

**Are our Chinese Guests Annoying? : An Analysis of  
Thai Hosts' Perceptions of the Chinese Tourists**

**จริงหรือที่เขานักท่องเที่ยวจีนน่ารำคาญ: การวิเคราะห์การรับรู้เกี่ยวกับนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีน  
จากมุมมองของเจ้าบ้านชาวไทย**

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**ABSTRACT**

Along with the positive economic impact brought by the Chinese market, the negative social impacts have been the cultural clashes which have been reflected through complaints and comments made through several media. This study aimed to examine how the Thai hosts consisting of 401 respondents, working in the tourism industry including hotel staff, tour guides, tour operators and airline flight attendants, perceive the behaviors of the Chinese tourists or their guests. The behaviors studied were identified by reviewing bulletins, discussion boards, reviews and comments on online media. A previous study of similar topic done in Macao was closely reviewed. 19 behaviors of the Chinese tourists were perceived by the Thai hosts as frequent and annoying. These behaviors, which require immediate attention to, included talking loudly in public, making noise eating in a restaurant, rushing into a place/vehicle in a chaotic manner, bumping into/shoving others in a crowd, shouting/calling others in a hotel/public place, spilling food on the table, cutting a queue, allowing children to run around disturbing others, smoking in a non-smoking area, getting into the elevator/vehicle before others get off, walking obstructing others in the footpath, not caring to observe or learn local customs, littering carelessly, dropping cigarette butts, spitting in public, not flushing the toilet after use, not observing or breaking local traffic rules, wearing indecent clothes /not observing local dress code, and expecting to be served before locals. The relevant stakeholders should pay attention to these 19 behaviors as they occurred frequently and were annoying to the hosts. Other 19 behaviors were perceived to be annoying. However, they occurred less frequently. These behaviors have to be watched out. Three behaviors can be ignored as they were not annoying and not frequent. The tourist's trying to get a bargain took place frequently but it was considered not annoying. Therefore, this behavior is of low priority. The conclusion gave some ideas on how to deal with the frequent and annoying behaviors.

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## บทคัดย่อ

นักท่องเที่ยวจากสาธารณรัฐประชาชนจีน เป็นตลาดการท่องเที่ยวที่ใหญ่ที่สุดและนำรายได้เข้าสู่ประเทศไทยมากที่สุด แต่นอกเหนือจากผลกระทบด้านบวกต่อประเทศไทยซึ่งได้แก่การสร้างรายได้ให้แก่ประเทศแล้ว สิ่งที่เป็นผลกระทบด้านลบคือผลกระทบทางสังคมที่เกิดจากความแตกต่างทางวัฒนธรรมของนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีนบางส่วน ทำให้นักท่องเที่ยวจีนแสดงพฤติกรรมที่ไม่เหมาะสมในสายตาของเจ้าบ้าน การวิจัยเรื่องนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์ที่จะจำแนกพฤติกรรมที่นักท่องเที่ยวจีนแสดงออกขณะท่องเที่ยวว่าพฤติกรรมใดเกิดขึ้นบ่อยและมีความน่ารำคาญตามความรู้สึกของเจ้าบ้าน จากผลการวิเคราะห์ความคิดเห็นของกลุ่มตัวอย่างเจ้าบ้านจำนวน 401 คน ซึ่งเป็นบุคลากรที่ปฏิบัติงานในภาคอุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยว ได้แก่ พนักงานโรงแรมในระดับต่าง ๆ ผู้ปฏิบัติงานในภาคการท่องเที่ยวได้แก่มัคคุเทศก์ ผู้ประกอบธุรกิจด้านการท่องเที่ยว ร้านจำหน่ายสินค้า พนักงานบริการผู้โดยสารบนเครื่องบิน พบว่า มีพฤติกรรมของนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีน 19 อย่างที่กลุ่มตัวอย่างเจ้าบ้านเห็นว่าเป็นพฤติกรรมที่พบเห็นได้ค่อนข้างบ่อยถึงบ่อยมาก และมีความน่ารำคาญ ได้แก่ การพูดคุยเสียงดังในที่สาธารณะ รับประทานอาหารเสียงดัง การแย่งกันเข้าไปในสถานที่หรือยานพาหนะ การเบียด กระแทกหรือผลักผู้อื่นในที่สาธารณะ การร้องตะโกนเรียกหากันในโรงแรม หรือที่สาธารณะ การทำอาหารหก เลอะเทอะบนโต๊ะอาหาร การแข่งคิวผู้อื่น การปล่อยเด็กเล็กวิ่งเล่นรบกวนผู้อื่น การสูบบุหรี่ในที่ห้ามสูบ การแย่งเข้าลิฟท์หรือยานพาหนะก่อนที่คนอื่นจะออกมาหมด การเดินจนเต็มทางเท้ากีดขวางทางผู้อื่น การไม่ใส่ใจที่จะสังเกตหรือเรียนรู้ขนบธรรมเนียมของเจ้าบ้าน การทิ้งขยะเรี่ยราด การขวางกั้นทางหรือรีรูด การขว้างหรือถ่มเสมหะ การไม่กดชักโครกหลังจากทำธุระในห้องน้ำ การไม่ใส่ใจในกฎจราจร การแต่งกายไม่เหมาะสม และการคาดหวังว่านักท่องเที่ยวต้องได้รับการบริการก่อนเจ้าบ้าน พฤติกรรมที่เกิดขึ้นบ่อยและจัดว่าน่ารำคาญทั้ง 19 อย่างนี้ควรได้รับการพิจารณาแก้ไขปรับปรุงก่อน นอกจากนี้ยังมีพฤติกรรมอย่างอื่นอีก 19 อย่างเช่นกันที่เจ้าบ้านเห็นว่าน่ารำคาญแต่เกิดขึ้นไม่บ่อยจึงจัดว่าเป็นพฤติกรรมที่อยู่ในข่ายที่ต้องเฝ้าระวัง มีพฤติกรรม 3 อย่างที่สามารถมองข้ามไปได้เนื่องจากเกิดขึ้นไม่บ่อยและไม่น่ารำคาญ พฤติกรรมอีกอย่างหนึ่งที่เกิดบ่อยมากแต่ไม่น่ารำคาญคือการต่อรองราคาสินค้า จึงจัดว่าเป็นพฤติกรรมที่ไม่ต้องให้ความสำคัญ ในบทสรุปได้ให้ข้อเสนอแนะแนวทางการจัดการกับพฤติกรรมที่น่ารำคาญที่เกิดขึ้นบ่อย

## Introduction

From 2012 to 2018, the largest number of tourist arrivals to Thailand was from China. In 2012, there were 2,786,860 tourist arrivals. The number increased to 4,637,335 in 2013, and to 4,636,298 in 2014 and more than doubled to 9,805,753 in 2017. In 2018, the number of Chinese tourist arrivals rose to 10,535,955 (Ministry of Tourism & Sports, 2019). With this number in 2018, China provides the largest number of tourists (27.5% of total). According to the Tourism and Sports Ministry, tourism contributed 17.7 percent to Thailand's GDP in 2016 and 16.7 percent in 2015. The Tourism Authority of Thailand claims that the tourist industry earned 2.52 trillion baht (US\$71.4 billion) in 2016, up 11 percent from 2015. Thailand relies heavily on Chinese tourists to meet its tourism revenue target of 2.2 trillion baht in 2015 and 2.3 trillion in 2016. It is estimated that in average Chinese tourist remains in the country for one week and spends 30,000–40,000 baht (US\$1,000–1,300) per person, per trip. The average Chinese tourist spends 6,400 baht (US\$180) per day—more than the average visitor's 5,690 baht (US\$160). A sharp resurgence in Chinese visitor arrivals in December helped Thailand close 2018 with a total of 38.27 million arrivals, generating tourism expenditure of just over two trillion Baht (TAT News, 2019). However, international tourism brings negative social impacts to a destination country as well.

The local hosts in many countries have witnessed the uncivilized behaviors of their Chinese guests. Several posts contain complaints on the annoying behaviors of the Chinese tourists. The degree of severity of complaints vary from mild to strong ones. Some local hosts

have an impression that the Chinese tourists in their countries disregard customs and rules (Li, 2013). A Chinese man who was vacationing at a Maldives resort yelled threats and slurs at Chinese staff after he found that the restaurant where he had wanted to eat was fully booked (Li, 2013). Students at Ewha University in Seoul complained about an influx of Chinese tourists. They strided into libraries and took photos without the permission of students. Ewha University administration resolved the crisis by putting up multi-language signs advising tourists to stay clear of study areas. Even those of Chinese descent in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Taiwan are unable to tolerate such behaviors. In Hong Kong, there were instances where Chinese mothers allowed their children to urinate in public which made several Hong Kong residents extremely unhappy (Phneah, 2019). In Taiwan, a People's Republic of China mother let her children defecate on the floor of Kaohsiung airport, just meters from a toilet. A Singaporean host in Singapore was also annoyed by the behavior of the female Chinese tourists in Sentosa. She commented that the Chinese tourists would often take a bath or change outside the cubicles. She felt that nudity was very uncomfortable for her. It also annoyed her when Chinese nationals in Singapore spoke loudly on the phone in the MRT (Phneah, 2019). After watching a Youtube video showing a Thai girl and her boyfriend waiting politely in line when suddenly a swarm of Chinese tourists pushed and shoved their way to the front of the line, Sun (2018) concluded that Chinese tourists have no manners. Other comments reported that Chinese tourists did not know how rough they were and that they did not know how mannered people in other countries were. MouaSPY (2018) commented in a post that Chinese are known for bad behaviors everywhere they go, listing a series of annoying behaviors stating, "They push people around at the airport in Bangkok. They cut line at each Immigration check point and ran pass everyone to be the first to be served. They cleaned all the buffet table in Chiang Mai and leave nothing for those customers behind, very inconsiderate of others. They pee and poop in the street. They washed their faces at the drinking fountain and touched everything they see. They are loud mouth and very rude. Easily not to like them. They are among the worst Asian." These cross-cultural phenomena have created increasing tensions between the Chinese and their hosts (Li, 2013). Staff working at the Maldives resorts who rely heavily on tips would prefer to serve guests from countries with a tipping culture rather than Chinese guests, who tip very little or none. A poll by the Public Opinion Programme of the University of Hong Kong recently found that the number of Hong Kong residents holding negative feelings towards Beijing and mainland Chinese is up by about 40 % since November. Following that survey, SCMP.com conducted another online poll, headlined "What makes some Hong Kong residents dislike mainland China and its people?", more than 50 % of the readers blamed the negative feelings on "ill-behaved tourists" (Li, 2013). The rationale for conducting the present research is that despite the abundance of negative comments and complaints concerning the uncivilized behaviors of the Chinese tourists on various media (Li, 2013; Phneah, 2019; Sun, 2018), it is unlikely that all the behaviors branded as uncivilized in these comments will equally affect the Thai hosts. The objectives of this present research are, therefore, to examine which behaviors of the Chinese tourist really affect the local hosts negatively, and which behaviors are perceived as tolerable or acceptable. Also, the frequency of hosts' exposure to such behaviors will be examined. The result of the analysis will lead us to developing measures to deal with the behaviors that are considered to be frequent and troublesome.

## Review of Literature

Contact between culturally different tourists and hosts can lead to enhancement of tourists' and hosts' attitudes toward each other, to learning about the others' culture, and to the development of positive attitude (Reisinger, 2009). This research attempted to challenge this notion that the contact between two different cultures like Thai and Chinese cultures will not necessarily result in positive attitude, especially the attitude of the Thai hosts toward our

Chinese guests. When tourists are friendly, respectful and show an interest in the host society, local residents can develop pride in their local culture, socialize with tourists, and learn their language. Those who have longer contact with each other may develop more favorable attitude toward each other. Tourist-host contact may also result in exchange of correspondence and gifts, the development of personal relationships and even friendships (Bochner, 1982; Boissevain, 1979; Pearce, 1985). Tourists and hosts have different social status, play different roles, and have different goals. Tourists are to be served, whereas hosts are the servers; tourists are at leisure, whereas hosts are at work. The tourist-host contact occurs when there are opportunities for contact, which allow participants to interact, get to know each other and understand one another. If no opportunity exists, no contact occurs (Reisinger, 2009). Furthermore, the personal characteristics of tourists and hosts, such as tolerance, enthusiasm, interest, generosity, welcoming attitudes, willingness to listen and understand each other's need, and mutual respect, increase the chances for mutual interaction. On the other hand, resentment, disrespect, lack of appreciation for each other's cultural background, arrogance, and sense of superiority decrease the chances for interaction. Therefore, without a closer, longer, and deeper interaction, a positive attitude is not likely to be developed. Social interactions between tourists and hosts are governed by rules of social behavior. These rules concern introductions, greetings and farewells, names and titles, behavior in public places, and so forth. In this research, the aspects of behavior of the Chinese guests in public places that affect the host negatively will be examined. Negative attitudes create reservation, suspicion, dissatisfaction and lack of understanding, and thus discourage the participants from the development of interaction. The more a person is prejudiced, the less likely the person is involved in interaction. However, prejudice does not mean avoidance of contact; even highly prejudiced people seek contact with others (Reisinger, 2009).

Several studies have been conducted to analyze the influence of nationality on tourist behavior (Pizam and Reichel, 1996; Pizam et al., 1997). These studies investigated the perception that British, Israeli, Korean and Dutch tour guides had of tourists of different nationalities on escorted motor-coach tours. These studies showed that nationality influences the tourist culture and that there was a significant perceived difference between the nationalities. In the study of the Dutch tour guides' perceptions of French, Italian, Japanese and American tourists in the Netherlands, the results showed that in eighteen out of the twenty behavioral characteristics there was a significant perceived difference between the four nationalities. The Americans were perceived to be the most distinct from the other nationalities and the Italians were the most similar to the other nationalities. The Italians-Americans were perceived by the tour guides as being the most similar to each other in their behaviors (Pizam, et. al., 1997).

In the study of the Israeli tour guides' perceptions of American, British, German and French tourists, the results also showed that in eighteen out of twenty behavioral characteristics there was a significant difference between the four nationalities. The Americans, again, were perceived to be the most different and the French the most similar to the other nationalities (Pizam and Reichel, 1996). A few studies on perceptions of misbehavior of Chinese tourists have been done (Loi and Pearce, 2015; Lai, 2016; Phichaiwongphakdee, 2018).

Wu (2016), who analyzed the media representations of Chinese outbound tourist behavior mentioned that most of the academic research on good or bad tourists is about sustainable/responsible/ environmental friendly/ ecofriendly tourists, and tend to focus on the relationships between tourists and the natural or cultural environment. Studies on vacation etiquette have only attracted limited attention. In his research, which involved an analysis of 137 media reports about Chinese tourist behaviors, Wu summarized four groups of attitudes toward Chinese tourists. Slightly more than half of the media reports revealed complex attitudes toward Chinese tourists, or the attitudes that Chinese tourists bring both benefits and

costs. 32.1 % had negative attitudes toward Chinese tourists as annoying. Nearly 11 % had positive attitudes, hoping that a new generation will become savvy tourists. A small percentage, 5 %, held the view that Chinese tourists' bad behavior hurts China's national image.

Loi and Pearce (2015) studied the perceptions of 363 residents of Macao and 365 tourists there regarding the annoying behavior of the tourists, and found that the four most frequently encountered behaviors were, in order from high to low: smoking anywhere without considering those around them; littering/spitting in public; breaking into a line of waiting people; and driving a car or crossing road unsafely/ not observing local traffic rules and regulations. With regard to the attitudes toward annoying behaviors of the tourists in Macao, the researchers found that the most annoying behaviors were: not flushing the toilet after use; littering/spitting in public; verbally or physically abusing service personnel in hotels and other service operations; and smoking anywhere without considering those around them. Out of the 40 perceived annoying behaviors, the authors have developed 3 new integrative categories: 1. Behavior directly relating to others; 2. Isolated individual acts, which are bodily functions or presentation/ appearance issues, and verbal or sound acts; and 3. Marginally illegal or scam behaviors.

Lai (2016) investigated the impact of Chinese tourists' misbehavior on Thailand tourism by interviewing 76 respondents consisting of 56 tourists from Malaysia, Netherlands, Hong Kong, Australia, Japan, Singapore and Iran, and 20 locals. Lai concluded that the majority of the respondents were aware of the issue of Chinese tourists' misbehavior in Thailand. However, almost half of the respondents had not encountered with the incidences themselves. Their awareness of the issues was mainly from the broadcasted news or word of mouth. Nearly half of the tourist respondents were aware of the issue but had not witnessed the incidence of the Chinese tourist misbehavior. Thirty-six percent of Thai local residents had direct experience with the misbehaved Chinese tourists. Those tourists who had experienced such behavior gave examples like speaking loudly, being impolite, cutting queue and spitting. In terms of image of Thailand's tourism, majority of the tourist respondents thought that Chinese tourists' misbehavior would not tarnish the image of Thailand's tourism. Over 90 % of the tourist respondents said they would still revisit Thailand and recommend it to others, which signified the destination loyalty of the tourists towards Thailand. Lai (2016) concluded that Chinese tourists' misbehavior would not affect the tourism image of Thailand and would not decrease the loyalty towards Thailand. However, Lai (2016) commented that the Thai government's current measures are not sufficient and effective to combat the issue of Chinese tourists' misbehavior, and that incidents of Chinese tourists misbehavior still continue in Thailand. Lai (2016) further commented that this issue caused dissatisfaction of some locals towards Chinese tourists, but the local community is still showing support and commitment in hosting more Chinese tourists for the sake of the country's economy.

This study attempts to investigate the more micro aspect of the Thai hosts in relation to less-than-desirable Chinese tourist behavior in general. Although there is a problem in defining the concept of hosts, in this study hosts refer to service providers and people in the tourism trade, as well as those who involved both directly and indirectly in tourism. The hosts in this study included both employers and employees in tourism sectors. This study seeks to assess the perceived frequency and the levels of annoyance of Chinese tourist behaviors in Thailand. The sources of the behaviors to be studied will be derived from the comments posted by bloggers in websites, as well as from the previous literature. This work builds from the identification of problematic Chinese tourist behaviors which appeared in the Internet media and academic papers to a more detailed study of the perceptions of the desirability of those behaviors. The literature review on hosts' perceptions of tourists mostly indicates that many host communities perceive tourists of different nationalities to be different and behave in different ways from themselves (Reisinger and Turner, 2003). The hosts' perception of tourists

refers to how tourists are seen by their hosts. This research work attempts to examine the perception of uncivilized behavior of the Chinese guests based on its frequency of occurrence. Also, it will examine the attitude of the host, the service provider in tourism industry, from the degree of annoyance derived from each behavior.

### **Research Method**

The sample of Thai hosts consisted of local people who work in tourism industry, who were mostly hotel staff in various departments, tourist guides, shop assistants, bus and/or boat drivers, and domestic airline flight attendants. The questionnaires were mailed to the hotels and tour companies which had been contacted and agreed to participate in the research project and allowed their personnel to complete the questionnaire. Therefore, the convenient sampling method was employed. However, the researcher tried to make sure that the Thai host sample represented the Thai host population by mailing the questionnaires to hotels and tour companies both in Bangkok and upcountry. Outside Bangkok, the questionnaires were distributed to hotels and tour companies in Chiang Mai, Nakhon Ratchasima, Phuket, Krabi and Samui Island in Surat Thani.

As previously mentioned, the research tool was a questionnaire, which consisted of two parts. Part 1 comprised closed-ended questions on demographic profile of the respondents. Part 2 described the frequency of the perception of 43 behaviors, and the degree of annoyance toward each of the 43 behaviors. Evaluation was made based on an ordinal 4-scale: 1 (never encountered before/ not at all annoying), 2 (not very frequently/ mildly annoying), 3 (rather frequently/ rather annoying) and 4 (very frequently/ very annoying).

The data collection period took place during March and July 2018 before 401 completed questionnaires were collected. The data were analyzed. The statistics employed were percentage, Mean, and Standard Deviation at the general level. The use of a frequency-annoyance action grid similar to the importance-performance (IPA) matrix, which was often used in tourism and literature (Blesic et al, 2014; Choibamroong, 2017; Obonyo, Ayieko & Kambona, 2013; Parasakul, 2019) was employed in order to illustrate the relationship between frequency and annoyance ratings of the behaviors in a neat manner.

### **Research Findings**

#### **The Thai host demographic profile**

The sample of the Thai hosts comprised 401 respondents, and slightly more than half (55 percent) were drawn in Bangkok. The remainder were drawn from other regions in the north, the northeast and the south of Thailand. The percentage of female respondents is slightly higher than that of the male respondents, which mirrored the Thai population as a whole with slightly more females than males. Most of the respondents were between 20 and 39 years old. Over two-thirds of the respondents held a bachelor degree. About 27 % finished either high school or vocational school. A small percentage received a higher degree. The host sample comprised mostly hotel personnel, which included department managers (11.1 %), front office staff (27.1 %), bell captain and security (5 %), housekeeping staff (11.9 %), F&B staff (10.8 %). The rest were from the tourism and transport sector, which included tourist guides (18 %), tour operators (2.8 %), airline flight attendants (8.5 %). With reference to income, the respondents were asked to self-estimate their income from not satisfactory to very good. About 41 % reported that their income was satisfactory, and about 35 % reported that their income was good. Thirteen percent were not satisfied with their income, while 11 % reported that they had very good income. The details are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Demographic Profile of the Thai Hosts

Demographics	Number	Percentage
Area of Residence		
Bangkok	221	55.1
Chiang Mai	66	16.5
Nakhon Ratchasima	27	6.7
Krabi	4	1.0
Nonthaburi	20	5.0
Phuket	39	9.7
Koh Samui	24	6.0
Gender		
Male	184	47.5
Female	203	52.5
Age		
Under 20	5	1.3
20-29	143	35.8
30-39	120	30.1
40-49	69	17.3
50-59	47	11.8
60 and over	15	3.8
Highest Education Level		
High school/Vocational school	106	26.9
Bachelor degree	266	67.5
Master or higher degree	22	5.6
Occupation		
Tourist guides	70	18.0
Hotel manager	43	11.1
Hotel front office staff	105	27.1
Bell captain/bell boy/security	19	4.9
Hotel housekeeping/engineer	46	11.9
Hotel F&B staff	42	10.8
Bus/boat driver	7	1.8
Tour entrepreneur/owner	11	2.8
Airline flight attendant	33	8.5
Hotel sales and marketing	12	3.1
Self-estimate Income		
Not satisfactory	50	13.2
Satisfactory	155	40.9
Good	132	34.8
Very good	42	11.1

Note Total sample:  $N = 401$ . Totals differ due to missing data

#### Analysis of perceived frequency and level of annoyance

An analysis of the results was undertaken by comparing the frequencies of the observed behaviors cross referenced with how annoying they were perceived to be. A frequency-annoyance grid was constructed to illustrate the relationship between frequency and annoyance ratings of the behaviors. The data provide a range of key annoying behaviors, some of which

are perceived to be relatively frequent. Table 2 presents the frequency annoyance evaluation of the 42 behavior types by the 401 respondents.

**Table 2.** Mean Scores of Frequency and Level of Annoyance of Chinese Behavior Types

Behavior	Perceived Frequency	Level of Annoyance
1. spitting in public	2.69	3.01
2. smoking in the non-smoking area	2.83	3.16
3. throwing cigarette butts	2.70	3.09
4. Writing on public walls	1.45	2.94
5. Littering carelessly	2.71	3.16
6. Urinating outside toilet bowl	2.36	3.34
7. Smoking/throwing cigarette butts in the toilet	2.32	3.15
8. Squatting on a toilet bowl seat	2.40	3.19
9. Not flushing the toilet after use	2.64	3.44
10. Talking loudly/making a loud noise in public	3.65	3.32
11. Smoking while eating in a restaurant	2.06	3.05
12. Making noise while eating in a restaurant	3.42	3.15
13. Spilling food around the dishes on the table	3.10	2.95
14. Smoking while browsing or shopping in a store	2.07	2.94
15. Shop lifting	1.36	3.05
16. Bargaining when going shopping	2.73	2.10
17. Trying on clothes or trying food item but not buy	2.42	2.35
18. Rinsing foot in a public wash basin	2.05	3.09
19. Not caring to observe or learn local customs	2.74	2.77
20. Rushing into a place or a transport in a chaotic manner	3.21	3.19
21. Bumping into or shoving others in a crowd	3.19	3.19
22. Cutting a queue or not queuing for service	3.07	3.25
23. Getting drunk in public	2.10	2.71
24. Not observing or breaking local traffic rules/crossing the road unsafely	2.58	2.93
25. Wearing indecent clothes / not observing a local dress code	2.55	2.63
26. Lying / sleeping in a public place casually	1.91	2.35
27. Leaving / sneaking out of a restaurant without paying	1.55	2.92
28. Getting into the elevator or a vehicle before others get off	2.82	3.13
29. Being too affectionate in public	2.17	2.02
30. Walking obstructing others in the footpath	2.77	2.90
31. Allowing children to defecate in a street or a public place	2.24	3.08
32. Taking a photo where it is forbidden	2.42	2.80
33. Eating strong-smell food in a public transport	2.21	2.93
34. Allowing children to run around disturbing others In a public place	2.93	3.14
35. Insulting local people who cannot speak Chinese	1.90	2.84



**Table 2.** Mean Scores of Frequency and Level of Annoyance of Chinese Behavior Types (Cont.)

Behavior	Perceived Frequency	Level of Annoyance
36. Asking for too much service from officials or service providers	2.26	2.95
37. Expecting to be served before local people	2.53	2.86
38. Being impolite / behaving rudely to service providers	2.42	3.01
39. Knocking / shaking public toilet doors when they are closed	2.28	2.96
40. Shouting calling others in a hotel corridor or public places	3.13	3.19
41. Knocking on every hotel door to look for friends	2.12	2.97
42. Standing on a passenger seat to pick up things in an overhead bin/climbing on a prohibited place to take photos	2.13	3.00

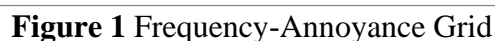
N = 401, Cronbach's alpha (Perceived frequency scale) = .940, Cronbach's alpha (Level of Annoyance) = .962

The mean scores 2.50-3.24 were interpreted as 'rather frequently/rather annoying' and the scores 3.25-4.00 were interpreted as 'very frequently/very annoying'. Of the 42 behaviors, only two behaviors were perceived as very frequent: Talking loudly/making a loud noise in public (3.65), and 12. Making noise while eating in a restaurant (3.42). There were other 18 behaviors considered to be 'rather frequent'. According to the descending means, these rather frequent behaviors were: Rushing into a place or a transport in a chaotic manner (3.21); Bumping into or shoving others in a crowd (3.19); Shouting calling others in a hotel corridor or public places (3.13); Spilling food around the dishes on the table (3.10); Cutting a queue or not queuing for service (3.07); Allowing children to run around disturbing others In a public place (2.93); smoking in the non-smoking area (2.83); Getting into the elevator or a vehicle before others get off (2.82); Walking obstructing others in the footpath (2.77); Not caring to observe or learn local customs (2.74); Bargaining when going shopping (2.73); Littering carelessly (2.71); throwing cigarette butts (2.70); spitting in public (2.69); Not flushing the toilet after use (2.64); Not observing or breaking local traffic rules/crossing the road unsafely (2.58); Wearing indecent clothes/ not observing a local dress code (2.55), and; Expecting to be served before local people (2.53). The other 22 behaviors, having the mean values lower than 2.50, were regarded as 'not very frequent'. We will now move on to examine the level of annoyance of the Thai hosts towards these behaviors.

The Thai hosts considered 38 behaviors as being annoying behaviors. Four types of behaviors considered to be very annoying were: not flushing toilet after use (3.44); urinating / defecating outside toilet bowl (3.34); talking / making a loud noise in public (3.32); cutting a queue/ not queuing for service (3.25). Others 34 behaviors were considered to be rather annoying, having the means ranging between 2.50 and 3.24. These rather annoying behaviors were: shouting calling others in hotel corridors or public places (3.19); bumping into / shoving others in a crowd (3.19); rushing into a place / vehicle in a chaotic manner (3.19); squatting on toilet bowl seat (3.18); smoking in the non-smoking area (3.16); littering carelessly (3.16); making noise while eating in a restaurant (3.16); smoking/throwing cigarette butts in toilet (3.15); allowing children to run around disturbing others (3.14); getting in elevator or vehicle before others get off (3.13); throwing cigarette butts (3.09); rinsing foot in public wash basin (3.09); allowing children to defecate in the street / public places (3.08); smoking while eating in restaurant (3.05); shop lifting (3.05); being impolite/ behaving rudely to service providers (3.01); spitting in public (3.01); standing on passenger seats to pick up things/climbing on

prohibited places to take photos (3.00); knocking on every hotel door to look for friends (2.97); knocking/shaking public toilet doors when they are closed (2.95); spilling food around dishes on table (2.95); asking for too much service from officials or service providers (2.95); writing on public walls (2.94); smoking while browsing / shopping in stores (2.94); not observing / breaking local traffic rules / crossing the road unsafely (2.93); eating strong-smell food in public transport (2.93); leaving/sneaking out of restaurant without paying (2.92); walking obstructing others in the footpath (2.90); expecting to be served before locals (2.86); insulting local people who cannot speak Chinese (2.84); taking photos where it is forbidden (2.80); not caring to observe or learn local customs (2.77); getting drunk in public (2.71), and lastly; dressing oneself improperly in public / not observing local dress codes (2.64). We have seen that most of the behaviors were regarded by the Thai host as rather annoying to very annoying. However, it is not practical to take measures to correct all of these 38 annoying behaviors of our Chinese guests. Only the annoying behaviors that took place rather frequently to very frequently should be taken into consideration. Therefore, the author borrowed the idea from the importance-performance analysis (IPA) to identify the issues that needed to be concentrated to. The importance-performance analysis grid has often been used in the tourism and hospitality literature (Cai, 2015; Chu & Choi, 2000; Dabphet, 2017; Lelisa, Fentaw, & Duba, 2018; Nisco, Riviezzo, & Napolitano, 2015; Obonyo, Ayieko & Kambona, 2013). The grid suggested in this research resembles IPA in format only because it is considered to be a neat way of presenting results across the frequency and annoyance dimensions. The mean scores are plotted in Figure 1 for a graphic presentation of the distribution along the two-dimensional frequency-annoyance grid. The X-axis represents the perceived frequency of encounter and the Y-axis portrays the level of annoyance associated with these behaviors. The four quadrants were identified and constructed using a scale mean of 2.50 as the cross-hairs for both scales. The use of a scale mean at the level of 2.5 on out 4-point scale is one of the two main ways of determining the cross-hair points of the grid (Loi & Pearce, 2015). The four quadrants identified here are as follows:

- Quadrant I (concentrate here) – behaviors are perceived to be highly annoying and frequently encountered by respondent hosts. These behaviors should be focused on because they will directly affect the emotions of the hosts.
- Quadrant II (watch out) - behaviors are perceived with high annoyance level but not as frequently seen. Policy makers should continuously watch and observe the trend of these behaviors in order that these behaviors will not become more prominent and thus cross over into Quadrant I.
- Quadrant III (let it be) – behaviors are deemed neither annoying nor frequent by the respondents. Policy makers should not preoccupy themselves with these behaviors.
- Quadrant IV (low priority) – behaviors are considered to be frequently seen but not very annoying to the host respondents. Such behaviors are of no immediate concern or threat to the policy makers and thus limited resources should be extended to this low priority cell (Loi & Pearce, 2015).



In Figure 1, most plots are concentrated and located on the high annoyance range, but they equally spread across both high-frequency and low-frequency domains, or Quadrant I and Quadrant II, with only three behaviors falling in the low annoyance and low-frequency zone (Quadrant III). Only one behavior, bargaining when go shopping, is located in the low-priority zone (Quadrant IV). As summarized in Quadrant I, the Thai host respondents found 19 behaviors of the Chinese guests as frequent and annoying. These behaviors are no. 9, not flushing the toilet after use; no. 10, talking loudly/making a loud noise in public; no. 22, cutting a queue / not queuing for service; no. 20, rushing into a place or a transport in a chaotic manner; no. 12, making noise while eating in a restaurant; no. 21, bumping into or shoving others in a crowd; no. 40, shouting calling others in a hotel corridor or public places; no. 34, allowing children to run around disturbing others in a public place; no. 2, smoking in the non-smoking area; no. 5, littering carelessly; no. 28, getting into the elevator or a vehicle before others get off; no. 3, throwing cigarette butts carelessly; no. 13, spilling food around the dishes on the table; no. 1, spitting in a public; no. 30, walking obstructing others in the footpath; no. 24, not observing or breaking local traffic rules / crossing the road unsafely; no. 19, not caring to

observe or learn local customs; no. 37, expecting to be served before local people, and; no. 25, dress improperly / not observing a local dress code. These 19 behaviors are considered to be rather annoying and frequent by the Thai hosts. Many articles describing annoying behaviors of the Chinese guests have also reported these behaviors as priority items (4News, 2015; Li, 2013; Sun, 2018; Phneah, 2019). Table 3 summarizes the mean averages of the perceived frequency and the degree of annoyance of the 19 problematic behaviors.

**Table 3.** The mean averages of the perceived frequency and the degree of annoyance of the 19 problematic behaviors as shown in Quadrant I

No.	Behavior to concentrate	Perceived Frequency	Level of Annoyance
10	Talking loudly / making a loud noise in public	3.65	3.31
12	Making noise while eating in a restaurant	3.42	3.16
20	Rushing into a place / vehicle in a chaotic manner	3.21	3.19
21	Bumping into or shoving others in a crowd	3.18	3.19
40	Shouting calling others in a hotel corridor/public places	3.12	3.19
13	Spilling food around dishes on table	3.09	2.95
22	Cutting a queue or not queuing for service	3.07	3.25
34	Allowing children to run around disturbing others	2.91	3.14
02	Smoking in the non-smoking area	2.83	3.16
28	Getting into the elevator or a vehicle before others get off	2.82	3.13
30	Walking obstructing others in the footpath	2.76	2.90
19	Not caring to observe or learn local customs	2.74	2.77
05	Littering carelessly	2.71	3.16
03	Throwing cigarette butts	2.69	3.09
01	Spitting in public	2.69	3.01
09	Not flushing the toilet after use	2.61	3.43
24	Not observing or breaking local traffic rules / crossing the road unsafely	2.55	2.93
25	Dress improperly / not observing local dress codes	2.54	2.64
37	Expecting to be served before locals	2.51	2.86

There are other 19 behaviors which are considered to be annoying, but, fortunately, they take place less frequently. These behaviors, in Quadrant II, included marginally illegal or scam behaviors like shop lifting; writing on public walls; allowing children to defecate in a street or in a public place; leaving or sneaking out of a restaurant without paying; taking a photo where it is forbidden; and getting drunk in public. Other annoying but less frequent behaviors are isolated individual acts relating to bodily functions or presentation issues. These behaviors are urinating outside toilet bowl; smoking or throwing cigarette butts in the toilet bowl; squatting on a toilet bowl seat; smoking while eating in a restaurant; smoking while browsing or shopping in a store; rinsing foot in a public wash basin; standing on a passenger seat to pick up things or climbing a prohibited place to take photos; knocking on every hotel door to look for friends; knocking or shaking public toilet doors when they are closed; and eating strong-smell food in a public transport. The other behaviors are behaviors directly relating to others.

These are being impolite or behaving rudely to service providers; asking for too much service from officials or service providers; and insulting local people who cannot speak Chinese.

**Table 4.** The mean averages of the perceived frequency and the degree of annoyance of the 19 behaviors to watch out in Quadrant II

No.	Behavior to watch out	Perceived Frequency	Level of Annoyance
32	taking photos where it is forbidden	2.42	2.80
38	being impolite/ behaving rudely to service providers	2.41	3.01
08	squatting on toilet bowl seat	2.36	3.18
06	urinating or defecating outside toilet bowl	2.33	3.34
07	smoking/throwing cigarette butts in toilet	2.31	3.15
39	knocking/shaking public toilet doors when they are closed	2.25	2.96
36	asking for too much service from officials or service providers	2.22	2.95
31	allowing children to go to toilet in the street / public places	2.21	3.08
33	eating strong-smell food in public transport	2.19	2.94
42	standing on passenger seats to pick up things/climbing on prohibited places to take photos	2.12	3.00
23	getting drunk in public	2.10	2.71
41	knocking on every hotel door to look for friends	2.09	2.97
14	smoking while browsing / shopping in stores	2.04	2.94
11	smoking while eating in restaurant	2.03	3.05
18	rinsing foot in public wash basin	2.02	3.09
35	insulting local people who cannot speak Chinese	1.86	2.84
27	leaving/sneaking out of restaurant without paying	1.52	2.92
04	writing on public walls	1.43	2.94
15	Shop lifting	1.34	3.05

## Discussion

The single most annoying behavior type was no. 9 (not flushing the toilet after use). The second most annoying behavior perceived by the host was no. 10 (talking loudly/making a loud noise in public). The result aligns with Loi and Pearce's findings, which reported that the residents of Macao regarded these two types of bodily functions of the Chinese tourists the most annoying (Loi and Pearce, 2015). This piece of findings was supported by an actual incidence which took place at the White Temple in Chiang Rai province in the north of Thailand that the temple staff refused entry to Chinese visitors for half a day due to their frequent indecent public toilet usage, using the toilet without flushing it (Editor Chiang Rai News, 2015) This type of behavior is considered to be an example of an isolated individual act, subdivided into the category of bodily functions or presentation issue. Other isolated individual acts causing annoyance to the hosts are such behaviors like smoking in the non-smoking area or smoking without caring those around them, allowing children to run around disturbing others

in a public place, a lack of table manner by spilling food around the dishes on the table, walking obstructing others in the footpath, expecting to be served before local people, not caring to observe or learn local customs, and dress improperly or not observing a local dress code. These annoying behaviors are isolated individual acts related to bodily function or appearance issues, which were the results of family upbringing or lack of training. These behaviors have become a part of personality of an individual. Other isolated individual acts, subdivided into verbal or sound acts included talking loudly/making a loud noise in public, talking loudly while eating in a restaurant, and shouting or calling others in public places or along the hotel corridor. These isolated individual acts are considered frequent and annoying to the hosts. The Chinese government seems to be well-aware of the problems of the uncivilized manners of the citizens. Consequently, they issued "Guide to Civilized Tourism" (China National Tourism Administration, 2013). This guidebook, issued in September 2013, details advice to the Chinese traveling overseas. The matters that affected the Thai hosts in this research were mentioned in this guidebook, such as "Do not occupy public bathrooms for long periods", "Do not leave footprints on toilet seats", "Remember to flush the toilet after use"; "Do not spit out chewing gum or spit on the ground", "Do not litter; do not smoke at no smoking venues"; "Keep voices low", "Wait patiently in the queue", "Do not block streets by walking side by side"; "Do not speak loudly in public" and; "Dress neatly and appropriately"; "Do not bare your chest or back in public"; "Show courtesy to elders, children and people with disabilities"; "Show courtesy to ladies"; "Avoid swearing and using foul language". Other frequent and annoying behaviors are behaviors that directly relate to others. Such behaviors include cutting a queue or not queuing for service; rushing into a place or a transport in a chaotic manner; bumping into others or shoving others in a crowd; and getting into the elevator or a vehicle before others get off. The Chinese government has acknowledged the problem of misbehaviors relating to others, therefore the guides to civilized tourism include in it the sentences like "Be orderly when queuing in public", "Do not push or shove", "Queue jumping is shameful wherever you are". The last category of frequent and annoying behaviors is marginally illegal or scam behaviors. Such behaviors include throwing cigarette butts; spitting in public, and; not observing or breaking local traffic rules / crossing the road unsafely. In spite of the existence of this guidebook, the issues of undesirable behaviors of some Chinese tourists have been reported in media up until now.

In conclusion, now it is the task for researchers, governments, and professionals to identify or implement the tools which can improve these 19 undesirable behaviors in a short time frame. Although the Chinese government has tried to encourage their citizens to behave in a civilized manner while travelling overseas, as a host we should support the effort of the Chinese government by raising their awareness of being civilized tourists. At least they should be aware that their uncivilized behaviors could hurt China's national image. Experience tells us that formal consumer education campaigns tend to have limited impacts (Swarbrooke, 1999). Therefore, all we can do is to raise awareness of the issues and leave tourists to decide for themselves what they should do in terms of their behavior as tourists and become involved in pressure groups. To raise their awareness, the hosts including the government agencies, travel agencies, and the local communities, have to provide clear instructions, especially guideline for proper behaviors addressing the cultural differences at key points in the journey (i.e., on board airline flight departing for a destination, arriving at a destination, and on-site visiting an outbound destination). Providing them with such guidelines and instructions would be helpful to many Chinese tourists, especially those with little travel experience, and those who are less educated. Such clear messages and guidelines may potentially decrease their anxiety about behaving inappropriately and make it easier for them to save their faces. The educated Chinese tourists should be involved in pressure groups. In the contemporary world, educated Chinese tourists are aware of the need to behave well in the eyes of the hosts (Zhang, Pearce, & Chen,

2019); therefore, they may become agents of positive changes and management among their fellow travelers. It is culturally accepted that knowledgeable individuals should guide or give instructions to those with less knowledge on proper behavior abroad.

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