when the intentions are affected by, among other things, the attitude to the behaviour Ajzen (2002, 2011, 2020). Lehberger, Kleih & Sparke (2021) confirmed that the attitudes to how serious COVID-19 have to do with the belief that COVID-19 is a common flu; hence, some preventive and behaviours do not consider the virus. Some behaviours are preventative and behaviours that do not consider the virus, which is demonstrated in the results. This indicates that most Thai travellers do not believe that COVID-19 is a common flu as most have negative attitudes towards the viral disease.

This paper hopes that most Thai traveller generally had a negative attitude towards travelling in the current situation. The Thai traveller thought that a trip would affect them. It was clear that COVID-19 had generally negatively affected them, as mentioned above, potential consequences for the behaviour. Despite this point, it appeared that the Thai traveller' perspective that in certain circumstances it would be okay to travel. Some Thai traveler may think that in certain circumstances it would be okay to travel. The

circumstances can be acute where, for example, a family member risks losing his life, but also for work-related purposes. It was also considered more acceptable to travel nationally by car in order not to contribute to further spread of infection. A negative perception of the behavior determines the individual's attitude to the behavior. It is why the Thai traveler may consider accepting travelers in certain circumstances may be due to the fact that the negative perception of refraining from a trip outweighs the negative perception of being infected by COVID-19 during a trip. This paper believe that some Thai traveler, who believes that there are no problems with traveling in the current situation, believes that traveling by car is preferable, but if there are no alternatives, it may be public transport. And some Thai traveler had booked trips canceled by airlines, which has been beyond the individual's control, despite the some Thai traveler believes that it would still have refrained from traveling if the flights had not been canceled. The Thai traveller' attitudes towards the introduced recommendations and restrictions were generally positive, but a majority considered that Thailand could handle the current situation better. The reason why some Thai traveller may point that the authorities should have handled the situation better by introducing stricter and more mandatory rules may be that the Thai traveller have an idea of what the situation may lead to, according to Ajzen (2002, 2011, 2020) determined that behavioural beliefs are linked to what the individual believes the behaviour results. Unlike the other Thai travellers, the recommendations regarding travelling are good, but I do not believe it should be mandatory.



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## Subjective norm of COVID-19 impact on Thai consumers' travel behaviours

Based on the compiled concept and theory, which shown above, this paper can state that most Thai travellers believe that their surroundings would have had a negative attitude towards choosing to travel in the current situation. This paper views that most Thai travellers were influenced by their surroundings, which is the subjective norm that concerns the reference group's view of behaviour. This paper points to the Thai traveller's perspective on the normative beliefs that come into play and believe it is the individual's reference group's view of behaviour. It presents that their reference group had been optimistic about a trip at present but believed that the reference group had had some understanding of the action. It refers to subjective norm also the individual's perception of the reference group expectations of following norms. So this paper can state that the reference group did mind that the respondent travelled as long as the person was healthy and recently travelled. It may be due to the lack of a presence of social pressure from the reference group.

## Perceived behaviour control of COVID-19 impact on Thai consumers' travel behaviours

Based on the compiled concept and theory, which shown above, this paper can determine that most Thai travellers follow the recommendations and restrictions issued by the Thai authorities. Furthermore, it states that the Thai traveller has different opinions and thoughts about which recommendations and restrictions they consider worth following. It can show that most Thai travellers had

about the recommendations and restrictions because you should stay at home if they are ill or have a cold not to infect other people. Concerning recommendations and restrictions concerning travellers, it can be seen that there is a clear pattern of the distribution of opinions and thoughts that the Thai traveller have regarding travelling under COVID-19. Most Thai traveller is following recommendations and restrictions is not the right thing to do, as the Thai traveller has chosen to make trips, which according to the authorities are not necessary and can be expected until the pandemic is over. This behaviour of Thai traveller has indicated that the individual experiences the execution of the behaviour relatively quickly. This paper can explain perceived behaviour control, which includes how easy or difficult the individual feels to perform the behaviour. As previously mentioned, perceived behavioural control is based on beliefs that include time, cost, availability that facilitate or complicate the implementation of the behaviour. Despite the recommendations and restrictions, the Thai traveller has chosen to travel, which indicates that controlling the beliefs has not made it difficult for them to perform the behaviour. Following this theory, the individual of Thai traveller has not considered that the control beliefs hindered the implementation of the behaviour, which led to the actual behavioural control that led to the respondent choosing to travel.

On the other hand, some Thai traveller has taken the responsibility to follow the recommendations and restrictions that have been given and thus decided to cancel their trip following the Thai government's advice on unnecessary travel. The Thai traveller may point out that it had affected one's finances as airline tickets during this period are more expensive than usual. This paper suggests



that control beliefs have played a role in the respondent's behaviour. As previously mentioned in a section on attitude, some Thai traveller may have booked flights that were cancelled by the airlines. It indicates that control over the behaviour was not complete, which is in line with Ajzen and Madden (1986) determined that control over the behaviour is not complete when the behaviour depends on external factors.

An analysis of the theory indicates that the Thai traveller has chosen to change their lifestyle and plan for actions that would typically have been carried out (Kamkankaew, 2017). This paper can explain that Thai traveller, with the help of media during a crisis, has an opportunity to review their regular activities. Furthermore, it is possible to see from the Thai traveller' perspective whether they have taken responsibility in society and changed everyday activities and adapted to the recommendations and restrictions that have been issued.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to gain an insight into how Thai consumers view travelling during COVID-19. Understanding the knowledge about consumers' attitudes and whether the mass media affects them was needed. It was also considered essential to study consumers 'perception of risk to understand consumers' potential travel intentions. Based on compiled results and analyses, conclusions have been compiled based on this paper's issues: how does the risk perception of COVID-19 affect Thai consumers' travel intentions and travel behaviours? Furthermore, how does the mass media affect Thai travellers' attitudes during COVID-19?

The results of this paper show that Thai consumers perceive the concept of risk as something negative and that COVID-19 more or less constitutes a risk for them. Thai consumers may follow the recommendations and restrictions introduced to avoid risks that may arise in connection with COVID-19. The young age of the Thai traveller is irrelevant to how COVID-19 is perceived as a risk. Thai consumers who perceive COVID-19 as a risk have refrained or had refrained from travelling. The reference groups 'negative attitude towards whether Thai consumers had chosen to travel in the current situation affects the Thai traveller' travel intones and travel behaviour. The results of this paper also shown that Thai consumers follow the Thai authorities' travel advice.

Furthermore, the results of this paper also show that consumers experience that media and news updates create anxiety in people through frightening headlines. Thai consumers may also experience that the media withholds the truth, which creates feelings of anxiety. Finally, the results of this paper show that media updates on COVID-19 allow Thai consumers to form their own opinion.

## Suggestion

This paper has identified Thai consumers' travel behaviors and attitudes during the ongoing pandemic COVID-19. The results of this paper shown that Thai consumers follow the Thai authorities' recommendations and restrictions. There is a clear pattern that shown that Thai consumers may define and may perceive risk in different ways, but in general, the concept of risk is perceived negatively. Furthermore, this paper can state to consumers that COVID-19 poses a risk to them. The reason why consumers have a negative



attitude towards the viral disease may have to do with the fact that COVID-19 is a new virus and is perceived as uncontrollable, and why some Thai traveller does not follow the recommendations and restrictions introduced maybe because they perceived the advantages to outweigh the disadvantages of COVID-19. Some Thai traveller is familiar with similar risks and feels that they have control over the virus. However, the causes of this behaviour were not further studied. Thai consumers may mention that the Thai authorities should have handled the situation better by introducing stricter and more mandatory rules are rooted in what consumers fear the situation may result in.

Since this paper was limited to a conceptual paper and literature review, it would have been interesting to adopt in studying a more extensive range of consumers. For the academician, the scope could have been increased in a qualitative and quantitative method to study more the Thai traveller consumers older than 25 years as the majority of the Thai traveller. It would have been interesting because of the risk of becoming seriously ill with COVID-19 increases over 60 years. By future studying the elderly, it could compare whether and how consumer behaviour differs depending on age. In order to generalize the result, the scope would be increased to study consumers in several parts of Thailand. Therefore, it would also have been interesting to study consumers from more areas in order to be able to generalize about Thai consumers.

For future study, the study could be adjusted so that the Thai traveller are instead asked about their thoughts on national travel, as travel within Thailand has not been as limited as international travel. Since the study also refers to international travel currently

limited, it becomes more likely that behaviours are not carried out according to the factor perceived behaviour control. The results of this paper are intended to contribute to further research on consumer behaviour during the spread of infectious viral diseases, travel behaviours during pandemics and travel behaviours during COVID-19, as previous research in this area are considered deficient.

For the policy implementation, this paper would like to propose that the government should implement policies that manage the balance of monetary and fiscal policies, the policy to raise the standards of Thai tourism both the management system of the tourism industry and personnel in the tourism industry, the policy of opening the country for the Tourism, health and safety policies. The Thai government should impel forward policies to help, remedy, restore, promote and support Thai tourism businesses. The policy must be consistent with emerging norms such as promoting a cashless society in tourist destinations to reduce the transmission of COVID, promoting more e-commerce business and promoting innovation in tourist destinations. For the policy to support Thai travel agencies, the Thai government has to encourage entrepreneurs to adapt to changes such as organizing a new normal tourism education program, and supporting group tourism activities. As tourist travel patterns have been changed, the government should direct policies that assist in managing the capital structure of Thai tourism businesses. In formulating a policy, the Thai government must consider both demand and supply, especially in terms of travel demand among travellers worldwide. If the government plans to open Thailand, the government must consider travel bubble issues for countries that are ready to exchange tourists, but it should be based on mutual acceptance of conditions.



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