JRGBS   ISSN: 2465-4094
วารสารรังสิตบัณฑิตศึกษาในกลุ่มธุรกิจและสังคมศาสตร์
Journal of Rangsit Graduate Studies in Business and Social Sciences

Ubolphan Kanjananont Kvarme and Nakamol Chansom

Vol.6 No.1 January-June 2020

EFFECT ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCE FACTORS ON NORWEGIAN SENIOR TOURISTS' TRAVEL INTENTION TO THAILAND

Ubolphan Kanjananont Kvarme[1] and Nakamol Chansom[2]

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the determinants of Norwegian senior tourists' intention to visit Thailand and to analyze path model of factors affecting travel intention of Norwegian senior tourists which had high propensity in travel and high spending records considering the pre visitation stage. In this study, travel intention was proposed to be affected by travel motivation, expectation, travel constraints, destination image, and electronics word of mouth (e-WOM) as exogenous variables in the model. In addition, attitude toward travelling to Thailand was investigated as a mediator. 500 samples as qualified respondents were analyzed. Structural equation model (SEM) was conducted to examine the proposed model by employing Lisrel version 8.72. The effect analysis was conducted to investigate influence of research constructs. The predictors of travel intention explain around 62% of its variance.

The effect size of attitude toward travelling to Thailand presented a highest significant effect to travel intention while e-WOM presented a highest significant positive effect to attitude toward travelling to Thailand followed by travel constraints with the significant negative effect. This study bridged the gap of lacking knowledge about the Norwegian senior tourists in Thailand to have a better understanding of their travel characteristics and related constructs that affected to their travel intention to Thailand. The implications provided marketing strategic planners and tourism industry practitioners with effective marketing strategies and appropriate tourism products to serve the potential needs of this market.

Key words: Norwegian senior tourists, travel intention, attitude, Thailand

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1. Introduction

According to the ageing population market has emerged as an extremely important target for a large number of industries according to the increased purchasing power for most consumer goods and services as well as the tourism industry. In the tourism sector, changing demographics will primarily impact on the characteristics and relative importance of travel segments, with a domino effect on the types of tourism products, services and the activities they engage in while away. Along with challenges, demographic change will also bring new opportunities for the tourism sector. Additionally, senior tourists group has also been highly focused in term of promoting long term stay and high expenditure tourists. Senior tourists; the age range 55-75 are a very heterogeneous group, with needs and expectations very diversified, in relation to age, health conditions, social and familiar constraints and economic status. They have undoubtedly different expectations when traveling: the personal preferences and tastes also matter. In Europe, Germany and the United Kingdom are the largest senior domestic and international markets, while seniors in Scandinavia show the greatest propensity to travel (Patterson and Pegg, 2009). In addition, seniors in smaller European markets such as Norway, Luxembourg and Switzerland generally have higher net incomes than seniors in Eastern and Southern European markets. Tourism expenditure is also expected to be higher among seniors from these countries when Scandinavia shows the greatest propensity to travel. Scandinavian tourists are attractive target to numerous number of tourism destinations regarding to strong economics in this region and tend to have high level of tourism expenditure. Approximate 30% of Scandinavian population are in silver age (55+). Norway tends to have strongest economic than the others in Scandinavia. According to National expenditure, Norwegians' growth in tourism expenditure among the highest in the world. Besides, the ageing people of Norway is one among the other countries that have the highest rate of exercise. However among the factors contributing to the growth in Thailand in 2016 were The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) strategies to target niche travelers; such as senior travelers, sport-people and women travelers. Several researched in Thailand examined the senior market mainly on travel motivation such as Japanese senior travelers, European senior tourists to Thailand have been examined recently (Esichaikul, 2012; Sangpikul, 2008; Seyanont, 2017). Unfortunately, neither specifically studied Norwegian market nor Scandinavian market which has a high propensity in travel and high spending record, if any they have been emerged with European Senior market study. It could be remarkably benefit to Tourism industry of Thailand in order to penetrate Norwegian senior tourist market with the effective marketing strategies and appropriate tourism products.

The Theory of Planned behavior (TPB) is applied as the theoretical base in this study which is an extension of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975 as cited in Ajzen, 1991.) The Theory of Planned Behavior is widely used in numerous number of consumer behavior researches in many academic areas together with tourism behavior. TPB theorized that perceived behavioral control, through its influence on behavioral intention, or impact directly on actual behavior (Huang, 2006). According to the study of Zhang et.al (2016), it is presented that if we can understand the factor which has a power to predict the intention of tourists, we can know

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trend of behavior which will be occurred in the future according to the intention of tourists. In addition, the subjective norm is not employed in this study. According to several previous researches showed firm support of the weak correlation between subjective norm with tourist intention (Huang, 2006, Lam & Hsu, 2004). However, Ajzen (1991) also suggested that TPB may inadequate to explain the relationship between attitude and behavior, it may be useful to involve additional constructs. With respect to tourist behavior, Zhang (2009) accredited (Chen & Hsu, 2000) discussion explaining that tourist behavior can be divided into three groups: before, during and after the trip. Tourist behavior in the first stage are connected to travel motivation, destination image and decision making. During the trip, tourist behavior is highly connected to attitude toward service quality as well as activity selection and the nature of experience. In the post-visit stage, tourists' satisfaction received high attention from numerous studies. Moreover, Hsu, Cai, and Li (2010) developed the model based on the preliminary theoretical model of Gnoth (1997) to study the behavioral process in the pre-visit stage of tourist in the context of Chinese outbound travelers. The model composed of expectation, motivation, and attitude. The model suggested the significant relationship between these three conceptual independent constructs. Subsequently, Word of Mouth is acknowledged to play a remarkable role in influencing and forming consumer attitudes and behavioural intentions (Jalivand, Ebrahimi, and Samiei, 2012). As the finding of Jalivand et al. (2012) showing that e-WOM positively influences the destination image, tourist attitude and travel intention together with destination image and tourist attitude have a significant relationship with intention to travel when examining the inter-relationships among electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), destination image, tourist attitude, and travel intention in the tourism industry. Moreover, Miao (2015) studied the relationship between e-WOM and Chinese tourists' decision-making influence factors to visit Thailand, and to investigate how e-WOM affects Chinese tourists' intention to travel in Thailand. The results show that e-WOM significantly affects tourists' behavioral intention toward visiting Thailand by affecting their attitude. In numerous number of tourism studies, the travel motivation has shown to be one of the most important factor in term of tourism behavior. Besides, motives are in the beginning stage of decision making process (Crompton & McKay, 1997). In term of motivation, the concepts of the push and pull factors is popular utilized by many tourism researches (Lam & Hsu, 2004; Sangpikul, 2008a; Huang and Hsu, 2009; Lee, 2009; Zhang, 2009; Eisichaikul, 2012, Seyayont, 2017). Push factors are defined as internal motives or forces that cause tourists to seek activities to reduce their needs, while pull factors are destination generated forces and the knowledge that tourists hold about a destination (Gnoth, 1997). Several researchers attempted to study the pull factors by interchange pull factor with destination attribute (Kim et al., 2003; Zhang, 2009). However the finding of Lee (2009) found insignificant influence of motivation to future behavioral intention. According to extensive literature review, the other relevant constructs such as Motivation, Expectation, Destination Image and electronic Word of Mouth were employed in order studied to have better understand the determinants of Norwegian senior tourists' Travel Intention to visit Thailand especially on pre-visit stage.

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2. Research Objective

1) To examine the profile of Norwegian senior outbound tourists in term of their socio-demographic and trip-related characteristics

2) To investigate the impact of travel motivations, expectation, travel constraints, destination image, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on Norwegian senior tourists' intention to visit Thailand using a multitude of theories.

3) To investigate the impact of travel motivations, expectation, travel constraints, destination image, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on Norwegian Senior Tourists' attitude towards traveling to Thailand.

4) To examine effect analysis on the causal relationship among Norwegian senior tourist's motivation, their expectation, travel constraints, destination image and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), attitude and travel intention.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Population and Sample size

The population of the study is comprised of Norwegian senior tourist at age 55 and over who have some awareness about Thailand or have been traveled to Thailand at least one time and sample of this study is an Norwegian senior tourist at age 55 and over who have some awareness about Thailand or have been traveled to Thailand at least one time. According to the unknown population size, the statistical estimation is employed in this study using W.G Cochran (1953) formula to determining sample size,

$$n = Z^2 \, p \, (1\text{-}p) \, / \, e^2$$

n = sample size

Z = represents confidence at 95%, the value is from z-score table at the confidence level 95% (z= 1.96)

p = the estimated proportion of an attribute that is presented in the population

e = acceptable random error (e = 5%)

Thus, the minimum sample size from the estimation is 384 for 95% significant level. In addition, this study employ the structural equation modeling analysis, the sample size plays an important role in the estimation and interpretation of SEM results. There are some rule of thumbs to determine sample size when apply Structural Equation Model analysis in research methodology for further to ensure an appropriate use of maximum likelihood estimator (ML) (Hair et al., 2010). The minimum of sample size must be required to reduce the chance of having an exaggerated goodness-of-fit indices (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988 as cited in Kim, 2015). The appropriate size of sample according to Kline (2011) suggested a sample size of 10-20 respondents per estimated parameter to be sufficient sample size. Thus, the sample size of 465 or higher would be sufficient and appropriate to ensure the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis with 31 variables (15 times).

3.2 Data Collection

The data collection in this study were collected by using non purposive sampling method. In order to reflect actual data from respondents, the online survey was conducted in Norway in a three-month period from December 2018 to February 2019. The qualified respondents needed to be 55 years old or over, who have some awareness about Thailand or have been traveled to Thailand at least one time. This study also excluded those who decides not to travel to Thailand as a particular destination. It is hard to compare responses rates with the different studies regarding to the nature of online panel survey as there are various kinds of lengths, topics and incentive supported (Huang and Hsu, 2009). According to the responses, 19 out of this 533 respondents (3.56%) of 533 were eliminated as the respondents have never been to Thailand and no intention to travel to Thailand. The remaining 514 responses were screened and 14 respondents (2.62%) finished the questionnaire only half way or not complete the full questionnaire. Thus, there was 500 qualified respondents which was sufficient for descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis.

3.3 Research Instrument

The questionnaire was originally developed in English and then translated into Norwegian. A back-translation is carefully translated and checked the correspondent of meaning between the two versions by an academic scholars to ensure that both English and Norwegian versions are comparable. The questionnaire consists of 8 sections, the first section is related to respondents profiles followed by seven measurement of the research constructs; Travel Motivation, Expectation, Travel Constraints, Destination Image, electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), Attitude toward travelling to Thailand and Travel Intention to Thailand of individual respondent. All of the sections in the survey instrument consist of items that utilize a 5-point scale. The five academic scholars and teachers were requested to review validity of the indicators and evaluate indicators of each construct and also gave the useful suggestion to organize the appropriate instrument for this research. The research instrument was corrected and adjusted in accordance with the recommendations and comments. After the items of the measurement scales are adjusted and developed, the pre-testing of the scales were conducted in order to evaluate the reliability and validity of this research before the gathering data (Hinkin et al., 1997). According the determine pilot sample size using the confidence interval approach, a sample with 80% accuracy at the 95% confidence level is calculated as $n = 1.96^2 (0.5*0.5)/ 0.2^2$, The result based on this formula is 25 (Chi, 2005). Thus, the first version of questionnaire is conducted and distributed in a small scale preliminary testing to 30 Norwegian Senior tourists in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the construct before the main research. In order to ensure that the measurement scale is reliable, the reliability of measurement is examined by Cronbach's alpha test which is frequently used is various researches. The reliability coefficients score is generally agreed upon limit for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.70 which is defined as adequate, while 0.80 and 0.90 are defined as good and excellent respectively (Chang, 2013; Kim, 2015). The discrimination indices of the research instrument are analyzed to measure how well an item is able to distinguish by using Pearson product moment coefficient between the item's

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scores and the total test scores with the pilot survey data, the total test scores are derived partly from that item's scores. The correlational indices, so values can range from -1.00 to 1.00 and more than 0.20 is defined as acceptable (Ebel and Frisbie, 1986).

4. Data Analysis

The statistical analysis in this study employed SPSS and Lisrel 8.72 to analyse the data collection. SPSS was employed to generate descriptive and inferential statistics, while Lisrel 8.72 was employed for conducting the structural equation modelling (SEM) to examine effect analysis and hypotheses testing.

4.1 Demographic Analysis

The respondent demographic data of effective sample from 500 respondents were analyzed by descriptive statistics using the SPSS. About 351 respondents (70.2%) have been to Thailand for holidays at least one time, while 149 respondents (29.8%) have never been to Thailand but they are interested to go for holiday in Thailand. Male respondents (52.4%) slightly outnumbered their female counterparts (47.6%). About two-third (66.8%) of the respondents are under the age of 65. In term of marital status, 68.6% of the respondents are married, while 14.6% stay single and the remaining are divorced and widow. Nearly half of the sample (48.6%) are fully retired, about one third of respondents (35.8%) work partially, while 11.8% of respondents still work full time and 3.8% are self-employed or have own business. Above than two third of respondents (67.8%) have annual household income more than 250,000 to 750,000 NOK, while 35.8% have annual household income above 250,000 to 500,000 NOK and the respondents about 32.0% have annual household income above 500,000 to 750,000 NOK, while 12.6% of respondents have annual household income more than one million NOK. Nearly 80% of the respondents had a university education while only 3.8% of respondents were educated from secondary school. Most of respondents plan their trips 1-3 months ahead before travelling which is 69.4% and the largest group budget for travelling is between 20001-30000 NOK which is 43.8% of respondents. About 51.6% of respondents prefer to choose basic package and there are slightly differences of the travelling season as they likely travel abroad in every season. The travelling period of most respondents is during 2 weeks up to one month (70.2%) and the largest group of accommodation (60.8%) is 3-4 Star Hotel. About half of the respondents (50.0%) pointed out promotion as a factor that affecting their choice and the use of the information source are slightly different when all information sources are applied, mostly on internet (99.4%). Google is the most popular internet searching sources for the respondents (35.0%) and almost two-fifth (39.4%) of the respondents travel alone. When travelling with their own child/ children are the second-largest group (26.8%), travelling with their spouse or partner is about one-fourth of respondents (24.4%) and travelling with their friends is in the least group (0.4%).

4.2 Variable Attribute Analysis

The mean value ($\overline{x}$) and standard deviation (S.D) of each constructs was examined in order to analyze variable attribution of this study. According to Best and Khan (1993), the indicator of mean value can be defied as

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followed: "Best" when mean value is between 4.51 - 5.00, "Good" when mean value is between 3.51- 4.50, "Moderate" when mean value is between 2.51 - 3.50, "Poor" when mean value is between 1.51 - 2.50 and "Bad" when mean value is between 1.00 - 150. The indicators of Mean Value and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of each research construct are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of research constructs

Fit Index	Mean Value	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	Interpretation
Travel Motivation	2.13	0.879	Poor
Expectation	3.62	0.608	Good
Travel Constraints	3.62	0.613	Good
Destination Image	3.60	0.360	Good
Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)	3.32	0.729	Moderate
Attitude	4.17	0.579	Good
Travel Intention	3.89	0.659	Good

The indicators of Travel Motivation from all items was slightly low value. The record found that the measurement "Avoid the hustle and bustle if daily life" showed the highest mean value, followed by "Relax physically". When "Gain a feeling of belonging" showed a lowest mean value. According to the indicators of Expectation, the record showed "Shop for value for money items" presented a highest mean value, followed by "Experience something different". However "Have a good time with family/ relative/ friends" showed a lowest mean value. For Travel Constraints indicators, Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) overall is in good level. The record showed "I don't have companion to travel with" presented a highest mean value, followed by "I have no time to take a trip" when the item "I don't have energy to travel" showed a lowest mean value. According to the indicators of Destination Image, overall indicators was in good level. The record showed "Good coffee shops and restaurants" presented a highest mean value, followed by "Outstanding natural scenery". However "Tour guide who can speak Norwegian" showed a lowest mean value. Subsequently, the indicators of electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) Travel, the record showed "I often read tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impression on others" presents a highest mean value, followed by "To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews". While the item "If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my destination" showed a lowest mean value. The indicators of Norwegian Senior tourists' Attitude toward travelling to Thailand, Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) overall was good. The

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record showed their attitude from all of their knowledge about Thailand, "visiting Thailand would bring them worthiness" followed by "visiting Thailand would bring them happiness". However "visiting Thailand would bring them enjoyment" from all of their knowledge about Thailand shows a lowest mean value. Lastly the indicators of travel intention of Norwegian Senior Tourists to Thailand, Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) overall was good. The record shows the measurement "I want to go to Thailand at some point of my lifetime" presents highest mean followed by "I would recommend a trip to Thailand", when the measurement "I intend to go on a trip to Thailand within next 12 months" showed a lowest mean value. According to aforementioned variable attributes analysis, the top three highest mean rating and the lowest mean rating of each variables in this study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 The Highest Mean Rating and The Lowest Mean Rating of Latent Variables

Item	Highest mean value	Lowest mean value
Travel Motivation	Avoid hustle and bustle of life	Gain a feeling of belonging
	Relax Physically	
	Relax Mentally	
Expectation	Shop for value for money items	Have a good time with family/relative/friends
	Experience something different	
	See some beautiful scenery	
Travel Constraints	No companion to travel with	No energy to travel
	No time to take a trip	
	Traveling takes too much planning	
Destination Image	Good coffee shops and restaurants	Tour guide who can speak Norwegian
	Outstanding natural scenery	
	Availability of comprehensive tourist information	

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Table 2 The Highest Mean Rating and The Lowest Mean Rating of Latent Variables (cont.)

Item	Highest mean value	Lowest mean value
Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)	Know what destination make good impressions on others	To have less worry about destination
	Choose the right destination	
	Choose an attractive destination	
Attitude	Worthiness	Enjoyment
	Happiness	
	Satisfaction	

In addition, the study investigated the inter-relationship among the research constructs including in the proposed model. The overall model was tested by conducting correlation matrix, discriminant validity was performed to test statistically of the values of the correlation coefficients in the matrix as shown in Table 3. According to 21 elements of interrelationship in the matrix, eight were significant at the 0.01 level while four were significant at the 0.05 level and the other 9 were not significant. They were mainly between exogenous variable and endogenous variable. First group are between exogenous variables and endogenous, Expectation, Travel Constraints and Destination Image to Endogenous Variable Attitude toward travelling to Thailand and exogenous variables; Travel Constraints, Destination Image, electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and Travel intention to Thailand. It was also found that the correlation between exogenous variables and exogenous variables such as destination image and travel motivation, electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and travel motivation as well as electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and Expectation were insignificant. The result showed that all latent variables in correlation matrix had discriminant validity in general. The relationship between Attitude toward travelling to Thailand and Travel Intention had maximum correlation coefficient 0.487, while the second relationship are between Travel constraints and Destination Image 0.405. Most latent variables has positive relationship in the same direction whereas correlation between travel constraints and travel motivation was significantly negative. This can be interpreted that with travel motivation will be less with travel constraints.

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Table 3 Correlation Matrix of Latent Variables in the overall measurement model

Latent Variable	Travel Motivation	Expectation	Travel Constraints	Destination Image	e-WOM	Attitude	Travel Intention
Travel Motivation	1.000						
Expectation	0.167**	1.000					
Travel Constraints	-0.236**	0.247**	1.000				
Destination Image	-0.015	0.227**	0.405**	1.000			
e-WOM	0.046	0.066	0.088*	0.322**	1.000		
Attitude	0.111*	-0.030	-0.059	0.050	0.204**	1.000	
Travel Intention	0.101*	0.092*	-0.003	0.023	0.033	0.487**	1.000

**p<0.01 , *p<0.05

4.3 Effect Analysis

The proposed model was estimated by Structural equation modelling (SEM) using Lisrel 8.72. Model data fit adequacy was assessed using multiple goodness of fit indices and measurement; the chi-square and corresponding degrees of freedom (x^2/df), the root mean square residual (RMR), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the goodness of fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), the comparative fit index (CFI) and the normed fit index (NFI) are applied to evaluate the correspondence of proposed model. According to Kline (2005) a set of fit indices must be applied to check overall fit for the measurement and the value of the fit indices should be above the model adaptability standard, the value of GFI, AGFI, CFI and NFI more than 0.90 signify model fit, while RMR less than 0.05 and RMSEA less than 0.08 signify model fit, and x^2/df is considered satisfactory when $x^2/df < 3$ with large samples (N > 200), $x^2/df < 2.5$ in medium-sized samples (100 < N < 200), and < 2 in small samples (N < 100).

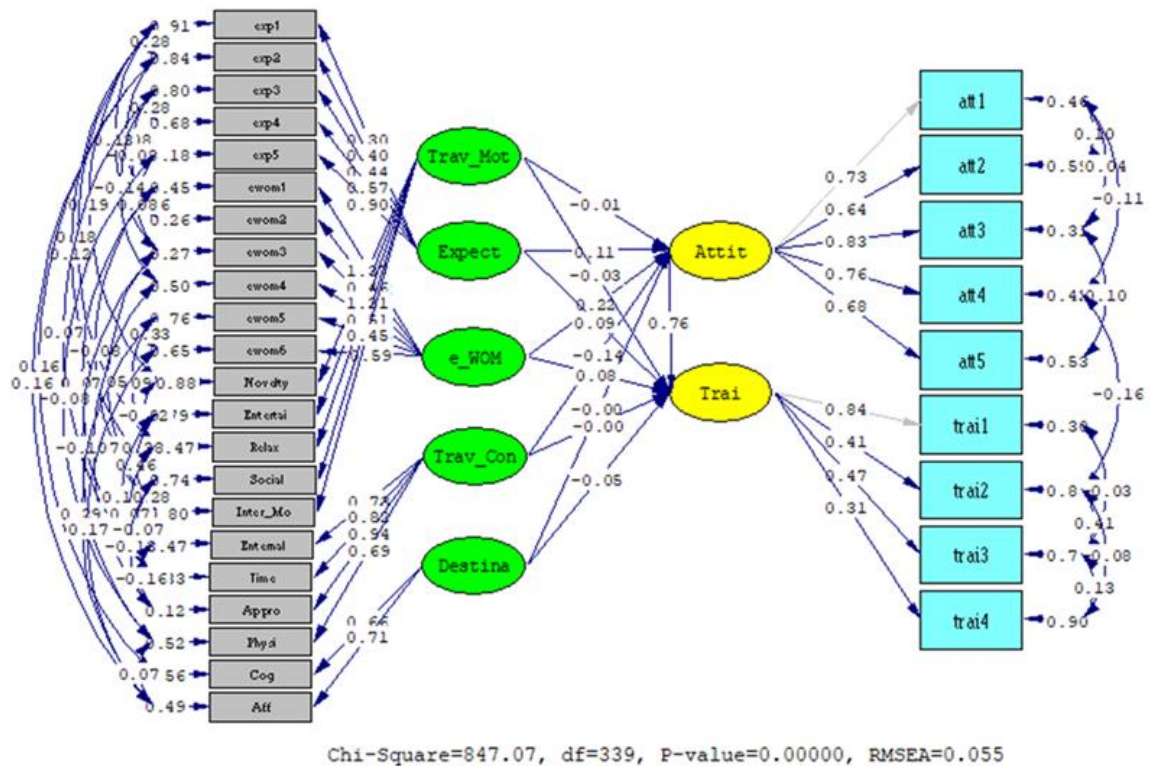Chi-Square=847.07, df=339, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.055

Figure 1 Path Analysis Model

By running Lisrel 8.72, a set of statistics indicated that the proposed model in figure 1 showed a good fit of empirical data when Chi square = 847.07, degree of freedom = 339, x2/df = 2.50 which is acceptable when x2/df is less than 3 (n= 500), the goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.90, AGFI = 0.86 which is defined as acceptable fit when AGFI is higher than 0.90 is defined as good fit (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003), the comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.96 which is more than 0.90, and the normed fit index (NFI) = 0.92 which is more than 0.90. Subsequently, the root mean square residual (RMR) = 0.46 which is less than 0.50 and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.055 which is less than 0.08 with respect to Kline (2004, 2005).

When examine the effect parameter between five exogenous variables; travel motivation, expectation, travel constraints, destination image, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and two endogenous variables; attitude and travel intention of Norwegian Senior tourists to Thailand. The effect coefficients are shown in Table 4 along with the square multiple correlation (R^2) associated with Attitude and Travel Intention.

According to the direct effect between Travel Intention and Travel Motivation, Expectation, Travel Constraints, Destination Image, electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and Attitude toward travelling to Thailand. The effect size can be presented -0.041, 0.173, -0.110, -0.054, 0.246 and 0.760 respectively when the effect from

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Attitude toward traveling to Thailand is highest at 0.760 direct effect. Regarding the indirect effect, Attitude was the only mediating variable between exogenous and endogenous variables, Travel Intention. Therefore the indirect effect existed only between exogenous variables and Travel Intention. The indirect effect size of Travel Motivation, Expectation, Travel Constraints, Destination Image and electronic Word of Mouth are -0.08, 0.083, -0.11, -0.002 and 0.167 respectively.

The coefficient of determination (R-Square) of Attitude is at 0.063 which is defined that the exogenous variables; Travel Motivation, Expectation, Travel Constraints, Destination Image and electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) can explain the integrated effect size toward Attitude 6.3%.

However the coefficient of determination (R-Square) of Travel Intention is at 0.62 which can be defined that Travel Motivation, Expectation and Travel Constraints, Destination Image, electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and Attitude can explain the integrated effect size toward Travel Intention 62.0%.

Table 4 Total effect and indirect effect analysis between exogenous and endogenous variables

Endogenous Variables / Exogenous Variables	Attitude			Travel Intention		
	TE	IE	DE	TE	IE	DE
Travel Motivation	-0.010	-	-0.01	-0.041	-0.008	-0.033
Expectation	0.110	-	0.110	0.173	0.083	0.09
Travel Constraints	-0.140*	-	-0.140	-0.110	-0.11	0.00
Destination Image	-0.003	-	-0.003	-0.054	-0.002	-0.052
e-WOM	0.220*	-	0.220*	0.246	0.167	0.079
Attitude	-	-	-	0.760*	-	0.76
Goodness of fit indices	Chi-square=847.07 GFI=0.90 AGFI=0.82 RMR=0.046 RMSEA=0.055 CFI=0.92 NFI=0.92 x^2/df =2.50					
Structural Model Var	Attitude			Travel Intention		
R-SQUARE	0.063			0.62		

*p<0.05

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5. Discussion and recommendation

This study explored each of research constructs regarding to the proposed mode; Travel motivation, Expectation, Travel Constraints, Destination Image and electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), Attitude and Travel Intention of Norwegian Senior Tourists.

The Travel Motivation factors were identified, all measurement items were presented in 5 dimensions of Travel Motivation factors: Novelty, Entertainment, Relaxation, Socialization and Internal Motivation. Relaxation; to avoid hustle and bustle in daily life and to relax their physical are mostly concerned by Norwegian senior tourists in term of motivation factors. While other dimensions were all documented in motivation studies as common motivation factors.

In addition, Expectation were identified by 5 measurements, the finding showed Norwegian senior tourist expect to shop for value for money products and also expect to experience something different, while having a good time with family/ relative/ friends" was the least of their expectation.

Travel Constraints factors were identified in 4 dimensions: External resources constraints, Time constraints, Approval and Social Condition constraints and Physical Condition constraints. It was found that the highest mean rating constraints of Norwegian senior tourists to travel was no companion to travel with and followed by they have no time to travel. The lowest popularity was Physical Condition factor such as no energy to travel.

According to Destination Image factor, many researches in tourism area only measured cognitive image. In this study Destination Image were identified by both Cognitive image and Affective image similar to Huang, 2009. It was found that cognitive image factor such as good coffee shops and restaurants presented highest mean, followed by outstanding natural scenery while Norwegian senior tourists' defied that Affective factor such as tour operator who can speak Norwegian was least important.

Furthermore, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) which was one extension construct in this study were identified by 6 measurements. The finding showed Norwegian Senior tourist often read tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impression on others presents a highest mean value followed they often read other tourists' online travel to make sure of choosing the right destination. However, they do not worry much if they have not read tourists' online travel reviews before making decision.

Additionally, Attitude were identified by 5 measurements, Happiness, Enjoyment, Worthiness, Attractiveness, and Satisfaction. From the result it was found that in term of Norwegian senior tourists' attitude, travelling to Thailand would bring them worthiness and happiness most while enjoyment was least concerned.

In term of Norwegian senior tourist's travel intention, were identified by 4 measurements; They would recommend the trip to Thailand, They intend to go on a trip to Thailand within 12 months, They intend to go on a trip to Thailand within 24 months and they want to go to Thailand at some point of their life time. It was found that

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they intend to go to Thailand at some point of their life time followed by they would recommend the trip to Thailand was highly concerned while they intend to come within 12 months was least concerned.

In addition, the study investigated the inter relationship among the research constructs including in the proposed model. The overall model was tested by conducting correlation matrix, discriminant validity was performed to test statistically of the values of the correlation coefficients in the matrix. The result showed that all latent variables in correlation matrix had discriminant validity in general. The relationship between Attitude toward travelling to Thailand and Travel Intention had maximum correlation coefficient 0.487, while the second relationship are between Travel constraints and Destination Image 0.405. Most latent variables has positive relationship in the same direction. However correlation between travel constraints and travel motivation was significantly negative. This can be interpreted that with travel motivation will be less with travel constraints.

Moreover, the effects analysis were conducted to examine direct effect, indirect effect and total effect among the research constructs in the proposed model by employing SEM. The result of effect analysis between five exogenous variables: Travel Motivation, Expectation, Travel Constraints, Destination Image and electronics Word of Mouth (e-WOM) with two endogenous variables; Attitude and Travel Intention. The effect parameter between five exogenous variables with Attitude toward traveling to Thailand presented only direct effect and effect coefficients of electronics Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and Travel Constraints significantly affected Attitude toward travelling to Thailand. According to the effect analysis between five exogenous variables and Attitude as and endogenous variables in the proposed model with Travel Intention, it was founded that the effect parameter between attitude toward traveling to Thailand is highest and only direct effect was presented. In term of indirect effect of five exogenous variables toward Travel Intention. None of them significantly affect Travel intention though the result showed indirect effect parameter. However Travel Motivation, Expectation and Travel Constraints, Destination Image, electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) and Attitude can explain the integrated effect size toward Travel Intention 62.0%. Subsequently, Travel Motivation, Expectation, Travel Constraints, Destination Image and electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) can explain the integrated effect size toward Attitude 6.3%.

However this research only focused on the pre-visit stage of Senior Norwegian Tourists. Future study, the past visit stage should be considered for further to gain insights of Senior Norwegian tourism market in all aspects. Thus, more reliable factors regarding to past visit stage of tourists such as satisfaction and past experience should be added. Moreover, in order to better understand the Senior Norwegian Tourists, other variables such as their preferences and their specific behaviors should be also considered. Finally, the effect analysis between exogenous variables have not studied in this research. In the future, the path analysis among exogenous variables should be further discussed.

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6. Contribution and Limitations

6.1 Contribution

This research building upon previous theories extends the knowledge on tourism consumer behavior. The benefit of this study can be integrated to various sectors such as nation / government sector, business and organization and academic area.

In term of contribution to Nation, government sector especially those who take responsibility for marketing, promoting Thailand tourism industry, particularly target international tourists and strategic planning such Tourism Authority of Thailand. This can be benefit in term of planning the strategy in promoting Senior Tourism especially the market with high purchasing ability and high propensity to travel such as Norwegian senior tourists with high propensity and spending record but it is difficult to have a comparative analysis with Norwegian senior tourists group in Thailand as neither Norwegian senior tourists nor Scandinavian senior tourists have been studied in Thailand. The research finding presented attitude toward traveling to Thailand significantly affect to Norwegian senior tourists' intention. In their attitude, traveling to Thailand would bring them worthiness, happiness and satisfaction. Thus increasing tourists' attitude toward to Thailand is a key factor to attract more senior tourists. Additionally, the finding also showed an access tourist information is important to Norwegian senior tourists as the availability of comprehensive information is in the rank of high score. According to the demographic profile reported that 99.4% of them using internet to search for information. Thus it is useful to develop the tourist information availability in various media especially online or electronic media. Moreover as other local government sector have promoted each own areas to induce more tourists. The dual language presentation might be useful to attract international tourist as well as domestic tourists.

In term of contribution to business sector, this study can help improve marketing promotions and the development of more effective destination positioning strategies for tourism marketers and tourist industry practitioners to effectively design specific marketing strategies and appropriate tourism products to satisfy the needs of Norwegian senior outbound market. As the finding suggest that e-WOM is positively related to travel intention, when e-WOM is positively related attitude and attitude is positively related to travel intention. Thus, tourists' review and recommendation could be focused to increase attitude toward traveling to Thailand and travel intention for Norwegian senior tourists. Moreover, the finding present lacking of companion and time to travel and too much planning in travel are their constraints. It might be useful for those in hospitality sector in term of creating products or strategies and find collaborate the relevant sector to eliminate theses constraints for example a full board tour package or half board tour package and reduce the process in planning the trip.

This study can bridge the gap and contribute to the tourism literature in the area of senior tourist behavior especially Norwegian market and / or emerging market. The statistical analysis of this study could be applied as a basis for further research into senior tourism behavior especially Norwegian market and other emerging market. However many of previous studies focused on the senior tourists from the countries in term of large number of

senior population and high expenditures. In Thailand, the study of senior tourists travel motivation of Japanese senior travelers, European senior tourists have been examined recently (Esichaikul, 2012; Sangpikul, 2008; Seyanont, 2017). Up to date, only few researches has been devoted to understand Senior Scandinavian market in Thailand. If any, they have been emerged with European Senior market study. Though 30 percent of their population are in silver age above than 55 years old and Scandinavian tourists hold the third biggest outbound tourists in the world and their travel spending per capita in Scandinavia is among the world highest record. Furthermore, neither specifically studied Norwegian market nor its senior market which has a high propensity in travel and high spending record. Moreover numerous researchers studied on travel motivation and behavior of senior tourism in order to understand and satisfy the needs of senior tourists. The finding from this study found that travel motivation have insignificant effect on travel intention and attitude toward traveling to Thailand. Therefore, focusing on senior tourist motivation might not be adequate to gain insight of senior tourist behavior.

6.2 Limitations

The electronic survey is employed for data collection in this study. It is hard to compare responses rates with the different studies regarding to the nature of online panel survey as there are various kinds of lengths, topics and incentive supported (Huang and Hsu, 2009). In this study, a rate of return is a potential limitation in survey research, thus the incentive for completion is offered. In addition, surveys can be leading or biased. In order to ensure that questions are clear and objective, content validation is measured as well as conducting a pilot study. Another limitation is in the SEM methodology, SEM assumes free correlations among all exogenous variables in a structural model. Thus the directional relationship between each pair of exogenous variables cannot be tested even though causal relationships were existed among them. Besides, this study examine only one single market, the Norwegian senior travel market, the results obtained may not be directly generalizable to individuals from different cultures or nations according to different countries have their own characteristics and cultures, and the results or conclusions of this study cannot be applied to other countries. Finally, the present study tested a proposed model on pre-visit stage including the respondents who have been to Thailand at least once and those who have never been to Thailand but have an interest to visit Thailand. It would be useful to compare the model with respondents who have been to Thailand with those who have never been to Thailand but tend to visit Thailand.

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