

THE DIRECTION OF TOUR OPERATORS TOWARD PROMOTING ELDERLY TOURISM IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

This research study aimed to study tour operators' approaches to promoting tourism among the elderly in Thailand. It was qualitative research by conducting in-depth interviews specifically targeting the sample population of 15 tourism operators to demonstrate. For example, opinions on Thailand's tourism infrastructure, government attitudes, and incentive policies. It was found that tourism operators agree that overall infrastructure and government policies are successful in supporting elderly tourism within the country. In addition, entrepreneurs want the government to support the tourism industry just as the government supports other initiatives in every aspect, strategically and in terms of marketing, advertising, and public relations. Promotion serious and continuous use of social media and other media that reach elderly tourists.

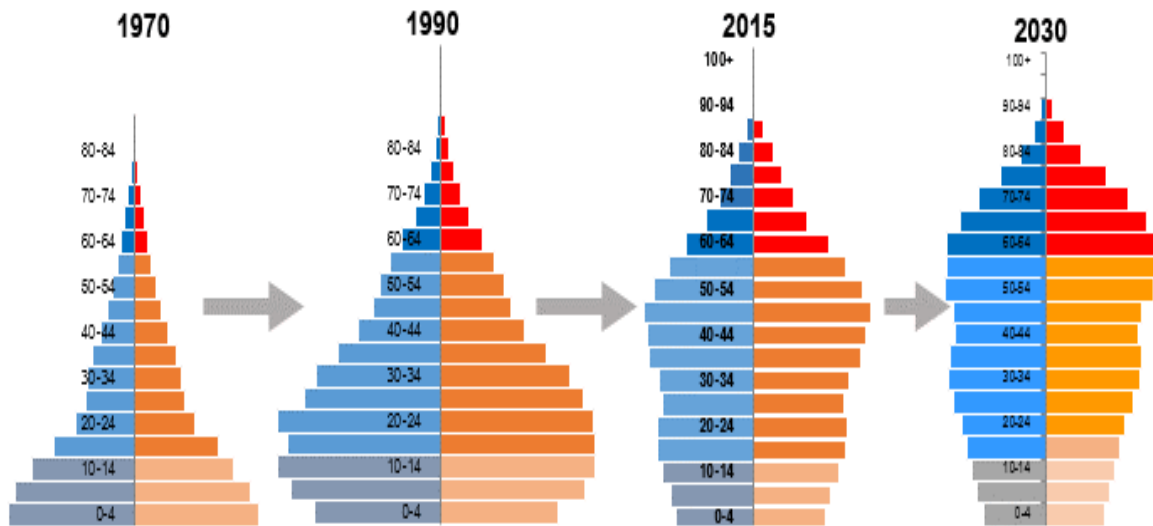
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INTRODUCTION

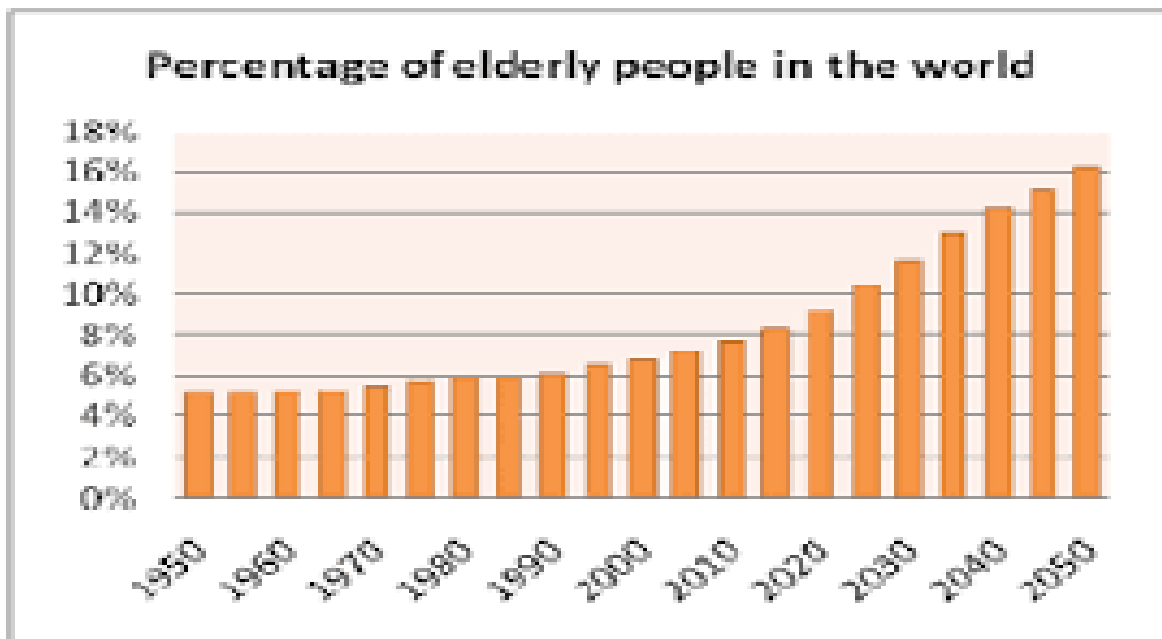
Thai tourism is expanding, according to Kasikorn Research's estimates in March 2017. Tourism in Thailand will grow by 7-8 percent in 2017, with 930 billion in turnover from tourism in rural areas. The research is optimistic that Thais will make approximately 158.2-159.7 million domestic trips, an increase of roughly 7.3% in 2016. Thailand has many tourist destinations in all 77 provinces across Thailand, each of which is one. Each has its own identity as a center of culture, and tradition, a sacred place for Buddhist worship for pilgrimage, and a beautiful sanctuary as a historical tourism destination. Ecological A place to relax with beautiful natural resources, including beautiful seas, rivers, streams, and mountains, and a simple lifestyle with local people, creating peace and tranquility and attracting people to experience nature. As well as being a source of local food at Invite you to try and have local souvenirs that are popular with tourists who travel to travel and enjoying various tourism activities in different provinces, especially the elderly who have time to travel slowly and have the power to buy things they want because the elderly spend time with tired work. And has been in a hurry throughout his career when the workload is exhausted, so he has enough time and money to spend as he pleases.

But at the moment, Thailand is not yet prepared to support tourism for the elderly, which is increasing daily due to the relatively rapid demographic change with the reduction of birth and death rates, causing the population age structure to change. It is an aging society with a survey that in 2005 from 11.1 percent increased to 15.6 percent in 2015 and is expected to increase to almost 20% in the year. 2020 and increase to 30 percent in 2035 (United Nations, 2019). What follows, the state should provide appropriate promotion of civil architecture safety for the elderly, especially in tourist attractions where the elderly are prevalent everywhere. Province for the convenience and security of the elderly and attracting the elderly with the readiness and desire to travel throughout Thailand, which stimulates the Thai economy, especially at the local level, has income and local people have the work puts a burden on the

public. For this reason, the research study focuses on the combination of slow tourism for the elderly in Thailand and the direction of tourism operators, which will benefit stakeholders in Thailand. Thailand's tourism industry, which includes the promotion and support of the government, is essential.



Changing age structure of Thai population



LITERATURE & THEORY

Slow-life tourism is undeniably the brand of tourism in this century. As it has been said, the demographic structure is changing, and the average percentage of the elderly is rising. Compete in tourism for the elderly with the following essential components:

1. **Tourism infrastructure** is a crucial factor that will attract tourists. It is both physical and property safety because tourism is a form of relaxation. In addition, it is transportation that must be convenient and easily accessible, including accommodation management if any

location has it. Factors the tourism industry that a country is prosperous will grow the tourism industry. (Mill and Morrison, 1992:263). A tourist attraction must have beautiful scenery, good facilities, accommodation, restaurants, and souvenir shops, good environment, lovely atmosphere, and other services, infrastructures of transportation and public utility fellowship of friendly landlords (McIntosh and Goeldner, 1986:200). Beautiful natural resources, cultural tourism resources.

2. **Government policies** the tourism industry is an essential driver of the country's economy and has a steady growth rate, and is involved in many sectors that benefit from tourism revenue.

3. **Tourism as an employment** opportunity business and tourism as an employment opportunity business and a service industry generate enormous profits for individuals, societies, and nations. (Nongsiej, Prosperous; Shimray, Somipam R., 2017)

4. **Studying the travel** motivation of Slow Travelers who want to experience their intent characteristics of slow travel, motivation, and slow travel destination experience are directly related to the slow food movement that developed in Italy in the late 1980s (Dickenson, 2002). In the local area, they can spend time with the natural environment, taste the local food, and absorb the local culture. The elderly will be happy to experience the friendly atmosphere around them.

These include concentrations of income-earning activities in the hands of a handful of people, mostly outside interests, with local entrepreneurial skills generally low and job creation. On the other hand, where soft skills and low wages are primarily associated with tourism, many such jobs are created in the hospitality and leisure sectors. Therefore, the tourism sector's development has various impacts on the country's overall development and, of course, affects both product imbalances and inequalities in life opportunities. One example is the case of tourism opportunities. For the elderly as the world is entering an aging society. Several older adults in the world the elderly population in Thailand is estimated to be about 8 million people (13% of the total population). It is expected to increase in line with international trends (AgeingAsia, n.d.). However, the elderly suffer from reduced opportunities and lifestyle experiences as they age.

This issue is addressed directly by the UN's Recife Charter on Tourism for the Elderly, which on the one hand, acknowledges the potential problems facing the elderly in terms of their declining status. Income and opportunities for self-realization and vice versa, alternatives for tourism development by a new group of tourists who may have the desire to explore the world and accumulated income supplemented by pensions. (Of course, not all older adults in society or countries. However, there are indicators that older people in many countries have substantial spending power and in worlds with more demographic and regulatory frameworks. Changes in inheritance and willingness to spend that income older people still make consumption decisions in the same way that the consumer behavior model indicates (Kristensen, Mortenson & Gronholdt, 1999).

However, studies are being conducted to more clearly characterize those involved in elderly tourism, for example. The South Korean sample found a correlation between travel experiences—leisure life satisfaction participation, perceived value, overall quality of life, and willingness to return. (Shoemaker, 1989) found that the overall market for elderly tourists is heterogeneous and composed of segments, while at the same time concluding that a particular group of Taiwanese tourists is motivated to travel for new needs. These study principles reflect the different demographic needs of other countries. And due to the development of tourism-related infrastructure, the opportunity to visit more places and perform more diverse exercises. It is probably not surprising that most of the aging travel-related literature comes from East Asia. The region's rapid economic development offers possibilities that people could never have imagined before and beyond. There is also a substantial Neo-Confucian influence that

fosters respect for the elderly. People from inexperienced societies tend to have more experience-hungry behaviors. A shift from group travel by coach to individual expeditions is attested. As elderly tourism is still a relatively recent phenomenon, it was deemed appropriate to use a more dynamic model. The link between the past and the present (Living a slow life).

The Recife Declaration outlines factors that destination and tourism managers should consider when planning for senior travelers:

- Fundamental quality factors (e.g., safety and security hygiene and environmental health considerations, independence access to services and facilities, and consumer protection standards)

- Interaction with people and places visited

- Educational and cultural experience

- Entertainment and outdoor activities

- Facilities for social events and

- Rhythm and form of appropriate tourism leisure activities (UNWTO, 1996)

METHODS

This research was in-depth qualitative research with interviews. The tool used was an interview form. The respondent population was 15 tourism industry entrepreneurs. All questionnaires were collected, and data were fed into the PSPP open-access statistics program for analysis with a series of techniques.

RESULTS

The study found that eight operators agreed that the current tourism infrastructure was sufficient for the elderly, while seven decided that the government did not support it. Older adults will be able to attract elderly tourists. Therefore, every tourist attraction in every province should improve civilization to accommodate elderly tourism. The tourism business is now quite competitive. Entrepreneurs must agree. It must be in the same direction that the economic situation reflected by the country's GDP is burdensome (40.0%) and very high (46.67%), resulting in a slowdown in tourism.

CONCLUSION & FUTURE WORK

An increase in this caused slowdown in tourism is a reaction to the mass tourism that has developed due to low-cost international flights, intergovernmental agreements, blue skies, and the development of tourism infrastructure in terms of convenience. Reservations, information facility awareness, Money exchange, and the result of new destinations provide a wide variety of options that may be segmented according to demand. This mass tourism pattern has negative consequences, such as the physical impact on places dependent on incoming tourists and the total environmental impact. The new tourism movement is a response to this. It is initially characterized by social and ecological consciousness and Authenticity (Poon, 1989). Authenticity is seen as a means of entering the back end of an endpoint when the smallest and least impactful part is often associated with excellent function, such as sports: ethnic groups, and diaspora tourism (Conway & Timms, 2010).

This approach further evolved with the emergence of the concept of a slow lifestyle which rejected many of the devices of the contemporary world in the form of fast food, external impressions, and social media intermediaries between people. Observed and real-world, this movement offers not only a way to enjoy life but more than a way to re-evaluate the individual's position in respect of society, identity, a neo-liberal rational model. And a shift to market-

driven politics within developed countries where this phenomenon is most frequently seen (Leitch, 2003). In the context of Travel, Slow tourism involves the form and purpose of travel. And how those involved use the services and experiences. In the case of Thailand, the owners of Businesses do not need to wait for promotion or support from the government, but only business owners should participate. Help build a network in every province, apply Social Media technology along with the continuous development of service business potential, then learn the needs of elderly Thai tourists continuously and adjust services and facilities. All of the travel styles of the elderly, the elderly are very necessary. That the elderly must be enthusiastic and want to search for new things. Let the elderly come back to use the service next time.

According to this study, entrepreneurs should change their attitudes instead of managing elderly tourists abroad, which is more expensive. The monthly frequency can be arranged more than overseas travel, and the cost of operation is less than the cost of organizing the overseas trip.

The vital suggestion is that the government must support entrepreneurs in terms of travel convenience, landscaping, and architecture that is suitable for the elderly to travel and can help themselves without burdening them. Others provide financial support to entrepreneurs if the place to visit requires the cost of buying tickets, etc. The government should allow government agencies to recommend public relations places to visit in every province, especially highlights of each section equally and continue regularly as well as develop. The potential of all people in the area to have knowledge and competency about their region and to be able to be a guide for everyone as well as showing hospitality with goodwill.

Therefore, there should be further research on the satisfaction factors of the elderly in choosing and making travel decisions.

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