



## **Research Report**

การวิเคราะห์และเปรียบเทียบแรงจูงใจในการเดินทางและพฤติกรรม  
นักท่องเที่ยวนานาชาติที่เดินทางมาประเทศไทย

# **An Analysis and Comparative Study of Travel Motivations and Travel Behaviors of International Tourists to Thailand**

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**This research project was granted by**

**Dhurakij Pundit University**

**Year 2008**

Research Title	:	An Analysis and Comparative Study of Travel Motivations and Travel Behaviors of International Tourists to Thailand
Researchers	:	Aswin Sangpikul
Institution/publisher	:	Dhurakij Pundit University (including copy right)
Year of Completion	:	2009
Total pages	:	67 pages

### บทคัดย่อ

ในช่วงระยะเวลากว่า 10 ปีที่ผ่านมา มีงานวิจัยที่ศึกษาเกี่ยวกับนักท่องเที่ยวนานาชาติที่เดินทางมาท่องเที่ยวในประเทศไทยมากขึ้นทั้งในด้านพฤติกรรมนักท่องเที่ยว ลักษณะหรือรูปแบบการเดินทางท่องเที่ยวของนักท่องเที่ยวนานาชาติและงานวิจัยอื่นๆอีกหลายเรื่อง แต่อย่างไรก็ตามจากการทบทวนงานวรรณกรรมในเรื่องนักท่องเที่ยวนานาชาติที่เดินทางมาประเทศไทยพบว่างานวิจัยส่วนใหญ่ดูเหมือนจะมุ่งศึกษานักท่องเที่ยวเฉพาะกลุ่มหรือจากประเทศใดประเทศหนึ่งมากกว่าการศึกษาในลักษณะเชิงเปรียบเทียบหรือวิเคราะห์ความแตกต่างระหว่างประเทศหรือภูมิภาค ซึ่งการศึกษาเชิงลักษณะเปรียบเทียบจะให้นักการตลาดสามารถมองเห็นภาพกว้างของตลาดเป้าหมายได้ชัดเจนขึ้น อีกทั้งจะทำให้ทราบถึงความเหมือนหรือความแตกต่างของนักท่องเที่ยวแต่ละกลุ่มได้ ซึ่งจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการกำหนดกลยุทธ์การตลาดให้เหมาะสมกับความต้องการของนักท่องเที่ยวกลุ่มเป้าหมายแต่ละกลุ่ม ดังนั้น งานวิจัยในครั้งนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์และเปรียบเทียบแรงจูงใจและพฤติกรรมการท่องเที่ยวของนักท่องเที่ยวนานาชาติที่เดินทางมาประเทศไทย โดยเปรียบเทียบในลักษณะภูมิภาคระหว่างนักท่องเที่ยวชาวเอเชียและชาวยุโรป

งานวิจัยในครั้งนี้ใช้แบบสอบถามในการเก็บข้อมูลกลุ่มตัวอย่างนักท่องเที่ยวนานาชาติที่เดินทางมาท่องเที่ยวในประเทศไทยจำนวน 400 คน ผลการวิจัยระบุว่าแรงจูงใจผลักดัน (push factor) ที่ทำให้นักท่องเที่ยวอยากเดินทางท่องเที่ยวทั้งชาวเอเชียและยุโรปมีลักษณะคล้ายกัน คือ แรงจูงใจที่ต้องการพบเห็นสิ่งแปลกๆใหม่ๆในสถานที่ต่างๆ (novelty seeking) ส่วนปัจจัยดึงดูด (pull factor) ที่ทำให้นักท่องเที่ยวชาวเอเชียและชาวยุโรปเดินทางมาประเทศไทยมีความแตกต่างกัน กล่าวคือ กลุ่มตัวอย่างนักท่องเที่ยวชาวเอเชียส่วนใหญ่เดินทางมาประเทศไทยเพราะปัจจัยดึงดูดด้านความหลากหลายของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวและกิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยว

ส่วนนักท่องเที่ยวชาวยุโรประบุว่าปัจจัยด้านวัฒนธรรมและประวัติศาสตร์เป็นปัจจัยดึงดูดหลักให้อยากเดินทางมาประเทศไทย นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่านักท่องเที่ยวชาวเอเชียและชาวยุโรปมีความแตกต่างกันในด้านพฤติกรรมการท่องเที่ยวหลายด้าน เช่น การวางแผนการเดินทาง ระยะเวลาพำนัก กิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยว และแหล่งข้อมูลข่าวสาร งานวิจัยในครั้งนี้ได้ค้นพบประเด็นที่น่าสนใจหลายประการที่เกี่ยวกับแรงจูงใจในการเดินทางและพฤติกรรมนักท่องเที่ยวชาวเอเชียและยุโรปที่เดินทางมาประเทศไทย ทั้งนี้หวังว่าผลการวิจัยจะมีประโยชน์ต่อหน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้องโดยสามารถนำผลการวิจัยและข้อเสนอแนะไปพัฒนาและปรับแผนกลยุทธ์การตลาดและสินค้าให้เหมาะสมกับกลุ่มตลาดเป้าหมาย

### Abstract

During the past decade there is an increasing of studies relating to international tourists to Thailand such as tourist behaviors, travel pattern and trip characteristics. However, the literature review indicates that most studies seem to focus on examining international tourists based on one particular country or culture rather than exploring them in terms of comparative studies. Comparative studies are generally argued to provide a wider outcome, and a better understanding of similarities and differences of the target markets. With this reason, they would provide a better development of marketing plans and strategies for the target groups. This study, therefore, aims to examine and compare travel motivations and tourist behaviors of international tourists to Thailand based on a regional base between Asian and European tourists.

A self-administered questionnaire survey was used to collect the data from international tourists (400 samples) who were visiting Thailand for leisure and holiday purpose. The results of the study indicated that travel motives (push factor) of Asian and European respondents seemed to be similar in that most of them were more likely to be motivated by 'novelty seeking' when traveling overseas. However, there were some differences regarding the major attractions (pull factor) drawing them to Thailand. Most of Asian respondents indicated 'a variety of tourist attractions and activities' was the major factor attracting them to Thailand while the European respondents indicated that 'cultural and historical attractions' was the key factor for them to come to Thailand. The study also

revealed some differences of travel behaviors between Asian and European respondents in some aspects such as trip arrangement, length of stay, tourism activities and source of travel information.

The results of the study are expected to provide practical implications that can be helpful for both policy makers and industry practitioners to develop appropriate marketing strategies and tourism products for the international travel markets, specifically for Asian and European markets. In addition, the findings will contribute to the tourism literature in the area of travel motivations and tourist behaviors of international tourists to Thailand.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Dhurakij Pundit University for providing me a research fund for this research project. I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Dr. Paitoon Sinlarat, Vice President for Research Affairs, Associate Professor Dr. Sorachai Bhisalbutra and university research committee to approve the project and provide research funds to accomplish the tasks.

I would like to say thank you to the university research center and their staff for their help and support throughout the research project. Finally, I wish to thank you all the work cited in this research.

Aswin Sangpikul

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

This chapter aims to provide the overview of research project including research background, objectives, contributions, hypotheses and definitions of key terms used in this study.

#### **1.1 Research Background**

It is generally argued that the tourism industry is one of the largest and most important sectors for Thailand economy. During the past decade, the tourism industry has significantly expanded and contributed to the overall economic growth of Thailand. Each year millions of international visitors come to Thailand to experience the uniqueness of Thai culture and the beauty of natural resources. According to the statistical reports by the Tourism Authority of Thailand or TAT (2008), the number of international tourists visiting Thailand has been increasing over the past 10 years, from 7.76 million tourists in 1998 to 14.46 tourists in 2007 (TAT, 2008). Overseas tourists visiting Thailand come from different parts of the world. Major markets include Asia, Europe, North America and Australia (TAT, 2007). Although the tourism industry in Thailand has been growing during the past decade, however, the market competition within the region should not be overlooked. In recent years there has been an increasing market competition in the region from major competitors such as Malaysia and Singapore as well as emerging destinations like Vietnam and Cambodia. In particular, major competitors like Malaysia (with 17 million tourist arrivals a year) and Singapore (with 10 million tourist arrivals a year), they have allocated a lot of budgets for promoting tourism in their countries each year with the aim to be the tourism hub of the region (World Tourism Organization, 2007). Their aggressive marketing strategies, for example, can be evidently seen from various media coverage (e.g. TV, newspapers, magazines) aiming to promote Malaysia or Singapore as the leading tourist destination. Since the tourism industry is a major economic driver and a powerful revenue-generating activity in many countries, it is anticipated that the tourism competition is more likely to be more intensified and competitive within the region. With the expected trend and current competitive tourism market, increasing the number of international tourists to Thailand and targeting Thailand as the tourism hub of the region seem be the challenges for Thailand's tourism industry to compete with key competitors and emerging destinations. And this is the focus of the research issue (problem) identified in this study. In other words, the

concerns could be how Thailand would develop the effective tourism plans and strategies in order to compete with other countries in the region.

Given the importance of the tourism industry to the Thailand's economy and the current competitive market situation, it is essential for Thai tourism marketers to develop effective marketing strategies to attract more international tourists to the country as well as to develop tourism products responding to the needs of the target tourists. In order to be successful in global tourism, according to the literature, tourism marketers should understand travel needs and behaviors of the target markets (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Jang & Wu, 2006). One of the useful approaches to understand travel needs and why people travel is to examine 'travel motivations' (Crompton, 1979; Cha, McCleary & Uysal, 1995; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Understanding travel motivations could be regarded as a starting point for the success of the tourism marketing programs (Cha et al., 1995; Shin, 2003). This is because travel motivations help explain tourists' internal needs to travel and what motivates them to a particular destination, and they are also associated with tourists' destination choice (Dann, 1977, Compton, 1979). Thus, the knowledge of travel motivations would enable tourism marketers to better satisfy travelers' needs and wants, and then be able to develop appropriate marketing programs serving the needs of the target markets (Jang & Cai, 2001; Andreu, Kozak, Avci, & Ciffer 2006).

One of the common and useful approaches to examine travel motivations is based on the theory of push and pull motivations or often called theory of push and pull factors (Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). A review of literature indicates that examining travel motivations based on the theory of push and pull motivations has been widely accepted in the tourism literature (Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983; Yuan & McDonald, 1990). This is because the theory helps explain why people travel and where they go; providing clues for holiday decisions. According to the theory, push factors are related to travel motives (why people travel) while pull factors are associated with tourism attractions (what attracts people to visit a particular destination). When considered together, push and pull factors are believed to be related to tourists' travel decision making. With this context, the theory of push and pull motivations seems to provide a useful framework to examine different forces motivating a person to take a holiday, and also help identify the factors attracting that person to choose a particular destination. In order to understand travel needs of international tourists, and to develop effective marketing programs to attract overseas travelers, **this study aims to employ the theory of push and pull motivations to investigate travel motivations of international tourists to Thailand.** More specifically, the study will also examine and compare travel motivations and their travel

behaviors based on geographical regions (e.g. Asia, Europe). Previous literature (in Thai context) indicates that most studies on tourist-related behaviors are primarily focused on one single market (one country) rather than examining or comparing tourist groups from different countries or regions. Moreover, previous research reveals that tourists from the same region such as Asia or Europe may have some similarities on travel related-behaviors such as travel motivations and/or travel preferences because they may share some commonalities with the core culture either Asian culture (Asian tourists) or Western culture (European tourists), and this may be worth for further studies such as a comparative study based on regional base or geographical area (Lee, 2000; Kim & Prideaux, 2005). In general, it is argued that a comparative study would yield more useful implications and practices to the industry than a mono-based study since the research results can provide a wider outcome and better understanding of travel needs and tourists' characteristics of different target markets (Kim & Lee, 2000; Kozak, 2002; ). The results are expected to help destination marketers develop more appropriate marketing programs and strategies for each market. Moreover, in practice it seems that many Thai tourism businesses develop their marketing strategies for international markets with little or no support/usage from research-based information. Therefore, this presents a research opportunity for the current research project to examine and compare travel motivations of different target tourists as well as to make a contribution to the tourism industry by providing marketing practices or implications based on research results. It is hoped that the findings of the study will provide policy markers and tourism marketers a better understanding of travel motivations of international tourists to Thailand and assist them in formulating appropriate tourism polices and strategies to effectively target the international tourist markets.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

- 1) To identify push and pull factors that influence travel motivations of international tourists to Thailand
- 2) To examine and compare travel motivations (push and pull factors) and travel behaviors of international travelers to Thailand based on geographical region

### 1.3 Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature review (chapter 2), the following hypotheses have been formulated:

**Hypothesis 1** – International tourists with different geographical regions may have differences in travel behaviors.

**Hypothesis 2** – International tourists with different demographic characteristics may have differences in travel behaviors.

**Hypothesis 3** – International tourists with different geographical regions may have differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand's destination attractions (pull factors).

**Hypothesis 4** – International tourists with different demographic characteristics may have differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand's destination attractions (pull factors).

### 1.4 Research Scope

This study primarily aimed to examine and compare travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists to Thailand. The theory of push and pull motivations were employed as a conceptual framework to examine tourists' motivations. The samples were international travelers who were visiting Thailand for holiday and leisure purposes. Data collection was undertaken in major tourist cities in the central area including Bangkok, Ayutthaya, and Pattaya. In this study, tourists' geographical region (i.e. Asia, Europe), and demographic characteristics (i.e. age, gender, education, income) were determined as independent variables while travel motivations and travel behaviors were established as dependent variables.

### 1.5 Research Contributions

This study employed the theory of push and pull motivations to investigate the travel motivations of international tourists to Thailand. The theory of push and pull motivations is a well-respected motivational theory used to examine travel motivations of various traveler groups (Dann, 1977; Klenosky, 2002). The theory is useful for explaining why people travel (push factors) and where they go (pull factors), and this will reflect the basic travel needs and wants of

the target tourists for going on holidays. Thus, the results of the study are expected to provide useful implications for policy makers and tourism marketers to develop effective marketing strategies (e.g. marketing communications, advertising or promotional campaigns) and tourism products to attract more international tourists to Thailand. Moreover, since the study compares the travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists to Thailand, the research findings will help tourism marketers design more effective tourism programs to respond and better satisfy travel needs of different target markets. The study will also contribute/add to the existing tourism literature in the area of comparative studies of travel motivations and tourist behaviors of international tourists, particularly in Thai context.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

Several technical terms are used in this study. In order to better understand the context of travel motivations which is primarily related to psychology, the definition of key terms used in this study are provided as follows:

*Travel motivation* is a personal need that drives an individual to travel (Dann, 1977). It has an influence on tourists' behavior and decision making (where to go). In this study, the approach examining travel motivation is based on the push and pull motivations theory. This theory is basically assumed that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal forces (called push factors), and pulled by the external forces of destination attributes/attractions (called pull factors). These two factors, when considered together, provide the clues as to why people travel (Dann, 1977).

*Push factors* are mainly socio-psychological motives (personal needs) that make people want to travel (Crompton, 1979). They are related to the internal needs and wants of a traveler such as a desire for escaping from a busy environment, a need to rest, relax or seek adventure (Klenosky, 2002).

*Pull factors* are destination attractions/attributes that attract people to a particular destination (Uysal & Hagan, 1993). They are the external factors relating to the destination attractions such as beaches, landscape, natural attractions, historical sites, and culture (Klenosky, 2002).

*Tourist behavior* is the behavior or the process that consumers or tourists search, select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

This chapter aims to review the related literature on international tourists in Thailand, travel motivations (push and pull factors), travel behaviors and trip characteristics of international tourists, and cross-cultural studies. Its purpose is to provide general knowledge and overall concepts regarding the theories and studies related to this research.

#### 2.1 General Information of International Tourists in Thailand

**Before reviewing related literature in the areas of travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists, it is interesting to provide general information of international tourists in Thailand. This information would provide a better understanding of the overview of the inbound markets.** According to the TAT (2007), there was a total of 14,464,000 international tourist arrivals to Thailand with approximately 65% males and 35% females. The growth of the market during the past decade was not stable; slightly increasing and decreasing in some years due to external factors and global economic conditions. Among 14 million visitors, 38% were first-time visitors while the majority (62%) was repeat visitors. Most of them came to Thailand for leisure and holiday purposes (83%). Major tourists' age groups include 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54 years old, respectively. Major inbound markets are Southeast Asia, East Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia. Most of international tourists traveled independently (66%) while the rests (34%) traveled on group tours. The overall revenue generated from the inbound markets was approximately Baht 547,700 million. The average length of stay was approximately 9.19 days, however, Asian tourists seem to stay shorter or by 5.45 days compared to European and North American travelers. The average daily expense was Bath 4,120 with major spending on shopping, accommodation and food/beverage.

**In addition to the above information provided by the TAT, there are several studies examining different aspects of international tourists in Thailand. Reviewing these studies would provide further insight into the inbound markets in Thailand setting.** Tanapanpanich (1999), for example, examined international tourists' attitudes and impressions when visiting Thailand. The study found that most international tourists had good attitudes toward Thailand. They also appreciated Thai hospitality, Thai culture, and the beauty of national resources, particularly islands and beaches. The study indicated these destinations' attributes were regarded as important factors promoting repeat visit among international visitors. However, there were several issues that could negatively impact tourists' impression and needed attention from

concerned parties. These issues included safety/security concerns, tourism infrastructure, transportation, and cleanliness. Investigating demographic factors influencing international tourists in selecting tourist destinations in Thailand, Soda (2001) found that age, gender, income, education and country of origin had impacts on travel preferences of tourist destinations. The study distinguished international tourists to Thailand into 4 groups (historical, cultural, natural, and recreational groups), and each group had different travel characteristics and preferences in selecting tourist destinations. Different tourism programs and strategies were proposed to respond to the needs of different tourist groups. Tooyanon (2002) investigated travel satisfaction and consumption behaviors of international tourists in Thai restaurants. The study found that most tourists were highly satisfied with restaurants' services, a variety of products, food quality, food taste, and Thai hospitality. Those who stayed in Thailand more than 4 weeks were likely to have their meals at Thai restaurants 1-3 times a week, and they usually came with their friends for dinner. The study also revealed that the local media had influence on tourists' perceptions of Thai restaurants, and further reported that tourists with different demographics had different level of satisfaction, perceptions and consumption behaviors of Thai food. Rittichainuwat, Qu, and Mongkonvanit (2002) examined the impact of travel satisfaction on the likelihood of travelers to revisit Thailand and found differences in travel satisfaction between first time and repeat visitors as well as among travelers with different demographic profiles. The study revealed that, for example, the Asian travelers had the lowest travel satisfaction on all travel satisfaction factors (lodging, tourist attractions, transportation, foods and environment/safety) than their European and North American counterparts while female travelers had a lower level of satisfaction on the environment and safety than male travelers. The study concluded that the higher satisfaction travelers have toward their trips, the more likely they would revisit the destination. The study provided important implications to enhance the level of tourist satisfaction toward tourism products and services.

*With the above information*, it is hoped that the current study examining travel motivations and tourist behaviors of international tourists to Thailand would extend/add to the existing information provided by the TAT and previous literature, particularly the information regarding travel-related behaviors and trip characteristics of international tourists from different regions. This would help industry practitioners understand more about travel related-behaviors of international tourist markets in Thailand setting.

## 2.2 Concept of the Theory of Push and Pull Motivations

The theory of push and pull motivations, developed by Dann (1977), is one of the useful theories widely used to examine tourist motivations (Crompton, 1979; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983; Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Jang, Bai, Hu, & Wu, 2004). Dann (1977) made a significant contribution in suggesting two factors motivating people to travel and to go to a particular destination. The two factors are called push and pull factors. The concept of the theory describes that people are pushed to travel by internal motives (called push factors) and pulled to a destination by destination attributes/attractions (called pull factors) when making their travel decisions (Lam & Hsu, 2004). Thus, the concept is classified into two forces/factors (push and pull factors) indicating that people travel because they are pushed and pulled to do so by some forces or factors. Push factors (internal motives) are mainly considered to be associated with socio-psychological motives that predispose people to travel, while pull factors (destination attributes) are those that attract people to choose a particular destination (Lam & Hsu, 2004).

In details, push factors are the factors (or internal forces) that motivate or create a desire to satisfy a need to travel (Uysal & Hagan, 1993). Most of the push factors are internal forces or intrinsic motivators that relate to the needs and wants of the traveler, e.g. the desire for escape, rest and relaxation, adventure, excitement, prestige, health and fitness, and social interaction (Uysal & Jurowski, 1994; Klenosky, 2002). According to the literature, push factors can help explain why people travel, which is related to internal motivational driving forces. With regard to pull factors, they are related to external factors that effect where a person travels to meet his or her needs or desires (You et al. 2000). In other words, pull factors can be recognised as destination attributes/attractions that respond to and reinforce inherent push motivations (McGehee, 1996; Zhang, Yue, & Qu, 2004). Uysal and Jurowski (1994, p. 844) stated that 'pull factors can be those that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as it is perceived by those with the propensity to travel'. They may include both tangible resources such as beaches, mountains, recreation facilities, natural attractions, culture and historical attractions, as well as travelers' perceptions and expectations such as novelty, benefit expectations, and marketing image (Uysal & Jurowski, 1994). You et al. (2000) argued that pull factors can help explain why people decide to visit a particular destination.

One important study related to the push and pull motivations theory was indicated by Crompton (1979) who agreed with Dann's basic idea of push and pull motives but further identified nine motives: seven push motives and two pull motives (Jang & Cai, 2002). The seven push motives (socio-psychological motives) were escape, self-exploration, relaxation, prestige,



regression, kinship-enhancement, and social interaction while the two pull motives were novelty and education (Jang & Cai, 2002). Following Crompton's initial empirical effort in examining people's travel motivations, many studies have employed push and pull factors to examine tourists' motivations in different settings such as nationalities (e.g. Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Zhang & Lam, 1999), destinations (e.g. Jang & Cai, 2002; Kim & Prideaux, 2005; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), and tourist segments (Bieger & Laesser, 2002; Jang et al. 2004). The common push factors that were frequently identified in previous studies may include knowledge-seeking, ego-enhancement, self-esteem, social interaction, rest and relaxation, family togetherness, while the pull factors were natural environment, cultural and historical attractions, cost of travel, tourist facilities, and safety (Zhang & Lam, 1999; Klenosky, 2002; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Jang & Wu, 2006). As noted, tourism researchers have found the push and pull motivations theory as a useful approach to measure tourists' motivations. Because push factors are useful in explaining the desire for travel, whereas the pull factor help explain the choice of destination (Crompton, 1979; Christensen, 1983). And these two factors are related to people's decision making for travel and leisure purposes. According to the literature, people's motivations to travel begin when they become aware of certain needs and perceive that certain destinations may have the ability to serve those needs. As such, academics argue that the investigation of travel motivations to a particular area is viewed as a critical variable to develop a successful marketing program to satisfy tourists' needs and expectations (Crompton, 1979; Cha et al. 1995; Jang & Wu, 2006). An understanding of tourist motivations for visiting a particular destination can help tourism marketers manage more appropriate marketing programs and attract more tourists to visit the area (Jang & Cai, 2002; Jang & Wu, 2006).

*In conclusion*, the push and pull motivations theory seems to be widely recognised as a useful framework for examining the motivations underlying tourists and their travel-related behavior (Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Klenosky, 2002). Thus, its application to examine travel motivations of international tourists in previous studies should provide a useful approach to understanding a wide variety of different needs and wants that influence tourists' motivations in visiting a particular destination. Today, many researchers have employed it to investigate travel motivations of international tourists in different settings such as domestic travel, overseas holidays and other tourism activities (e.g. Klenosky, 2002; Jang & Cai, 2002; Kim, 2003, Hsu & Lam, 2003; Jang et al. 2004; Jang & Wu, 2006). Since the focus of the current study aims to examine travel needs and the factors attracting international tourists to Thailand, therefore, the push and pull motivations theory seems to be appropriate and relevant to the purpose of this study.

### 2.3 Studies Related to Push and Pull Motivations

Several studies (e.g. Yavuz, Uysal, & Baloglu, 1998; Zhang & Lam, 1999; Huang & Tsai, 2002; Jang & Cai, 2002; Jang & Wu 2006) have been conducted using the push and pull motivations theory to investigate travel motivations and tourist behaviors. These studies provide useful implications to tourism marketers in formulating appropriate strategies to attract a target market. Some of them have been reviewed, for example, Cha, McCleary, and Uysal (1995), explored the travel motivations of Japanese overseas travelers by focusing on the push factor approach and segmented them into three distinct groups: sport seekers, novelty seekers, and family/relaxation seekers. The result of the study disclosed that there were different motivation factors found among Japanese overseas travelers, and it was possible to cluster or segment Japanese overseas travelers based on their motivations. The authors suggested that, when marketing to Japanese overseas travelers, these three different groups should be recognised, and different types of advertisement should be considered. For instance, advertising the Super Bowl or other sports would be appropriate to the sport seeker group while advertising the adventure or knowledge related trips should be suitable to the novelty seeker group. Zhang and Lam (1999) investigated Mainland Chinese visitors' motivations to visit Hong Kong and disclosed that the most important push factors influencing the Mainland Chinese people to visit Hong Kong were 'knowledge', 'prestige', and 'enhancement of human relationship' motives. The most important pull factors or attractions of Hong Kong were 'hi-tech image', 'expenditure, and 'accessibility'. This study implied that the Mainland Chinese travelers perceived Hong Kong as a unique, modernized, friendly, and convenient place for holidays. The study suggested that concerned parties should build Hong Kong's image as a high-tech multinational city in the world to Chinese people via various accessible media.

Another study conducted by Jang and Cai (2002) reported that 'knowledge seeking', 'escape', and 'family togetherness' were the most important factors to motivate the British to travel abroad. However, 'cleanliness & safety', 'easy-to-access', and 'economical deal' were considered the most important pull factors attracting them to an overseas destination. The findings from comparing the push and pull factors across seven international destinations (USA, Canada, South America, Caribbean, Africa, Oceania, and Asia) as perceived by the British travelers indicated that each region had its own strengths and weaknesses in terms of its position in the minds of British travelers. The authors suggested that knowledge of people's motivations and its associations with their destination selection is critical to predict their future travel patterns, and the findings could be used for destination product development and formation of marketing strategies.

In addition to examining overseas travelers, there were some studies employing the push and pull motivations theory to investigate the travel motivations of domestic tourists. For instance, Kim et al. (2003) examined the travel motivations of visitors to visit Korean national parks. They found that the most important push factors influencing Korean people to visit the national parks were ‘appreciating natural resources and health’, followed by ‘adventure and building friendship’, ‘family togetherness and study’, and ‘escaping from everyday routine’ respectively, while the most attractions of the national parks (pull factors) were ‘accessibility and transportation’, ‘information and convenience of facilities’, and ‘key tourist resources’. These findings implied that visitors to national parks in Korea were likely to consider the parks to be valuable recreational resources that provide important opportunities to appreciate natural resources or enhance health or build friendship. The authors suggested that the park administrators should recognise the needs of different groups of visitors (students, families, and older people), and develop the products responding to each group. More interestingly, the authors did not only provide a useful implication to Korean national park administrators but also to the park administrators of other countries who want to target Korean nature-based tourists. Another study focusing on domestic tourism conducted by Zhang, Yue and Qu (2004) explored the motivating factors of domestic urban tourists in Shanghai, China. The study showed that ‘prestige’ and ‘novelty’ were regarded as the top two important push factors of domestic tourists, while ‘urban amenity’ and ‘service attitude and quality’ were the most important pull factors of Shanghai appealing to domestic tourists. The result also reported that the ‘prestige’ (push factor) and ‘urban amenity’ (pull factor) had an impact on domestic tourists’ satisfaction. One important finding from the study indicated that the pull factors like ‘service attitude and quality’, ‘urban amenity’, ‘expenditure’ and ‘hi-tech image’ may influence the tourists’ likelihood to recommend Shanghai to their relatives and friends. In order to promote Shanghai, the authors recommended positioning Shanghai as a city of unique cultural and economic image as well as improve the service quality in Shanghai in order to attract the domestic tourists.

**In relation to Thai context, a review of literature indicates a few studies have examined travel motivations of international tourists to Thailand.** Among them, Varma (2003), for instance, examined push and pull factors between U.S. and Indian tourists. The study disclosed that U.S. and Indian tourists had differences in relation to push and pull factors. When traveling, the U.S. tourists were more likely to be motivated by exciting experiences while the Indian tourists were primarily stimulated by relaxation motives. The study also revealed that both groups had differences in the perceptions of destination attractiveness (pull factors) such as cultural activities, inexpensive environment, leisure activities, cuisine and safety. Different

marketing strategies were suggested for each market. Cheewarungroj (2005) investigated travel motivations of ASEAN tourists to Thailand. The results indicated that some demographic variables, such as age, income, travel experience, had impacts to travel motivations (push and pull factors) among ASEAN tourists. For instance, ASEAN tourists aged 46 or above were more likely to be motivated to travel by relaxation motive than other groups, and tourists with different income level also revealed differences in travel motives and destination attractions. The study reported that first-time visitors perceived knowledge seeking as a major motivation while repeat visitors placed novelty experience as major motivations, and they also had differences in the perceptions of sightseeing variety in Thailand. A recent study by Sangpikul (2008) revealed an interesting result regarding travel motivations of Korean travelers to Thailand. The finding indicated that many Korean travelers were primarily motivated to travel by 'fun & relaxation motives' while the 'attraction variety & costs of travel' were perceived as major attraction drawing them to Thailand. To attract Korean travelers, marketing themes relating to the relaxation motivations and a variety of tourism programs were suggested.

*To sum up*, the literature has shown that previous studies focusing on the push and pull motivations provide a useful and practical approach for understanding travel needs and wants of people as well as where they desire to go for holiday. The results of these studies imply that the conceptual framework of push and pull factors can be applied to examine travel motivations of different groups of tourists (domestic and international tourists). Although there are a number of travel motivation studies in international context (suggesting the importance of travel motivation studies), few studies have been conducted in relation to Thai context. Given the useful concept in understanding travel needs and wants of the target tourists and the need for tourism business to satisfy travelers' needs and expectations in a competitive global tourism, more research in this area (travel motivations of international tourists) is encouraged, particularly the studies comparing travel motivations of different target markets visiting a particular destination (e.g. Thailand).

## **2.4 Tourist Behaviors**

Tourist behavior is the behavior or the process that consumers or tourists search, select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and wants (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). The subject of tourist behavior has been a major topic for decades for hospitality and tourism practitioners. Contributions have been made from various aspects to understand tourist behaviors such as destination choice, mode of transportation, travel expense, accommodation, and leisure activities. In tourism studies, tourist behavior is a fundamental but

critical subject affecting the development of marketing strategies and product development (Chen & Hsu, 2000). Today, many scholars have investigated tourists' behaviors and their travel characteristics in order to satisfy travelers' needs and meet their expectations. Thus, it is argued that the understanding of tourist behavior is important for tourism marketers to make marketing activities more successful.

**In relation to Thai context**, there were several studies examining travel behavior of international tourists in Thailand. Some of them were reviewed, for example, Sirirod (2002) explored international tourists' decision making of accommodation on Kao San Road and indicated two types of decisions making regarding accommodation selections among international tourists. The first type was pre-decision made before traveling to Thailand, and the second one was onsite-decision (making decision when arriving). The major factors influencing accommodation choice was price, followed by quality, location and services. In addition, the study found that most tourists were generally satisfied with the accommodation in Kao San area. However, the pollution and traffic seemed to be major concerns among international tourists staying in Kao San area. Laksanakan (2003) investigated travel behaviors and trip characteristics of international visitors to Phuket and found that most respondents were male travelers aged between 25 – 34 years old. Many of them were Asian travelers with college degree. Their average annual income was approximately US\$ 5,000. Most of them were first-time travelers and visited Phuket for relaxing purpose. Many of these travelers were couples and spent approximately 4-7 days in Phuket. However, European travelers seemed to stay longer (approx. 8-14 days) than other groups. Major spending was spent on accommodation (approx. Baht 3,501 – 4,500) while other spending (e.g. food, shopping) was approximately Baht 1,001 – 2,000 per person per day. The study found that tourists with different backgrounds (e.g. nationality, education, occupations, income) would have different travel characteristics. Investigating Thai and international tourists' behaviors visiting Chiang Mai, Yenkuntau and Lougepanitpitak (2004) revealed travel behavior differences between Thai and foreign tourists in many aspects including type of food, souvenirs, accommodation, destination choice, spending, and travel preferences. However, the study found that most of them (Thai and foreign) received travel information about Chiang Mai from their friends and relatives. Sansartji (2005) examined travel behavior of foreign tourists after the Tsunami disaster in the southern Thailand and found that most of the samples were repeat visitors traveling for holiday and leisure purposes. They chose to visit Thailand due to low cost of living and beautiful natural attractions (e.g. islands and beaches). Most of them spent approximately more than one week in Thailand with primary spending on shopping, accommodation and food/beverage. A recent study by Taworn (2007)

found some differences of travel behaviors between Thai and international tourists when visiting Chiang Mai. The study revealed that most of them visited Chiang Mai because of natural attractions. Thai tourists came here with their friends while many international tourists traveled alone. Both groups preferred city hotels. Thai tourists received travel and accommodation information from their friends and relatives while foreign tourist mostly relied on Internet information. In relation to accommodation selection, the study indicated that both groups had different perspectives in terms of prices, location, quality and services. Different marketing campaigns were proposed separately for local and foreign markets.

*Based on the above literature*, different aspects of international tourists' related-behaviors were investigated, and it seems that tourists with different cultures or countries may have different travel behaviors and preferences. Moreover, several tourism scholars argue that nationality or culture may affect tourist behavior (Pizam & Sussmann, 1995); suggesting different tourist markets should be examined. In relation to international tourists to Thailand, researchers have not yet examined and compared international tourists' travel behaviors and trip characteristics in terms of regional base or geographical region (i.e. Asia, Europe, North America). This suggests more research work is needed in this area in order to better understand international tourists' travel behaviors when visiting Thailand. Understanding travel related-behaviors of different target groups should help tourism business design more effective and appropriate marketing strategies for each market or region. In this study, **it hypothesizes that international tourists with different geographical regions (hypothesis 1) and different demographic characteristics (hypothesis 2) may have differences in travel behaviors and trip characteristics.**

## **2.5 Cross-Cultural Studies in Tourism**

In this study, it aims to examine and compare travel motivations and travel behaviors of different tourist groups (i.e. Asia, Europe, North America). This indicates that the current study is dealing with cross-cultural studies which are the studies of two or more different cultures/countries; suggesting related literature on cross-cultural studies should be reviewed. In tourism literature, there are several cross-cultural studies relating to travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists (examining two or more countries). Reviewing these studies would provide some ideas relating to travel motivations and/or tourists' behaviors of international tourists.

Lee (2000), for example, compared travel motives of Caucasian and Asian visitors to visit a cultural Expo in Seoul. The study found differences in motivations between Caucasian

(Americans and Europeans) and Asian visitors (Koreans and Japanese). The results indicated that Caucasian visitors were generally had higher motivations than Asian visitors when attending cultural events; they differed with respect to three motivations including 'cultural exploration', 'novelty' and 'event attraction'. Yet, some similarities were found between Koreans and Japanese in relation to 'escape and socializations', and also between Americans and Europeans regarding 'cultural exploration'. Other similarities and differences were also found between Caucasian and Asian visitors attending cultural Expo event. Different marketing strategies were proposed for Asian and Caucasian groups based on their cultural influences/backgrounds. In an examination of travel motivations between two groups, Kim and Lee (2000) found Japanese and American travelers differed in prestige/status, family togetherness, and novelty, while they were similar in relation to knowledge seeking and escape motives. The findings indicated that Japanese tourists tended to show more collectivistic characteristics in seeking travel motivations, while Americans tended to show more individualistic characteristics. The study suggested important marketing implications when targeting these two markets by focusing on cultural differences. You, O'Leary, Morrison, and Hong (2000) also compared travel motivations between UK and Japan. The results indicated that UK and Japanese travelers differed on both push and pull factors. For instance, the similarity was found in novelty and knowledge seeking (push factor), while the differences were reported that the UK travelers seemed to be motivated by 'family, friends being together', and Japanese traveler were more likely to be motivated by rest and relaxation motivations. With regard to destination selection (pull factor), the UK travelers perceived seeing people from different background as major attraction whereas the Japanese rated historical places as important factor for them. Interestingly, the study also discussed that, in relation to push and pull factors, Western travelers in some aspects were more similar to each other than Asian travelers, and needed attention when marketing Western and Asian customers/tourists. Comparing travel motivations between Asian and American students, Kim and Jogaratnam (2002) found many similarities in the perceptions of travel motivations (focusing on push motivations) between two groups. However, the study also disclosed some differences in relation to travel motives such as 'get away from demands at home', 'indulging luxury', and 'participation in physical activity'. The study suggested that segmenting international student market based on ethnical groups seemed to have applications to tourism marketers. In addition to travel motivations, there are several studies investigating different tourists' travel behaviors. Fridgen (1996), for instance, reported that British tourists visiting North America ranked shopping and taking pictures as most preferred activities, whereas French tourists ranked local foods and dining as the most preferred activities. Fridgen (1996) further

noted that trip lengths differed between Europeans and Japanese tourists. Europeans tourists tended to stay longer than Asian tourists due to travel distance and cost of travel. Sussmann and Rashcovsky (1997) found differences in the usage of travel information sources between British and Canadian travelers. The study reported that, in order of importance, British travelers used information sources from their friends, past experiences, and travel agents, respectively. While Canadians preferred to use information from their friends, brochures, and travel agents. The study highlighted the need for careful market segmentation for the two groups. A recent study by Kim and Prideaux (2005) also found interesting results on cultural differences in travel motivations and tourist behaviors among American, Australian, Japanese and Chinese travelers. For example, American and Australian travelers appeared to rate 'culture and history' as more important motivations than Asian travelers (Japanese and Chinese), and they were more likely to stay at a particular destination for a longer period of time. The study also indicated Asian travelers were more interested in shopping and dining than other leisure activities when traveling overseas. Like You et al. (2000), Kim and Prideaux (2005) noted that Asian tourists showed some similarities within the group on travel behaviors rather than Western tourists. Also, Western tourists were more similar to each other in some travel aspects. Different marketing strategies were discussed to serve each market segment, and emphasis was given on the understanding of cultural backgrounds of different tourist groups.

*To conclude*, the above literature provides a better understanding of cross-cultural studies in relation to the differences on tourist motivations and related-travel behaviors among international tourists. According to the literature, tourists from different backgrounds may have different travel needs and motivations due to several factors such as cultural differences, perceptions, beliefs and expectations (Kim & Prideaux, 2005). Since the current study deals with international tourists' motivations and behaviors, reviewing previous cross-cultural studies may help researchers and marketers to better understand the differences in travel needs and behaviors among international tourists, and this may enhance both efficiency and effectiveness in international tourism marketing (Kim & Lee, 2000). This also helps them be aware of cross-cultural differences in international tourism setting and carefully design or develop tourism programs corresponding to the needs of the target customers. Given the increasing competition in the regional tourism (Southeast Asia) and complex tourists' behaviors, this presents research opportunities for further studies (including for the current research project) to investigate travel motivations of international tourist groups by examining two or more different tourist groups. In this study, **it is predicted that international tourists with different geographical regions (hypothesis 3) and different demographic characteristics (hypothesis 4) may have**



**differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand's destination attractions (pull factors).**

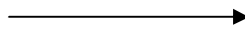
## **2.6 Conceptual Framework and Chapter Conclusion**

*To finally summarize the chapter,* the overview of the literature indicates several research gaps and opportunities for further studies on international tourists in Thailand setting. This may include travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists, particularly a comparative study to get better insights of the travel differences among international tourists in different settings or destinations. It is hoped that examining travel motivations and tourist behaviors would help extend the existing knowledge by fulfilling those gaps in the literature, and helps generate a better understanding of travel characteristics of international tourist markets, especially in Thailand scope. Moreover, the results are expected to provide tourism practitioners (e.g. government and private sectors) with useful information to develop appropriate marketing programs and tourism products to meet the targets' needs and expectations, and be able to attract them to Thailand.

In this study, push and pull factors were regarded as the main framework and they were used to explain travel motivations of international tourists to Thailand. This is the main focus needed to be found out from the research. Consequently, they were established as dependent variables as well as tourist behaviors (outcomes of the research). In addition to the geographical variable (tourists' regional base such as Asia, Europe), a review of literature indicated that demographic variables such as gender, age, education, and income have been frequently found to be associated with travel motivations (push and pull factors) and/or tourist behaviors. Hence, these variables (tourists' region base, gender, age, education, and income) were established as independent variables that might influence travel motivations and tourist behaviors. Finally, the conceptual framework, based on the above relationships, was developed for this study as shown below (relationship between independent and dependent variables).

### **Independent variables**

gender, age, education, income  
tourists' regional base (e.g. Asia, Europe)



### **dependent variables**

travel motivation (push and pull factors)  
travel behavior

## Chapter 3

### Research Methodologies

This chapter aims to describe research methodologies employed to investigate travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists to Thailand. The objective of this chapter is to discuss about population, samples, sampling method, research instrument, pre-testing, data collection, and data analysis.

#### 3.1 Population, Samples, and Sampling Method

The population in this study was international tourists who were visiting Thailand for holiday and leisure purposes whose age were 20 years old and above. Since the population or number of international tourists visiting Thailand each month is unknown in term of exact arrivals and the elements (research respondents) in the population have no probabilities for being equally selected as the samples/representatives, non-probability sampling by a convenience sampling method was chosen for this study (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001). According to the statistical report by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2007), the average number of international tourists to Thailand each month (previous data) was approximately 1,080,000 people (given population). Based on the standard statistical estimation such as a published sample size table (Table A) by Cavana et al. (2001), the approximate sample size by 384 people or more was required for this study.

Table A: Determining sample size for a given population size

Given population (N)	Appropriate sample size (S)
40,000	380
50,000	381
75,000	382
1,000,000*	384*

Source: Cavana, Delahaye, and Sekaran (2001, p.278)

#### 3.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument (questionnaire) for examining travel motivations of international tourists to Thailand was developed from a comprehensive review of relevant literature focusing on push and pull factors (i.e. Zhang & Lam, 1999; Huang & Tsai 2002; Kim, 2003; Jang & Wu, 2006). Most of the research questions in this study regarding push and pull factors were mainly based on previous studies, and only some of them were modified to correspond to the purpose of the current study. For example, some pull factors (destination attractions) were modified to be applicable to Thailand's destination setting. This is because destination attractions could be

varied, and they may be different from one country to another (Kozak, 2002). In this study, the destination attractions of Thailand may be different from other countries due to country's background, location, and geographical environment, and they should be modified to suit Thailand case. For the part of tourist behavior, the research questions developed for this study were reviewed from related studies (e.g. Baloglu & Uysal 1996; Hsu & Sung, 1997; Heung, Qu, & Chu, 2001; Laksanakan, 2003). Some questions were modified to meet the research objectives and the target samples in relation to tourists' behavior in Thailand. To enhance the validity of the research instrument, a draft questionnaire was reviewed by tourism scholars who provided helpful comments and feedback to revise and develop appropriate research questions.

The questionnaire was originally designed in English and consisted of 3 sections, i.e. 1) demographic characteristics 2) travel behaviors and trip characteristics and 3) travel motivations (push and pull factors). Each section is briefly presented as follow:

- 1) Section one - demographic characteristics:** This section consisted of 7 questions asking general information of the research respondents: i.e. gender, age, marital status, education, occupation, income, and country of residence.
- 2) Section two – travel behaviors and trip characteristics:** This section consisted of 16 questions asking the research respondents about their travel behaviors and trip characteristics, e.g. number of visits to Thailand, trip planning, tourism activities, travel expenses, accommodation choice, travel information search, and the likelihood of revisiting Thailand. The respondents answered the questions from a set of multiple choices.
- 3) Section three - push and pull factors:** There were 2 sub-sections in this part which were push and pull factors. The aim of push factor section was to investigate travel motives of international tourists, particularly their overseas travel motives. The push factors (13 items) were mainly based on socio-psychological motives (e.g. knowledge seeking, novelty seeking, adventure experience, new cultural learning). These push factors were measured by having the respondents indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statements relating to their reasons/desires to travel abroad. For example, a participant was asked "I travel abroad because I want to see something new and exciting". Then, he or she could express the level of agreement or disagreement by choosing on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). Many studies examining push and pull factors used the 5-point Likert scale to measure travel motivations since the length of the scale is deemed to be appropriate for expressing people's opinions (Kozak, 2002; Jang & Wu, 2006). For the part of pull factors, the aim was to identify what destination attractions drawing the respondents to visit

Thailand. The pull factors (13 items) were mainly associated with the features or attractiveness of Thailand's attractions (e.g. culture, beaches, food, shopping, etc). These pull factors were measured by having the respondents indicate their agreement or disagreement regarding the attractions in Thailand. For example, a participant was asked "Do you think Thai culture is an important factor attracting you to Thailand." Then, he or she chose the level of agreement on the 5-point Likert scale, the same scale with push factors.

### **3.3 Pre-testing**

According to Cavana et al. (2001), researchers should conduct a pre-test to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research instrument before gathering data. In this research project, there was a pre-test conducted before the final data collection. Using a convenience sampling method, the test was conducted with 50 international tourists in Bangkok to obtain feedback and comments on the clarity and appropriateness of the research questions. Most of the respondents in the pre-test process were mainly Asian and European tourists, few tourists from North America and others were found. Based on the pilot test, some modifications (e.g. wording, revision of some sentences) were changed and revised accordingly. In addition, a reliability test by Cronbach's coefficient alpha was also performed to determine the inter-item consistency reliability of the research instrument (Cavana et al., 2001). Based on the pre-test result, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated for the section of push and pull factors which were 0.81 and 0.87, respectively. The value of the alpha exceeded the recommended/acceptable level of 0.70 by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994); suggesting no further revision of the research questions. With the pre-test method, it ensured that the questionnaire was ready for data collection.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

Data were collected when the research respondents were visiting Thailand, and the surveys were conducted during December 2008. During the surveys, the respondents were asked if they would be interested to participate in the survey. Once they agreed, questionnaires were distributed on site and collected by researcher team (researcher and college students). All research respondents received small souvenirs for their participation. The surveys were undertaken in Bangkok and nearby cities including Ayutthaya and Pattaya. Out of 480 questionnaires distributed, only 434 questionnaires were completed and usable for final data analysis. Among them, there were 220 Europeans from 9 countries, i.e. UK (38), German (35), France (33), Switzerland (28), Italy (25), Sweden (23), Denmark (16), Spain (12) and

Netherlands (10), and 180 Asians from 7 countries, i.e. Malaysia (40), Singapore (36), Hong Kong (29), South Korea (22), China (19), Japan (16), India (10) and Taiwan (8), and some were from North America (n= 19) and Australia (n= 15). Since the samples (representative) from North America and Australia were too small to represent the region when compared to the Asian and European tourists (due to the limitation of convenience sampling method), they may not be suitable to be analyzed and compared the results to those two markets, particularly when computing factor analysis or an analysis of variance (ANOVA). Thus, these two markets were not included in the final data analysis because of a convenience sampling. The samples from Asia and Europe (400 tourists) were used in the final data analysis.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Data were analysed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program (version 13). Data analyses were performed through six steps which are discussed as follows. It should be noted that a 0.05 level of significance was employed in all of the statistical assessments in this study.

*Firstly*, descriptive statistics (i.e. mean, frequency, percentage) were used to describe general information of the respondents. *Secondly*, descriptive statistics (i.e. mean and standard deviation) were also employed to rank the push and pull factors in terms of individual item to determine which items served as major push and pull factors. Then, each push and pull factor was ranked in terms of the importance from the most important factor (highest mean) to the least important one (lowest mean). *Thirdly*, the push and pull factors were then grouped by using factor analysis to find the push and pull factor dimensions (or similar factor groupings) that may emerge among the respondents. Factor analysis was chosen because it is a statistical approach used to analyze interrelationships among a large number of variables and to explain the variables in terms of their common underlying dimensions or similar groupings (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 2006). *Fourthly*, to determine if there were any differences of travel related-behaviors among international tourists, a series of cross-tabulation (suitable for comparing frequency data) were used to profile each group and then chi-square tests were later performed to determine statistical differences among the groups. *Fifthly*, to examine if there were mean differences in the push and pull factors (statistical differences) among the two groups, t-test was undertaken. *Finally*, to examine the mean differences of push and pull factors among different demographic subgroups, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) or t-test when appropriate was implemented.

## Chapter 4

### Research Findings and Discussions

The purpose of this chapter is to present research findings, hypothesis tests, and discussions. In order to easily understand the content of this chapter, it is divided into 9 sections as follows.

- Section 4.1:** Profile of research respondents (p. 23)
- Section 4.2:** A comparison of travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists (p. 24)
- Section 4.3:** A comparison of travel motivations between Asian and European tourists (p. 27)
- Section 4.4:** An analysis of travel behavior differences among Asian tourists (p. 34)
- Section 4.5:** An analysis of travel behavior differences among European tourists (p. 40)
- Section 4.6:** An analysis of travel motivation differences among Asian tourists (p. 43)
- Section 4.7:** An analysis of travel motivation differences among European tourists (p. 45)
- Section 4.8:** Hypotheses testing (p. 47)
- Section 4.9:** Research discussions (p. 50)

It should be noted that the level of significance at 0.05 was employed in all of the statistical assessments in this study.

## Section 4.1: Profile of research respondents

**Table 4.1: Profile of research respondents**

Characteristics	Descriptions	Number (n=400)	Percent (100%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	232	58.0%
	Female	168	42.0%
<b>Age</b>	20 - 30 years	128	32.0%
	31 - 45 years	160	40.0%
	46 - 55 years	72	18.0%
	56 years or older	40	10.0%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	216	54.0%
	Married	152	38.0%
	Divorced/Separated/Widowed	32	8.0%
<b>Education</b>	High school or lower	72	18.0%
	Bachelor degree	236	59.0%
	Master degree or higher	92	23.0%
<b>Occupation</b>	Company employee	140	35.0%
	Government officer	72	18.0%
	Student	60	15.0%
	Business owner	36	9.0%
	Independent/self-employed	32	8.0%
	Unemployment	24	6.0%
	Housewife	12	3.0%
	Retired	20	5.0%
	Others	4	1.0%
	<b>Monthly Income</b>	US\$ 1,000 or lower	48
US\$ 1,001 – 2,500		104	29.0%
US\$ 2,501 – 3,500		132	33.0%
US\$ 3,501 – or higher		116	26.0%
<b>Regional base</b>	Asia	180	45.0%
	Europe	220	55.0%

From table 4.1, the samples were 58% males and 42% were females. Most of them were in the age group of 31 - 45 years (40%) and 20 – 30 years old (32%). More than half were singles (54%), and most of them (59%) had education at the college level (bachelor degree). The

respondents came from different occupations, for example, 35% were company employees, 18% were government officers, 15% were students, and 9% were business owner. Approximately 29% of the respondents had monthly income in the range of US\$ 1,000 – 2,500, 33% had income in the range of US\$ 2,501 – 3,500, and 26% earned approximately US\$ 3,501 or higher. There were 180 Asian respondents and 220 European respondents.

#### Section 4.2: A comparison of travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists

This section presents the results of a comparison of travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists. The chi-square tests ( $\chi^2$ ) were presented together with the cross-tabulation (showing frequency) to examine the statistical significant differences of travel behaviors between two groups. Comparing travel behaviors as well as trip characteristics between the two groups would help better understand the similarities and differences among international tourists.

**Table 4.2: Comparison of travel behaviors between Asian and European Tourists**

Travel behaviors/trip characteristics	Asians	Europeans	( $\chi^2$ )	Sig.
<b>Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)</b>			11.41	0.15
1 times	18.9%	16.5%		
2-3 times	40.0%	55.6%		
4 times or more	22.2%	21.5%		
Not sure, depending on opportunity	18.9%	6.4%		
<b>Trip arrangement to Thailand</b>			35.30	0.02*
Buy package tours (e.g. air ticket, accommodation)	36.0%	10.1%		
Travel with a tour company	15.7%	2.8%		
Travel independently (own arrangement)	46.1%	87.2%		
Others	2.2%	0.0%		
<b>Number of visits to Thailand</b>			27.92	0.00*
1 times	21.3%	58.3%		
2-3 times	43.8%	25.9%		
4 times	34.8%	15.7%		
<b>Length of stay in Thailand</b>			40.38	0.00*
5 days or less	25.0%	3.7%		
6-10 days	39.6%	14.7%		
11-15 days	19.9%	23.9%		
16 days ore more	15.6%	57.8%		



<b>Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand</b>			12.60	0.09
Own decision	27.8%	35.4%		
My couple (husband or wife)	22.2%	20.0%		
My boy or girl friend	4.4%	11.9%		
My friends	36.7%	24.3%		
My parents or relatives	7.8%	8.3%		
Others	1.1%	0.0%		
<b>Person accompanying the trip to Thailand</b>			8.29	0.08
Traveling alone	15.6%	11.2%		
Husband or wife	25.6%	32.7%		
Friends or relatives	44.4%	43.9%		
Family members (parents and children)	13.3%	5.6%		
Parents	1.1%	6.5%		
<b>Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok</b>			1.19	0.87
North (e.g. Chiang Mai)	33.7%	34.3%		
Northeast (e.g. Nakomratchasima, Khon Kaen)	1.2%	2.9%		
Central (e.g. Ayuthhaya, Kancanaburi)	12.0%	8.6%		
East (e.g. Pattaya)	15.7%	15.2%		
South (e.g. Phuket, Samui)	37.3%	39.0%		
<b>Preferred leisure activities</b>			14.79	0.01*
Sightseeing	25.7%	40.7%		
Shopping	17.2%	5.6%		
Visiting cultural/historical sites	12.6%	12.0%		
Visiting natural areas	19.5%	12.0%		
Visiting beaches/islands	20.3%	22.02%		
Urban traveling	2.3%	3.7%		
Visiting rural areas	1.1%	1.9%		
Others	1.0%	1.0%		
<b>Average daily expense for accommodation</b>			0.90	0.62
Baht 1,000 or less	25.5%	33.3%		
Baht 1,001 – 3,000	51.7%	54.6%		
Baht 3,001 or more	22.9%	12.0%		
<b>Preferred accommodation</b>			10.27	0.06
Luxury hotel (e.g. 5-star hotel)	6.9%	11.9%		
First class hotel (e.g. 4-star hotel)	28.7%	29.4%		
Budget hotel (e.g. 3-star-hotel)	31.1%	32.1%		
Guest house	23.0%	19.3%		
Friend/relative's house/others	9.2%	7.4%		
<b>Average daily expense for food and beverage</b>			1.25	0.54
Baht 300 or less	19.3%	24.5%		
Baht 301 – 600	61.4%	53.8%		
Baht 601 or more	19.3%	21.7%		

<b>Average daily expense for shopping</b>			33.50	0.03*
Baht 500 or less	14.8%	48.1%		
Baht 500 - 1,500	39.8%	38.0%		
Baht 1,501 or more	45.5%	13.9%		
<b>Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand</b>			17.35	0.02*
Media (e.g. TV, magazines, brochures, newspaper)	10.2%	10.7%		
Internet	43.2%	34.0%		
Friends/relatives	23.9%	35.0%		
Travel agents/tour companies	11.4%	1.9%		
Travel books	3.4%	14.6%		
Thailand's tourism office	6.8%	2.9%		
Others	1.1%	1.0%		
<b>What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand</b>			10.52	0.10
Thai culture	24.2%	23.0%		
Thai food	18.2%	19.8%		
Beaches	14.1%	12.5%		
Tourism attractions	8.8%	10.7%		
Thai people	19.4%	17.8%		
Natural areas	12.6%	15.3%		
Others	2.5%	0.9%		
<b>Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years</b>			10.17	0.45
Yes	84.3%	74.2%		
No	2.2%	3.7%		
Not sure	13.5%	22.1%		
<b>Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand</b>			8.22	0.87
Thai culture	20.4%	31.1%		
Nature & beautiful environment	20.3%	25.6%		
Friendly & nice people	34.2%	30.0%		
Low cost of goods & services	6.3%	4.4%		
A variety of leisure activities & entertainment	7.6%	2.2%		
A variety of tourism attractions	7.6%	3.3%		
Others	2.5%	3.3%		

\* P<0.05

Based on table 4.2, it is generally shows that Asian and European tourists differed from other each in some aspects of travel behaviors and trip characteristics. For example, trip arrangement it was found that most European tourists were independent travelers and they seemed to arrange their own trips (87.2%) while many Asian tourists (36.0%) bought package tour (36.0%), 15.7% traveled with tour company, and 46.1% arranged their own trips. The study

also reports that most European tourists were first-time travelers to Thailand (58.3%) whereas Asian tourists were repeat visitors (78.6%). With regard to length of stay, European tourists appear to stay longer than Asian tourists, particularly the length of 11-15 days and 16 days or more. It also was observed that Asia tourists differed from European tourists regarding preferred leisure activities, particularly sightseeing and shopping. For the average daily expenses of shopping, it was found that most of Asian tourists were more likely to spend around Baht 500-1,500 (39.8%) and Baht 1,501 or more (45.5%) while 48.1% of European tourists spent Baht 500 or less and 38% spent by Baht 500 – 1,500. It was interesting to note that some of Asian tourists (11.4%) indicated that travel agents or tour companies were the major source of travel information motivating them to Thailand while only small proportion of European tourists said so (1.9%). Travel books were also one of the useful travel sources among Europeans (14.6%) but not for the Asian tourists (3.4%).

#### **Section 4.3: A comparison of travel motivations between Asian and European tourists**

This section presents the results of a comparison of travel motivations (push and pull factors) between Asian and European tourists. T-tests were used to present the results and test if mean differences were significant between two groups (subsection 4.3.1 and 4.3.2). Subsection 4.3.1 shows the results of push factors (travel motives) in terms of individual factor that motivated the respondents to travel abroad while subsection 4.3.2 presents the results of individual pull factor (destination attractions) that attracted the respondents to Thailand. These results were analyzed based on mean ranking of push and pull factors.

In the following subsection 4.3.3 – 4.3.6, they present the results of factor analysis of push and pull factors based on Asian and European tourists. Factor analysis would help better understand the grouping of similar factors motivating the respondents to travel or take a holiday. Each factor dimension (or grouping) would be provided with mean factor to determine which one is more important for the respondents.

### 4.3.1 Comparison of Push Factors (individual push factors)

**Table 4.3: Comparison of push factors between Asian and European Tourists**

Push motivational items	Asians	Europeans	t-value	Sig.
1. I want to travel to a country I have not visited before.	3.53	4.19	4.19	0.00*
2. I want to experience cultures that are different from mine.	3.84	4.29	3.65	0.00*
3. I want to learn new things from a foreign country.	3.79	4.15	2.98	0.03*
4. I want to see something new and exciting.	3.81	4.27	3.82	0.00*
5. I want to seek fun or adventure.	3.75	3.98	1.96	0.53
6. I want to fulfill my dream of visiting a new country.	3.72	3.94	1.95	0.51
7. I want to spend more time with my couple or family members while traveling.	3.67	3.39	-2.74	0.00*
8. I want to see and meet different groups of people.	3.53	3.78	3.25	0.75
9. I want to escape from busy job or stressful work.	3.68	3.84	1.07	0.28
10. I want to escape from routine or ordinary environment.	3.86	3.81	0.34	0.74
11. I want to rest and relax.	3.89	3.99	0.62	0.53
12. I want to improve my health and well-being.	3.71	3.49	-2.77	0.00*
13. I can talk to everybody about my trips when I get home.	3.80	3.55	-2.60	0.01*
Overall mean score	3.81	4.02		

\* p<0.05

Table 4.3 shows the mean ranking of push factor (by individual factor). There were some significant differences of travel motives (push factors) between Asian and European tourists. The results indicated that European tourists were more likely to rate the motives relating to novelty or excitement experiences such item 1, 2, 3, and 4 higher than its counterparts (Asian tourists). These push factor were scored above 4.0 as rated by European tourists while the Asian tourists rated them less than 4.0. This suggests that European tourists tended to be motivated by novelty motives. Other differences were found in item 7 (spending time with family members), item 12 (improving health), and item 13 (talking about the trip). Asian tourists seemed to rate these items higher than European tourists. Based on the results, this may provide important implications to understand the differences of travel motives (reasons/desires to travel) between Asian and European tourists.

### 4.3.2 Comparison of Pull Factors (individual pull factors)

**Table 4.4: Comparison of pull factors between Asian and European Tourists**

Pull motivational items	Asians	Europeans	T-value	Sig.
1. Seaside/beaches	3.75	4.25	1.94	0.00*
2. Natural attractions	3.83	4.11	3.50	0.45
3. Thai culture	3.71	4.37	2.52	0.00*
4. Thai food	3.83	3.90	0.53	0.59
5. Cultural/historical attractions	3.76	4.24	1.37	0.00*
6. A variety of tourist attractions	3.92	3.74	-0.30	0.76
7. Low cost of living	3.81	3.82	-0.49	0.61
8. Travel costs to Thailand	3.84	3.69	-1.84	0.67
9. Travel information	3.66	3.55	-0.78	0.41
10. A variety of shopping places	3.88	3.80	-1.97	0.04*
11. Leisure activities and entertainment	3.80	3.47	-2.64	0.00*
12. Safety and security	3.73	3.82	0.66	0.50
13. Hygiene and cleanliness	3.65	3.46	-1.40	0.16
Overall mean score	3.79	3.98		

\* p<0.05

Table 4.4 represents the mean ranking of pull factors (individual items). Like the push factors, there were some significant differences found in the perceptions of pull factors (destination attractions) between Asian and European tourists. In generally, it seems that European tourists (M=3.98) were more likely to perceive Thailand as more attractive destination than Asian tourists (M=3.79) due to the higher overall mean score. When considered in details, it was found that European tourists rated higher score (significant differences) on the attractions of ‘seasides/beaches’, ‘Thai culture’, and ‘cultural/historical attractions’ than Asian tourists. Meanwhile, Asian tourists perceived and rated ‘a variety of shopping places’ and ‘leisure activities and entertainment’ as more important factors than European tourists. These differences should be noted for further discussions and recommendations.

### 4.3.3 Factor Analysis of Push Factors: Asian Tourists

In addition to ranking the mean of push and pull factors based on individual item, it is more important to analyze the dimension or the grouping of the push and pull factors in order to better understand the principal driving forces of tourists’ travel motivations. Thus, factor analysis was employed to group push and pull factors into similar groupings or dimensions. It starts with subsection 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 presenting the results of push factor analysis and followed by the results of pull factor analysis (subsection 4.3.5 and 4.3.6).

**Table 4.5: Factor analysis of push factors (Asian tourists)**

Push factor dimensions ( <i>reliability alpha</i> )	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Factor mean
<b>Factor 1: Novelty seeking</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.82)		7.12	34.89%	3.87*
I want to see something new and exciting	0.72			
I want to learn new things from a foreign country.	0.71			
I want to experience culture that is different from mine.	0.68			
I want to seek fun and adventure.	0.65			
I want to fulfill my dream of visiting a new country.	0.59			
I want to travel to a country I have not visited before.	0.54			
I want to rest and relax.	0.54			
I want to improve my health and well-being.	0.50			
<b>Factor 2: Escape</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.79)		2.34	10.28%	3.72
I want to escape from busy job or stressful work.	0.67			
I want to escape from routine or ordinary environment.	0.65			
<b>Factor 3: Socialization</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.69)		1.78	8.57%	3.45
I want to spend time with my family members while traveling.	0.65			
I can talk to everybody about my trips when I get home.	0.62			
I want to see and meet different groups of people.	0.59			
Total variance explained		60.35%		

\* the most important factor

As shown in table 4.5, three push factor dimensions were derived from the factor analysis, and they were categorized into 3 groups: (1) ‘novelty seeking’, (2) ‘escape’, and (3) ‘socialization’. Each factor dimension was named based on the common characteristics of the variables it included. The three push factor dimensions explained 60.35% of the total variance. Among them, ‘novelty seeking’ (factor mean=3.87) and ‘escape’ (factor mean=3.72) emerged as the major push factors motivating the respondents to travel abroad.

According to Kaiser’s (1974) criterion, a factor dimension with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 would be reported in the final factor structure, and only items with factor loading greater than 0.4 (indicating a good correlation between the items and the factor grouping they belong to) would be retained for each factor grouping. Factor loading represents the degree of correlation between an individual variable and a given factor (Bogari et al., 2003). A high factor loading indicates a reasonably high correlation between the delineated factors and their individual items (Lee, 2000). In this study, all the push factor dimensions had a eigenvalue greater than 1.0, and the items in each dimension had a factor loading greater than 0.4. This means that all the push factor dimensions and their items met Kaiser’s (1974) criterion. In addition, Cronbach’s alpha

was calculated to test the internal consistency of items within each factor dimension. The results showed that the alpha coefficients for all the three factor dimensions ranged from 0.69 to 0.82, well above the minimum value of 0.6 as an indication of reliability (Hair et al., 2006). Therefore, all the three push factor dimensions (factor 1 – factor 3) were maintained in the final factor structure (the current structure as they are).

#### 4.3.4 Factor Analysis of Push Factors: European Tourists

**Table 4.6: Factor analysis of push factors (European tourists)**

Push factor dimensions ( <i>reliability alpha</i> )	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Factor mean
<b>Factor 1: Novelty seeking</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.83)		7.45	38.78%	4.10*
I want to see something new and exciting	0.85			
I want to experience culture that is different from mine.	0.78			
I want to learn new things from a foreign country.	0.76			
I want to travel to a country I have not visited before.	0.75			
I want to seek fun and adventure.	0.71			
I want to fulfill my dream of visiting a new country.	0.70			
<b>Factor 2: Escape and relaxation</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.79)		2.47	12.38%	3.89
I want to escape from routine or ordinary environment.	0.66			
I want to escape from busy job or stressful work.	0.64			
I want to rest and relax.	0.61			
I want to improve my health and well-being.	0.60			
<b>Factor 3: Socialization</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.76)		1.55	8.55%	3.55
I want to see and meet different groups of people.	0.72			
I can talk to everybody about my trips when I get home.	0.70			
I want to spend time with my family members while traveling.	0.65			
Total variance explained		61.28%		

\* the most important factor

According to table 4.6, similarly to Asian tourists, three push factor dimensions were derived from the factor analysis, and they were categorized into 3 groups: (1) ‘novelty seeking’, (2) ‘escape & relaxation’, and (3) ‘socialization’. Each factor dimension was named based on the common characteristics of the variables it included. The three push factor dimensions explained 61.28% of the total variance. Among them, ‘novelty seeking’ (factor mean=4.10) and ‘escape & relaxation’ (factor mean=3.89) emerged as the major push factors motivating the respondents to travel abroad. It should be noted that, in general, factor analysis of push factors between Asians and Europeans were quite similar.

According to the result (table 4.6), all the push factor dimensions had a eigenvalue greater than 1.0, and the items in each dimension had a factor loading greater than 0.4. This means that all the push factor dimensions and their items met Kaiser's (1974) criterion. The results showed that the alpha coefficients for all the three factor dimensions ranged from 0.76 to 0.83, well above the minimum value of 0.6 as an indication of reliability (Hair et al., 2006). Therefore, all the three push factor dimensions (factor 1 – factor 3) were maintained in the final factor structure (the current structure as they are).

#### 4.3.5 Factor Analysis of Pull Factors: Asian Tourists

**Table 4.7: Factor analysis of pull factors (Asian tourists)**

Pull factor dimensions ( <i>Cronbach's alpha</i> )	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Factor Mean
<b>Factor 1: A variety of tourist attractions &amp; activities</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.85)		7.47	35.81%	3.83*
A variety of tourist attractions	0.88			
Cultural/historical attractions	0.85			
Thai culture	0.83			
Thai food	0.80			
A variety of shopping place	0.78			
Natural attractions	0.70			
Beach/seaside	0.69			
A variety of leisure activities and entertainment	0.66			
Travel information	0.62			
<b>Factor 2: Travel costs</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.80)		2.30	10.88%	3.58
Low cost of living	0.78			
Travel costs to Thailand	0.75			
<b>Factor 3: Safety and cleanliness</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.75)		1.45	8.23%	3.24
Hygiene and cleanliness	0.68			
Safety and security	0.61			
Total variance explained		60.15%		

\* the most important factor

With regard to pull factors, factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed to group the pull factors. According to table 4.7, three pull factor dimensions were derived from the factor analysis, and they were named: (1) 'a variety of tourist attractions & activities', (2) 'travel costs', and (3) 'safety & cleanliness'. These three factor dimensions explained 60.15% of the total variance. Based on the result, 'a variety of tourist attractions & activities' (mean factor=3.83)



and ‘travel costs’ (mean factor=3.58) were regarded as the major pull factors attracting the respondents to Thailand.

All the pull factor dimensions had eigenvalues greater than 1.0, and their items had factor loadings greater than 0.4. The alpha coefficients for all pull factor dimensions ranged from 0.75 to 0.85, well above the minimum value of 0.6 as an indication of reliability (Hair et al., 2006). Thus, all the three pull factor dimensions were retained for the final factor structure.

#### 4.3.6 Factor Analysis of Pull Factors: European Tourists

**Table 4.8: Factor analysis of pull factors (European tourists)**

Pull factor dimensions ( <i>Cronbach's alpha</i> )	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Factor Mean
<b>Factor 1: A variety of tourist attractions &amp; activities</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.82)		7.05	35.81%	3.89
A variety of tourist attractions	0.89			
Beach/seaside	0.81			
Natural attractions	0.79			
A variety of shopping place	0.75			
Low cost of living	0.73			
A variety of leisure activities and entertainment	0.71			
Travel cost to Thailand	0.70			
Travel information	0.68			
Hygiene and cleanliness	0.54			
Safety and security	0.51			
<b>Factor 2: Cultural and historical attractions</b> ( <i>alpha</i> = 0.87)		1.58	10.88%	4.15*
Thai culture	0.78			
Cultural and historical places	0.75			
Thai food	0.70			
Total variance explained		59.25%		

\* the most important factor

For European tourists, a similar factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed to group the pull factors. As shown in table 4.8, two pull factor dimensions were derived from the factor analysis, and they were named: (1) ‘a variety of tourist attractions & activities’ and (2) ‘cultural and historical attractions’. These two factor dimensions explained 59.25% of the total variance. With relatively high score of factor mean, ‘cultural and historical attractions’ (factor mean=4.15) and ‘a variety of tourist attractions & activities’ (factor mean=3.89) was considered as the key pull factors attracting the respondents to Thailand.

According to table 4.8, the pull factor dimensions had eigenvalues greater than 1.0, and their items had factor loadings greater than 0.4. The alpha coefficients for all pull factor dimensions ranged from 0.82 to 0.87, the two pull factor dimensions were retained for the final factor structure.

#### 4.3.7 Summary of Factor Analysis between Asian and European Tourists

This part summarizes the results of factor analysis of both push and pull factors between Asian and European respondents, the results, based on mean score ranking, are presented as follows:

**Table 4.9: Summary of factor analysis between Asian and European tourists**

<b>Factor dimensions</b>	<b>Asian respondents</b>	<b>European respondents</b>
<b>Push factors</b>	1) Novelty seeking 2) Escape 3) Socialization	1) Novelty seeking 2) Escape & relaxation
<b>Pull factors</b>	1) A variety of tourist attraction 2) Travel costs 3) Safety & cleanliness	1) Cultural/historical attractions 2) A variety of tourist attraction

According to table 4.9, it can be concluded that travel motives (push factors) between Asian and European respondents were slightly different. Both groups were mainly motivated to travel abroad by ‘novelty seeking’ and followed by ‘escape’ for Asians and ‘escape & relaxation’ for Europeans. However, each group appeared to perceive Thailand’s attractions differently. Asian respondents were more likely to be attracted to Thailand by ‘a variety of tourist attractions’, followed by ‘travel costs’ while European respondents were more likely to appreciate ‘cultural & historical attractions’ as important factor and followed by ‘a variety of tourist attractions’. These differences should be noted for further discussion and recommendation.

#### Section 4.4: An analysis of travel behavior differences among Asian tourists

This section aims to compare the results of travel behavior differences among Asian tourists based on different demographic subgroups by using cross-tabulation and chi-square tests ( $\chi^2$ ). Among six demographic variables, the study found some statistical differences of travel behaviors among Asian tourists on certain demographic variables which were gender and education. These results are presented in table 4.10 and 4.11.

**Table 4.10: Comparison of travel behaviors among Asian Tourists by education**

Travel behaviors/trip characteristics	E1 (n=38)	E2 (105)	E3 (37)	( $\chi^2$ )	Sig.
<b>Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)</b>				2.52	0.00*
1 times	55.7%	22.8%	21.0%		
2-3 times	14.5%	32.7%	39.7%		
4 times or more	7.8%	12.4%	14.8%		
Not sure, depending on opportunity	22.0%	26.2%	24.5%		
<b>Trip arrangement to Thailand</b>				1.14	0.25
Buy package tours (e.g. air ticket, accommodation)	19.20%	16.1%	18.0%		
Travel with a tour company	18.7%	17.5%	16.5%		
Travel independently (own arrangement)	59.9%	55.2%	61.7%		
Others	2.2%	1.2%	3.8%		
<b>Number of visits to Thailand</b>				3.79	0.15
1 times	50.0%	58.7%	55.3%		
2-3 times	23.1%	25.3%	29.8%		
4 times	26.9%	16.0%	14.9%		
<b>Length of stay in Thailand</b>				1.43	0.69
5 days or less	3.8%	3.7%	4.8%		
6-10 days	7.7%	17.3%	15.2%		
11-15 days	26.9%	23.5%	21.5%		
16 days ore more	61.5%	55.6%	58.5%		
<b>Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand</b>				6.35	0.49
Own decision	28.9%	22.8%	21.5%		
My couple (husband or wife)	25.2%	27.5%	26.8%		
My boy or girl friend	6.4%	12.8%	13.5%		
My friends	32.4%	28.8%	27.9%		
My parents or relatives	5.9%	8.1%	8.8%		
Others	1.2%	0.00%	1.5%		

<b>Person accompanying the trip to Thailand</b>				6.98	0.07
Traveling alone	7.7%	8.5%	8.7%		
Husband or wife	30.8%	31.8%	30.5%		
Friends or relatives	34.6%	35.9%	33.7%		
Family members (parents and children)	21.7%	20.5%	25.8%		
Parents	5.8%	3.3%	1.3%		
<b>Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok</b>				0.30	0.85
North (e.g. Chiang Mai)	30.5%	32.5%	29.8%		
Northeast (e.g. Nakhonratchasima, Khon Kaen)	3.5%	2.5%	5.5%		
Central (e.g. Ayuthaya, Kanchanaburi)	12.0%	8.1%	12.3%		
East (e.g. Pattaya)	15.7%	17.2%	18.9%		
South (e.g. Phuket, Samui)	38.3%	39.7%	33.5%		
<b>Preferred leisure activities</b>				14.79	0.21
Sightseeing	27.3%	33.3%	26.4%		
Shopping	15.2%	12.8%	13.8%		
Visiting cultural/historical sites	12.5%	12.7%	15.6%		
Visiting natural areas	17.5%	12.8%	13.5%		
Visiting beaches/islands	22.3%	22.8%	24.9%		
Urban traveling	2.8%	2.1%	2.5%		
Visiting rural areas	1.1%	1.8%	2.5%		
Others	1.3%	1.7%	0.8%		
<b>Average daily expense for accommodation</b>				0.21	0.00*
Baht 1,000 or less	27.9%	18.8%	10.5%		
Baht 1,001 – 3,000	55.8%	35.5%	35.8%		
Baht 3,001 or more	16.3%	45.7%	53.7%		
<b>Preferred accommodation</b>				5.28	0.15
Luxury hotel (e.g. 5-star hotel)	7.8%	13.9%	12.5%		
First class hotel (e.g. 4-star hotel)	26.9%	24.4%	23.5%		
Budget hotel (e.g. 3-star-hotel)	27.8%	29.4%	31.0%		
Guest house	19.2%	34.9%	22.5%		
Friend/relative's house/others	17.6%	7.4%	10.5%		
<b>Average daily expense for food and beverage</b>				2.33	0.23
Baht 300 or less	20.0%	25.3%	22.5%		
Baht 301 – 600	58.0%	57.0%	58.9%		
Baht 601 or more	22.0%	17.7%	18.6%		
<b>Average daily expense for shopping</b>				0.15	0.92
Baht 500 or less	50.0%	47.5%	48.9%		
Baht 500 - 1,500	34.6%	38.8%	36.8%		
Baht 1,501 or more	15.4%	13.8%	14.3%		

<b>Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand</b>				6.59	0.50
Media (e.g. TV, magazines, brochures, newspaper)	8.5%	9.8%	8.7%		
Internet	40.2%	38.6%	40.6%		
Friends/relatives	22.9%	23.4%	22.5%		
Travel agents/tour companies	12.4%	10.5%	13.8%		
Travel books	4.5%	5.8%	4.8%		
Thailand's tourism office	9.7%	9.1%	7.8%		
Others	1.8%	2.8%	1.8%		
<b>What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand</b>				8.50	0.10
Thai culture	18.9%	21.6%	25.4%		
Thai food	19.1%	16.9%	15.3%		
Beaches	16.9%	14.1%	13.4%		
Tourism attractions	10.1%	7.3%	10.8%		
Thai people	21.3%	23.7%	20.8%		
Natural areas	11.2%	14.1%	12.8%		
Others	2.5%	2.3%	1.5%		
<b>Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years</b>				0.33	0.56
Yes	78.7%	74.8%	69.8%		
No	5.8%	4.8%	8.7%		
Not sure	15.5%	20.4%	21.5%		
<b>Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand</b>				1.31	0.76
Thai culture	26.3%	26.1%	17.3%		
Nature & beautiful environment	25.0%	29.8%	30.9%		
Friendly & nice people	30.0%	28.9%	28.9%		
Low cost of goods & services	5.3%	4.9%	6.8%		
A variety of leisure activities & entertainment	6.5%	4.2%	8.8%		
A variety of tourism attractions	5.4%	3.8%	4.8%		
Others	1.5%	2.3%	2.5%		

\*  $p < 0.05$  E1= higher school, E2=bachelor degree, E3=master degree/higher

Table 4.10 shows that significant differences were found among Asians' education subgroups for number of overseas travel and average daily expenses for accommodation. According to the result, it appeared that the majority of group E1 (high school) traveled abroad on the average of 1 time a year while the majority of group E2 (bachelor degree) and E3 (master degree or higher) seemed to travel abroad on the average of 2-3 times or more (frequently than the samples in group E1). In relation to accommodation expenses, it was found that around half of the samples in group E1 were likely to spend around Baht 1,000 – 3,000 for accommodation while the majority of group E2 and E3 were more likely to spend around Baht 3,001 or more for their accommodation.

**Table 4.11: Comparison of travel behaviors among Asian Tourists by gender**

Travel behaviors/trip characteristics	Males (107)	Females (n=73)	( $\chi^2$ )	Sig.
<b>Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)</b>			2.11	0.54
1 times	22.2%	16.1%		
2-3 times	44.4%	35.5%		
4 times or more	20.4%	25.8%		
Not sure, depending on opportunity	13.0%	22.6%		
<b>Trip arrangement to Thailand</b>			0.50	0.82
Buy package tours (e.g. air ticket, accommodation)	19.8%	22.5%		
Travel with a tour company	20.7%	23.7%		
Travel independently (own arrangement)	56.7%	50.8%		
Others	2.8%	3.0%		
<b>Number of visits to Thailand</b>			4.49	0.17
1 times	24.6%	22.9%		
2-3 times	44.7%	52.0%		
4 times	30.7%	25.8%		
<b>Length of stay in Thailand</b>			5.80	0.11
5 days or less	18.9%	22.0%		
6-10 days	37.7%	27.7%		
11-15 days	15.1%	24.5%		
16 days or more	28.3%	25.8%		
<b>Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand</b>			7.84	0.40
Own decision	27.8%	32.3%		
My couple (husband or wife)	9.8%	7.8%		
My boy or girl friend	8.9%	9.8%		
My friends	45.8%	40.3%		
My parents or relatives	5.9%	8.1%		
Others	2.2%	1.7%		
<b>Person accompanying the trip to Thailand</b>			4.01	0.25
Traveling alone	20.4%	9.7%		
Husband or wife	20.8%	38.7%		
Friends or relatives	34.3%	28.1%		
Family members (parents and children)	21.7%	20.5%		
Parents	2.8%	3.3%		
<b>Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok</b>			5.92	0.08
North (e.g. Chiang Mai)	28.5%	31.9%		
Northeast (e.g. Nakhonratchasima, Khon Kaen)	4.5%	6.5%		
Central (e.g. Ayuthaya, Kanchanaburi)	14.0%	9.1%		
East (e.g. Pattaya)	13.7%	18.2%		
South (e.g. Phuket, Samui)	39.3%	34.3%		

<b>Preferred leisure activities</b>			3.65	0.00*
Sightseeing	21.0%	13.6%		
Shopping	8.9%	25.7%		
Visiting cultural/historical sites	17.5%	10.7%		
Visiting natural areas	18.5%	10.8%		
Visiting beaches/islands	26.1%	18.8%		
Urban traveling	3.7%	16.9%		
Visiting rural areas	2.8%	2.7%		
Others	1.5%	0.8%		
<b>Average daily expense for accommodation</b>			1.69	0.42
Baht 1,000 or less	28.3%	38.7%		
Baht 1,001 – 3,000	56.6%	41.9%		
Baht 3,001 or more	15.1%	19.4%		
<b>Preferred accommodation</b>			4.53	0.20
Luxury hotel (e.g. 5-star hotel)	8.6%	18.9%		
First class hotel (e.g. 4-star hotel)	36.5%	24.0 %		
Budget hotel (e.g. 3-star-hotel)	25.5%	27.9%		
Guest house	21.6%	23.8%		
Friend/relative's house/others	7.8%	5.4%		
<b>Average daily expense for food and beverage</b>			0.14	0.52
Baht 300 or less	14.4%	16.1%		
Baht 301 – 600	44.3%	35.5%		
Baht 601 or more	41.3%	48.4%		
<b>Average daily expense for shopping</b>			0.39	0.00*
Baht 500 or less	24.3%	21.5%		
Baht 500 - 1,500	51.0%	22.0%		
Baht 1,501 or more	24.7%	56.5%		
<b>Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand</b>			3.89	0.42
Media (e.g. TV, magazines, brochures, newspaper)	9.5%	10.8%		
Internet	40.2%	40.7%		
Friends/relatives	21.9%	20.6%		
Travel agents/tour companies	14.4%	11.5%		
Travel books	3.5%	4.8%		
Thailand's tourism office	7.7 %	9.5%		
Others	2.8%	2.1%		
<b>What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand</b>			4.2	0.21
Thai culture	13.8%	10%		
Thai food	20.5%	28.6%		
Beaches	12.3%	14.3%		
Tourism attractions	6.8%	12.2%		
Thai people	32.9%	20.4%		
Natural areas	11.0%	12.2%		
Others	2.7%	2.3%		

<b>Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years</b>			3.89	0.14
Yes	77.4%	93.5%		
No	3.8 %	0.0%		
Not sure	18.9%	6.5%		
<b>Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand</b>			2.23	0.51
Thai culture	31.5%	29.4%		
Nature & beautiful environment		29.3%	28.4%	
Friendly & nice people	19.9	27.8%		
Low cost of goods & services	5.9%	4.1%		
A variety of leisure activities & entertainment	6.1%	4.8%		
A variety of tourism attractions	5.5%	3.1%		
Others	1.8%	2.4%		

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\*p< 0.05

Table 4.11 shows that significant differences of travel behaviors were found between male and female Asian tourists regarding preferred activities and expense for shopping. According to the result, it appeared that female respondents tended to appreciate shopping activities and urban traveling more than male counterparts. Furthermore, they also differed from each other in terms of expenses for shopping. Most of male respondents tended to spend around Baht 500 – 1,500 a day while the majority of female respondents were more likely to spend higher than males (Baht 1,501 or more).

#### **Section 4.5: An analysis of travel behavior differences among European tourists**

Similarly to section 4.4, this section compares the results of travel behavior differences among European tourists based on different demographic subgroups by using cross-tabulation and chi-square tests ( $\chi^2$ ). Among six demographic variables, the study found there was the statistical difference on gender only. The result is presented in table 4.12.



**Table 4.12: Comparison of travel behaviors among European Tourists by gender**

Travel behaviors/trip characteristics	Males (n=125)	Females (95)	( $\chi^2$ )	Sig.
<b>Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)</b>			0.46	0.92
1 times	15.5%	17.6%		
2-3 times	62.1%	58.8%		
4 times or more	17.2%	15.7%		
Not sure, depending on opportunity	5.2%	7.8%		
<b>Trip arrangement to Thailand</b>			0.06	0.79
Buy package tours (e.g. air ticket, accommodation)	20.3%	21.5%		
Travel with a tour company	18.9%	15.6%		
Travel independently (own arrangement)	59.3%	60.8%		
Others	1.5%	2.1%		
<b>Number of visits to Thailand</b>			1.30	0.52
1 times	54.4%	62.7%		
2-3 times	26.3%	25.5%		
4 times	19.3%	11.8%		
<b>Length of stay in Thailand</b>			8.45	0.35
5 days or less	1.5%	3.1%		
6-10 days	9.7%	12.7%		
11-15 days	41.2%	43.4%		
16 days or more	47.6%	40.8%		
<b>Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand</b>			10.67	0.02*
Own decision	53.4%	23.5%		
My couple (husband or wife)	15.5%	35.0%		
My boy or girl friend	10.3%	13.7%		
My friends	15.5%	21.6%		
My parents or relatives	3.2%	4.5%		
Others	2.1%	1.7%		
<b>Person accompanying the trip to Thailand</b>			7.04	0.07
Traveling alone	17.5%	8.0%		
Husband or wife	31.6%	34.0%		
Friends or relatives	43.9%	44.0%		
Family members (parents and children)	4.5%	10.9%		
Parents	2.5%	3.1%		
<b>Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok</b>			1.14	0.56
North (e.g. Chiang Mai)	35.2%	37.0%		
Northeast (e.g. Nakhonratchasima, Khon Kaen)	3.5%	3.8%		
Central (e.g. Ayuthaya, Kanchanaburi)	4.5%	5.3%		
East (e.g. Pattaya)	15.7%	17.2%		
South (e.g. Phuket, Samui)	41.1%	36.7%		

<b>Preferred leisure activities</b>			2.79	0.42
Sightseeing	25.4%	24.3%		
Shopping	14.5%	15.8%		
Visiting cultural/historical sites	11.9%	12.8%		
Visiting natural areas	16.1%	15.1%		
Visiting beaches/islands	22.1%	24.5%		
Urban traveling	5.1%	3.2%		
Visiting rural areas	2.7%	2.4%		
Others	2.2%	1.9%		
<b>Average daily expense for accommodation</b>			1.51	0.49
Baht 1,000 or less	36.8%	29.4%		
Baht 1,001 – 3,000	54.4%	54.9%		
Baht 3,001 or more	8.8%	15.7%		
<b>Preferred accommodation</b>			6.77	0.14
Luxury hotel (e.g. 5-star hotel)	15.5%	7.8%		
First class hotel (e.g. 4-star hotel)	12.1%	27.5 %		
Budget hotel (e.g. 3-star-hotel)	29.3%	29.4%		
Guest house	37.9%	25.5%		
Friend/relative's house/others	5.2%	9.8%		
<b>Average daily expense for food and beverage</b>			1.59	0.44
Baht 300 or less	28.6%	20.0%		
Baht 301 – 600	48.2%	60.0%		
Baht 601 or more	23.2%	20.0%		
<b>Average daily expense for shopping</b>			4.66	0.09
Baht 500 or less	57.9%	37.3%		
Baht 500 - 1,500	31.6%	45.1%		
Baht 1,501 or more	10.5%	17.6%		
<b>Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand</b>			1.15	1.05
Media (e.g. TV, magazines, brochures, newspaper)	10.9%	10.4%		
Internet	34.5%	33.3%		
Friends/relatives	34.5%	35.4%		
Travel agents/tour companies	1.8%	2.1%		
Travel books	14.5%	14.6%		
Thailand's tourism office	3.6 %	4.2%		
Others	1.8%	1.1%		
<b>What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand</b>			4.5	0.32
Thai culture	17.0%	23.4%		
Thai food	17.7%	17.2%		
Beaches	12.3%	14.3%		
Tourism attractions	9.9%	6.3%		
Thai people	24.1%	21.9%		
Natural areas	14.2%	11.7%		
Others	3.5%	3.1%		

<b>Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years</b>			0.88	0.95
Yes	65.5%	62.7%		
No	3.4%	3.9%		
Not sure	31.0%	33.3%		
<b>Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand</b>			1.24	0.00*
Thai culture	21.2%	43.5%		
Nature & beautiful environment	40.3%	25.4%		
Friendly & nice people	19.2%	15.5%		
Low cost of goods & services	5.3%	4.9%		
A variety of leisure activities & entertainment	6.8%	4.7%		
A variety of tourism attractions	5.3%	3.9%		
Others	1.9%	2.1%		

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\*p < 0.05

Table 4.12 shows that significant differences of travel behaviors were found between male and female European tourists regarding persons influencing travel decision to Thailand and factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand. According to the result, it appeared that most of male tourists (53.4%) were more likely to make their own decision to travel to Thailand compared to females (23.5%). The study also found that female tourists seemed to discuss with their couples (husbands) when making decision to Thailand. Furthermore, the study revealed the differences between male and female respondents regarding the factors motivating repeat visit Thailand. Many of female respondents (43.5%) indicated that Thai culture was the major factor motivating them to come back to Thailand while only 21.2% males said so. However, it appeared that many of male respondents (40.3%) indicated that nature and beautiful environment was the important factor for them to return to Thailand while only 25.4% of females said so.

#### **Section 4.6: An Analysis of travel motivation differences among Asian Tourists**

In addition to comparing differences in travel behaviors, the study also aims to compare travel motivation differences within each group. In this part, comparing mean differences of travel motivations (push and pull factors) was performed by t-test or an analysis of variance (ANOVA) when appropriate to examine if there were statistical differences in the push and pull factor dimensions among demographic subgroups (i.e. gender, age, education, and income). Based on the results, the study revealed some statistical differences in the push and pull factors among Asian tourists (subgroups) which were gender and education while non-significant differences were found for the remaining demographics variables (i.e. age and income). The results are presented in tables 4.13 and 4.14.

**Table 4.13: Comparison of push and pull factors by gender (Asian tourists)**

Push and Pull factor dimensions	Gender		T-value	p-value
	Male (107)	Female (n=73)		
<b>Push factor</b>				
(1) Novelty seeking	3.95a	3.54a	0.09	0.03*
(2) Escape	3.84	3.80	0.30	0.75
(3) Socialization	3.55	3.40	2.37	0.45
<b>Pull Factor</b>				
(1) A variety of tourist attraction & activities	3.98	3.76	1.44	0.16
(2) Travel costs	3.77	3.69	1.55	0.90
(3) Safety & cleanliness	3.45	3.58	1.40	0.69

\* p-value &lt;0.05

a and b show the source of significant mean differences based on the Duncan's multiple range test ; a &gt; b

From table 4.13, the t-test revealed statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) existed between male and female Asian respondents in push factor 1 'novelty seeking'. The result reported that male respondents ( $M=3.95$ ) showed higher mean score than female respondents ( $M=3.54$ ) on this factor. This suggests that male respondents may be more likely to be motivated by 'novelty seeking' when traveling abroad than females respondents.

**Table 4.14: Comparison of push and pull factors by education (Asian tourists)**

Push and pull factor dimensions	Education groups			F-value	p-value
	E 1 (n=38)	E 2 (105)	E 3 (37)		
<b>Push factor</b>					
(1) Novelty seeking	3.67	3.78	3.95	0.54	0.58
(2) Escape	3.33b	3.76a	3.85a	0.77	0.00*
(3) Socialization	2.68	2.87	2.46	0.81	0.47
<b>Pull Factor</b>					
(1) A variety of tourist attraction & activities	3.78	3.98	3.85	0.45	0.51
(2) Travel costs	3.88a	3.79a	3.35b	0.47	0.03*
(3) Safety & cleanliness	3.45	3.58	3.62	2.75	0.26

\* p-value &lt;0.05

E 1=higher school or lower, E 2= bachelor degree, and E 3=master degree or higher

a and b show the source of significant mean differences based on the Duncan's multiple range test; a &gt; b

From table 4.14, the ANOVA test revealed statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) in education subgroups for push and pull factors. For push factor 2 ‘escape’, the respondents in group E2 with bachelor degree ( $M=3.76$ ) and E3 with master degree/higher ( $M=3.85$ ) seemed to rate ‘escape’ as more important push factor for them when compared to group E1 ( $M=3.33$ ). This suggests that the respondents with higher education level (bachelor degree or higher) are more likely to be motivated by ‘escape’ to travel to a foreign country than those with lower education (high school).

When considering pull factor, the respondents in group E1 with high school level ( $M=3.88$ ) and E2 with bachelor degree ( $M=3.79$ ) appeared to rate pull factor 2 ‘travel costs’ higher than the respondents in group E3 with master degree/higher ( $M=3.35$ ). This suggests that the respondents with education from bachelor degree or lower are more likely to be attracted to Thailand by travel costs than those with higher education (master degree/higher).

#### **Section 4.7: An Analysis of travel motivation differences among European Tourists**

Similarly to section 4.6, the study also aims to compare travel motivation differences among European tourists. Based on the results, the study revealed some statistical differences in gender and education subgroups among European respondents. The results are presented in tables 4.15 and 4.16.

**Table 4.15: Comparison of push and pull factors by gender (European tourists)**

Push and Pull factor dimensions	Gender		T-value	p-value
	Male (125)	Female (95)		
<b>Push factor</b>				
1) Novelty seeking	4.12	4.05	0.45	0.60
2) Escape & relaxation	4.02	3.54	0.33	0.01*
3) Socialization	3.45	3.61	1.35	0.48
<b>Pull Factor</b>				
1) A variety of tourist attraction & activities	3.99	3.84	1.23	0.18
2) Cultural and historical attractions	4.03	4.19	1.57	0.95

\* p-value  $< 0.05$

a and b show the source of significant mean differences based on the Duncan’s multiple range test ;  $a > b$

From table 4.15, the t-test revealed statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) existed between male and female European respondents in push factor 2 'escape & relaxation'. The result reported that male respondents ( $M=4.02$ ) showed higher mean score than female respondents ( $M=3.54$ ) on this factor. This suggests that male respondents may be more likely to be motivated by 'escape & relaxation' when traveling abroad than females respondents.

**Table 4.16: Comparison of push and pull factors by income (European tourists)**

Push and Pull factor dimensions	Income group				F-value	p-value
	I1 (n=15)	I2 (62)	I3 (65)	I4 (78)		
<b>Push factor</b>						
1) Novelty seeking	4.10	3.98	4.01	3.98	0.45	0.08
2) Escape & relaxation	3.41b	3.43b	3.98a	4.05a	0.33	0.00*
3) Socialization	3.51	3.43	3.61	3.58	1.45	0.45
<b>Pull Factor</b>						
1) A variety of tourist attraction & activities	3.45b	3.39b	3.91a	3.99a	1.32	0.00*
2) Cultural and historical attractions	3.97	3.99	4.12	4.18	0.57	0.90

\* p-value < 0.05

I1 = US\$ 1,000 or lower, I2 = 1,001 - 2,500, I3 = 2,501 - 3,500, I4 = 3,501 or higher

From table 4.16, the ANOVA test revealed statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) in income subgroups for push and pull factors. For push factor 2 'escape and relaxation', the respondents with higher income that are group I3 ( $M=3.98$ ) and I4 ( $M=4.05$ ) seemed to rate 'escape & relaxation' as more important push factor for them when traveling overseas compared to those with lower income which are group I1 ( $M=3.42$ ) and I2 ( $M=3.43$ ). This suggests that the respondents with higher income are more likely to be motivated by 'escape & relaxation' to travel to a foreign country than those with lower income.

When considering pull factor, likewise, the respondents in group I3 ( $M=3.91$ ) and I4 ( $M=3.99$ ) appeared to rate pull factor 1 'a variety of tourist attractions & activities' higher than the respondents in group I1 and I2. This suggests that the respondents with higher income (I3 and I4) are more likely to be attracted to Thailand by a variety of tourist attractions and activities than those with lower income (I1 and I2).

## 4.8 Hypotheses Testing

This part aims to present the results of research hypotheses which have been developed from the literature review section. There are four research hypotheses developed from this study. The results are presented as follows:

### Hypothesis 1

**H1o:** International tourists with **different geographical regions** (Asian and Europe) may have no differences in travel behaviors.

**H1a:** International tourists with **different geographical regions** (Asian and Europe) may have differences in travel behaviors.

To test hypothesis 1, chi-square test was employed to examine if there were significant differences in travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists. Based on the results of table 4.2, some significant differences of travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists were found in some aspects ( $p < 0.05$ ). For example, trip arrangement it was found that most European tourists were independent travelers who seemed to arrange their own trips to Thailand while many Asian tourists preferred to buy package tours and traveled with tour companies. Furthermore, European tourists appeared to stay longer than Asian tourists. Many of them preferred to stay 1-15 days and 16 days or more whereas Asian tourists stayed shorter period (6-10 days). It was also found that Asian tourists differed from European tourists regarding preferred leisure activities (i.e. sightseeing and shopping) and sources of travel information motivating them to Thailand. Based on these results, this indicates that international tourists with different geographical region (Asia and Europe) may have differences in travel behaviors. Therefore, the findings support alternative hypothesis (H1a).

### Hypothesis 2

**H2o:** International tourists with **different demographic characteristics** (e.g. gender, age) may have no differences in travel behaviors.

**H2a:** International tourists with **different demographic characteristics** (e.g. gender, age) may have differences in travel behaviors.

The purpose of hypothesis 2 aims to examine if 2.1) Asian tourists with different demographic characteristics had differences in travel behaviors and 2.2) European tourists with different demographic characteristics had differences in travel behaviors. To test these

hypotheses, chi-square tests were performed to examine if international tourists with different demographic characteristics would have differences in travel behaviors. According to table 4.10 and 4.11 (Asian tourists), there were some significant differences of travel behaviors among Asian tourists on gender and education subgroups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Based on table 4.10, significant differences were found on education subgroups regarding number of overseas travel and daily expenses for accommodation, and table 4.11 showed significant differences between gender groups on preferred activities and daily expenses for shopping.

With regard to European tourists (table 4.12), there were some significant differences of travel behaviors among European tourists regarding the person influencing travel decision to Thailand and the factor motivating repeat visit to Thailand. According to the result, it appeared that most male tourists were more likely to make their own decision to travel to Thailand while female tourists seemed to discuss with her couples (husbands) when making decision to Thailand. The study also revealed that many female respondents indicated that Thai culture was the major factor motivating them to come back to Thailand while male respondents seemed to indicate that nature and beautiful environment was the important factor for them to return to Thailand. Based on these results, this suggests that international tourists with different demographic characteristics may have differences in travel behaviors. Thus, the findings support alternative hypothesis (H2a).

### **Hypothesis 3**

**H3o:** International tourists with **different geographical regions** (Asia and Europe) may have no differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand's destination attractions (pull factors).

**H3a:** International tourists with **different geographical regions** (Asia and Europe) may have differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand's destination attractions (pull factors).

To test hypothesis 3, t-test was employed to examine if there were mean differences in push and pull factors between Asian and European tourists. Based on the results of table 4.3 and 4.4, there were some statistical differences between Asian and European tourists ( $p < 0.05$ ).

According to table 4.3, there were some significant differences of travel motives (push factors) between Asian and European tourists relating to novelty or excitement experiences (items 1, 2, 3, and 4). Other differences were found in item 7 (spending time with family members), item 12 (improving health), and item 13 (talking about the trip). This suggests Asian and European tourists differed in terms of push factors (motives to travel). Likewise, table 4.4



presented some significant differences found in the perceptions of pull factors (destination attractions) between Asian and European tourists. The study found that European tourists rated higher score on the attractions of ‘seasides/beaches’, ‘Thai culture’, and ‘cultural/historical attractions’ than Asian tourists. Meanwhile, Asian tourists rated ‘a variety of shopping places’ and ‘leisure activities and entertainment’ as more important factors than European tourists. Based on these results (table 4.3 and 4.4), this suggests that international tourists with different geographical regions may have differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand’s destination attractions (pull factors). Thus, the findings support alternative hypothesis (H3a).

#### **Hypothesis 4**

**H4o:** International tourists with **different demographic characteristics** (e.g. gender, age) may have no differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand’s destination attractions (pull factors).

**H4a:** International tourists with **different demographic characteristics** (e.g. gender, age) may have differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand’s destination attractions (pull factors).

Similarly to hypothesis 2, the purpose of hypothesis 4 aims to examine if 4.1) Asian tourists with different demographic characteristics had differences in push and pull factors and 4.2) European tourists with different demographic characteristics had differences in push and pull factors. To test hypothesis 4.1 and 4.2, t-test or ANOVA (when appropriate) was performed to examine if there were statistical differences. According to table 4.13 and 4.14 (Asian tourists), the study found some significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) among Asian tourists on push factors. Table 4.13 showed that male respondents were more likely to be motivated by ‘novelty seeking’ when traveling abroad than females respondents. While table 4.14 reported that the respondents with higher education level (bachelor degree or higher) were more likely to be motivated by ‘escape’ to travel to a foreign country than those with lower education (high school). Furthermore, the respondents with higher education (bachelor degree or lower) were more likely to be attracted to Thailand by travel costs than those with lower education (high school).

In relation to European tourists, table 4.15 and 4.16 reported some significant differences among European tourists ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results indicated that male respondents were more likely to be motivated by ‘escape & relaxation’ when traveling abroad than females respondents. Moreover, the respondents with higher income were more likely to be motivated by ‘escape & relaxation’ to travel to a foreign country than those with lower income. The study also revealed

that the respondents with higher income were more likely to be attracted to Thailand by a variety of tourist attractions and activities than those with lower income. With the above results, this suggests that international tourists with different demographic characteristics may have differences in travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand's destination attractions (pull factors). Thus, the findings support alternative hypothesis (H4a).

## **4.9 Research Discussions**

### **4.9.1 Discussion of Travel Motivations (Push and Pull Factors)**

According to push factor analysis (table 4.5), it was found that 'novelty seeking' was regarded as the most important push factor stimulating Asian respondents to travel abroad. Likewise, the study (table 4.6) revealed similar results indicating that 'novelty seeking' was regarded as the most important push factors motivating European respondents to travel overseas. In overall, the results of push factors analysis (motives to travel) of the two markets were quite similar, though there are minor or slight differences in other motives (e.g. escape and socialization motives). Generally, the current findings are similar to previous studies revealing that novelty seeking is the major motive for many tourist groups to travel to overseas destinations. For example, Lee (2000) revealed that novelty experience was the major push factor among international tourists visiting South Korea. Cha, McCleary, & Uysal (1995) and Jang & Wu (2006) also found that novelty and knowledge seeking was the key push factor for Japanese and Taiwanese to travel abroad. This suggests that, in international tourism, novelty seeking or the motive to experience something new, exciting or different from people's usual environment seems to be the major motive stimulating people to travel to different parts of the world in order to seek something that they can't obtain in their usual environment. Thus, it is not surprising with the current findings revealing that both Asian and European tourists were motivated by novelty motive to travel to a particular destination if they wish to experience something that is different from their own cultures.

With regard to pull factor analysis (table 4.7 and 4.8), it seemed that the results of pull factors between Asian and European tourists were different. In case of Asian tourists, 'a variety of tourist attractions and activities' was regarded as the most important factor attracting them to Thailand while European tourists perceived 'cultural & historical attractions' as the most important factor drawing them to Thailand. Basically, it should be noted the result of pull factors (destination attractions) could be viewed differently by country to country or market to market (i.e. Asians and Europeans) depending on the image and perception of travelers toward a particular destination (Kozak, 2002). In the current study, it could be possible that Asian tourists,

with similar cultures and distance closure to Thailand, they may perceive Thai culture not much different from their cultures or Asian subcultures. Instead, they may be attracted to Thailand due to a variety of tourism products and services being offered or marketed to the mass market by Thai tourism businesses/operators. According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand's reports (TAT, 2006; 2009), Thailand is marketing a variety of tourism products to the Asian markets including cultural tourism, health tourism, natural-based tourism, special interest tourism. Furthermore, there are several studies indicating that many Asian tourists come to Thailand because of a variety of tourist attractions such as culture, historical sites, beach tourism, shopping, night life or city entertainment (Nuchailak, 1998; Tanapanich, 1999; Soda, 2001). With the country's image of tourism product varieties among Asian markets and the above arguments, it could be possible that many Asian respondents seem to perceive Thailand as one of the destinations with a variety of tourism attractions, and this could be the major attraction drawing them to Thailand.

In case of European tourists, it seemed that they were more likely to appreciate Thai cultural and historical attractions as the major pull factors drawing them to Thailand. The current finding is somewhat similar to other studies examining travel motivations of European tourists (e.g. Yavuz, Baloglu & Uysal, 1998; You & O'Leary, 2000). Those studies indicated that cultural and/or historical attractions are common destination attractions drawing European tourists to visit a particular destination. For example, Yavuz et al. (1998) disclosed that European travelers perceived cultural attractions of Cyprus as more important factor for them than any attractions. Furthermore, You and O'Leary (2000) argued that culture and heritage attractions have strong appeals among many international tourists when visiting overseas destinations. This type of attraction could be ranked among the top destination attributes attracting European travelers to Asian destinations (You & O'Leary, 2000). In case of European tourists to Thailand, it could be possible that European respondents may perceive Thailand differently from Asian respondents. They may appreciate Thailand as the distinct country in Asia with old history and unique culture (e.g. Thainess). There are several studies reporting that many European tourists perceived Thai cultural/historical attractions as the most important factor for visiting Thailand such as Prasertwong (2001) and Zhang, Fang, and Sirirassamee (2004). Another reason to support why European travelers perceived Thai cultural & historical attraction as the major factors could be because Thailand is one of the few countries in the world that has never been colonized by any western power. This phenomenon affects the nature of the land, culture, history, and Thai people to this day. Previous research has shown that many international tourists come to Thailand because of the attractiveness of Thai unique culture and historical backgrounds (Prasertwong 2001; Zhang, Fang & Sirirassamee 2004). Moreover, Prasertwong (2001) argued

that Thailand is usually perceived to be a destination that is rich in historical and cultural attractions; making it different/distinct from other Asian countries and attractive to many international tourists. In addition to previous studies' support, it seems that the influences of marketing campaigns (by TAT.) also have the impact on Thailand's cultural image among European tourists. The campaigns can be found and supported by various types of activities using Thai cultural, historical and/or heritage themes as the key marketing tools attracting European tourists to Thailand (TAT, 2007; 2009). These marketing tools have been widely recognized and succeeded in the European markets. Based on the above arguments, it is not surprising why many international tourists including European tourists visit Thailand because of the Thai cultural & historical attractions.

#### **4.9.2 Discussion of Travel Behavior Differences**

According to subsection 4.4 and 4.5 (tables 4.10 – 4.12), they showed that there were some differences of travel behaviors between Asian and European respondents. For example, it was found that Asian and European tourists differed in trip arrangement. It appeared that European tourists were independent travelers and more likely to arrange their own trips to Thailand while many Asian tourists seemed to buy package tour or traveled with tour companies. European tourists tended to stay longer than Asian tourists, particularly up to two weeks or more while most Asian tourists preferred to stay approximately one week or less. Furthermore, Asian tourists also differed from European tourists regarding sightseeing, shopping, and spending behaviors. For instance, many Asian tourists with higher education (bachelor degree or higher) preferred to traveled abroad more frequently than those with lower education (high school). They also were more likely to spend more on higher costs of accommodation than those with lower education. For European tourists, most of male tourists were more likely to make their own decision to travel to Thailand compared to females. The study also reported that male and female respondents differed in the factors motivating them to return to Thailand. Many female respondents indicated that Thai culture was the major factor motivating them to come back to Thailand while male respondents were more likely to appreciate the hospitality of Thai and local people. Almost half of male respondents indicated that nature and beautiful environment was the important factor for them to return to Thailand, however, female respondents seemed to appreciate Thai culture as the key factor motivating them for repeat visit.

The current findings seem to be similar to several studies (e.g. Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; You & O'Leary, 1999; Horneman et al., 2002) indicating that tourists with different demographic characteristics and nationalities or cultural backgrounds may have differences in travel behaviors, trip characteristics and travel patterns. Previous literature indicates that tourists'

behaviors are heterogeneous in nature, and people travel for various reasons (Crompton, 1979; Baloglu & Uysal, 1996). Generally, tourists are consumers who buy a number of diverse and different products and services, and it is important for marketers to recognize that not all tourists travel for the same reasons (Horneman et al., 2002). According to the literature, tourists' behaviors may vary depending on several factors such as gender, education level, income, life style, travel tastes/ preferences, nationalities or cultural backgrounds (Romsa et al., 1980; You et al., 2001). Kozak (2002) argued that travel motivation as well as tourist behavior is a dynamic concept, it may differ from one person to another or group by group because people have different reasons for travel as well as the differences of an individual. Different characteristics of an individual may bring different consumption and diversified travel behaviors (Moschis, 1997 cited in You & O'Leary, 2000). In particular, this study examined travel behaviors among international tourists representing different countries from Asia and Europe. Thus, it could be possible that, by nature, these international tourists with different cultural backgrounds, lifestyles, and travel preferences may have differences in travel behaviors and trip characteristics as reported in previous findings (tables 4.10 – 4.12). With these arguments, it can help justify why Asian and European respondents with different demographic or cultural backgrounds may have different travel behaviors and trip characteristics.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions and Recommendations

This is the final chapter of the research report. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize research findings, provide recommendations, and address research limitations and future research opportunities.

#### 5.1 Conclusions

Using the theory of push and pull factors as a conceptual framework, this study has the objectives to examine and compare travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists to Thailand based on geographical regions (i.e. between Asian and European tourists). The study was done on the assumption and previous studies' support in that tourists from the same region (Asia or Europe) may share some similarities or commonalities on travel related-behaviors such as travel motivations and travel preferences as indicated from previous literature (Lee, 2000; Kim & Prideaux, 2005).

According to the current study, the results indicated that travel motives (push factors) and the perception of Thailand's destination attractions (pull factors) differed among international tourists to Thailand, particularly between Asian and European tourists. For Asian tourists, the study identified three push and three pull factor dimensions associated with Asian tourists' travel motivations. The three push factors were named as (1) 'novelty seeking', (2) 'escape', and (3) 'socialization', while the three pull factors included: (1) 'a variety of tourists' attractions & activities', (2) 'travel costs', and (3) 'safety & cleanliness'. Among them, 'novelty seeking' and 'a variety of tourist attractions & activities' were viewed as the most important push and pull factors for Asian tourists. With regard to European tourists, the study identified three push and two pull factor dimensions related to European tourists' travel motivations. The three push factors were name as (1) 'novelty seeking', (2) 'escape & relaxation', and (3) 'socialization', while the two pull factors included: (1) 'a variety of tourist attractions & activities' and (2) 'cultural & historical attractions'. Among them, 'novelty seeking' and 'cultural & historical attractions' were regarded as the most important push and pull factors for European tourists. In terms of examining the differences of push and pull factors across demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, education, income) both Asian and European subgroups, the results indicated some differences of push and pull factors in each group. For example, among Asian tourists, male respondents were more likely to be motivated by 'novelty seeking' when traveling abroad than females respondents. The respondents with higher education level (bachelor degree or higher)

were more likely to be motivated by 'escape' to travel to a foreign country than those with lower education (high school). Further, the respondents with higher education (bachelor degree or lower) appeared to be attracted to Thailand by travel costs than those with lower education (high school). In relation to European tourists, some differences of push and pull factors were also observed among European tourists. For instance, male respondents were more likely to be motivated by 'escape & relaxation' when traveling abroad than females respondents. The respondents with higher income seemed to be more likely to be motivated by 'escape & relaxation' to travel to a foreign country than those with lower income. And the respondents with higher income were more likely to be attracted to Thailand by a variety of tourist attractions and activities than those with lower income.

In relation to travel behaviors, the current study has revealed some differences of travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists in some aspects. The study showed interesting results about these two markets. For example, Asian and European tourists differed in trip arrangement. The study found that most European tourists were independent travelers and they seemed to arrange their own trips to Thailand while many Asian tourists bought package tour and traveled with tour companies, though some arranged their own trips. Another observation is that most European tourists were first-time travelers to Thailand whereas Asian tourists were repeat visitors. Although most Europeans were first-time travelers to Thailand, they were more likely to stay longer than Asian tourists, particularly the trip of 11-15 days and 16 days or more. Asian tourists also differed from European tourists in terms of preferred leisure activities such as sightseeing and shopping as well as spending behaviors for shopping and sources of travel information such as travel agents, tour companies, and travel books. When considered in details, some differences of travel behaviors within each group were found. For example, Asian tourists (subgroups), most respondents with higher education (bachelor degree or higher) tended to traveled abroad more frequently than those with lower education (high school). Furthermore, they also were likely to spend more on accommodation than those with lower education. In case of European tourists (subgroups), it was found that most of male tourists were more likely to make their own decision to travel to Thailand compared to females. Male and female respondents differed regarding the factors motivating repeat visit Thailand. Many female respondents indicated that Thai culture was the major factor motivating them to come back to Thailand while some male respondents said so. Almost half of male respondents indicated that nature and beautiful environment was the important factor for them to return to Thailand, however, female respondents seemed to appreciate Thai culture as the key factor motivating them for repeat visit.

With regard to research hypotheses, the study revealed that international tourists with different geographical regions (i.e. Asia and Europe) and demographic characteristics (i.e. gender, education and income) may have differences in travel motivations (push and pull factors) and travel behaviors. Based on research hypotheses, they may provide a better understanding of international tourists' travel related behaviors and may be useful for further applications on marketing purposes.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

This parts aims to present the recommendations which may be useful for destination tourism marketers and travel business to develop appropriate marketing strategies, policies and products corresponding to the needs of the target markets. Since this study examines and compares travel motivations and travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists, the recommendations will be proposed based on the results of each group.

### **5.2.1) Asian Tourists**

According to the literature, knowing the importance of push and pull factors perceived by the tourists/travelers can help destination marketers develop the marketing programs to meet the desired needs of target market (Hanqin & Lam, 1999). This implication could be applied to the current study to develop the products and services to attract the international tourists to Thailand. Based on the current findings, 'novelty seeking' was found to be the most important motive stimulating Asian respondents to travel abroad, and 'a variety tourist attractions & activities' was regarded as the major destination attraction drawing them to Thailand. Based on these results, tourism marketers should realize the importance of push factor 'novelty seeking' which are related to the needs to see something new, exciting or different from travelers' usual environment. These motives are perceived as driving forces for Asian tourists to travel abroad. At the same time, destination marketers should realize that 'a variety of tourist attractions & activities' is perceived as the major destination attraction (pull factor) drawing them to Thailand. According to You et al. (2000), tourism marketers need to tie the motivational drives (motives) with the activities that the destination can offer (attractions) and then package them to better satisfy the targets' needs. This suggestion could be applied to the case of Asian tourists who are mainly motivated to travel abroad by 'novelty seeking' and attracted to Thailand by 'a variety of tourist attraction & activities'. Thus, it is important for destination marketers to develop marketing programs (e.g. advertising, communications) by stimulating the needs of the targets (novelty seeking) and satisfy those needs with Thailand's destination attractions (a variety of



tourist attractions & activities). This can be done by designing appropriate marketing programs or advertisements (e.g. TV ads, travel guides/books, brochures) by matching what they need and what we can offer. One of the possible ways is to create a marketing or tourism theme, for example, “Explore Thailand: Discover and Experience the Land of Exotic and Variety”. The theme might help stimulate the needs of novelty seeking (something new, different or exciting), at the same time, attract or persuade them to discover those things in Thailand by offering a unique and a variety of tourism products reflecting the theme. It should be noted that, this is the suggested idea for destination marketers to develop further marketing plans and strategies based on their decisions. It is hoped that at least the study could provide some useful ideas contributing to the industry in some ways.

In addition to the above suggestions, the study has revealed interesting results regarding Asian travelers’ behaviors. Some observations have been made and this would be useful for destination marketers to develop appropriate marketing strategies for this market. For example, many Asian tourists traveled abroad quite often each year (more than once a year). This may provide marketing opportunities for destination marketers to develop appropriate marketing programs to attract more Asian tourists to Thailand by creating attractive and interesting package tours. It is also interesting to note that many Asian tourists were repeat visitors; implying that Thailand is one of the popular destinations for Asian travelers. Destination marketers may design different marketing strategies and a variety of tourism products for repeat visitors. The programs may include, for example, health tourism, nature-based/beach tourism, cultural tourism, and/or night life/entertainment. In addition to Bangkok as the major destination, many Asian travelers preferred to travel to different parts of Thailand. In particular, the north such as Chiang Mai and the south such as Phuket or Samui seemed to be a preferred place for many Asian travelers. This suggests that travel information and marketing campaigns should also focus other places such as the northern and southern regions. Based on the results of travel expenses (e.g. accommodation, food & beverage, shopping), the findings might be useful for destination marketers in several aspects. For instance, many Asian tourists mostly spent on medium-priced products and services, thus the travel information given to the targets (e.g. accommodation prices, food, shopping places) should reflect their needs and wants. One interesting observation is the source of travel information motivating the Asian travelers to Thailand which was primarily based on the Internet. This suggests that the Internet should be used as the major channel to promote tourism activities in Thailand. Travel business targeting at Asian travelers may provide various Asian languages (based on their target markets) on their websites. Furthermore, they should develop

interesting and attractive tourism products through the Internet and should use it as the main media to reach the targets.

### **5.2.2) European Tourists**

The recommendations for European tourists apply the same concept of those discussed in Asian tourists (matching the results of push and pull factors). However, the strategies need to be modified to cater to the needs of European tourists. The findings derived from European respondents indicated that ‘novelty seeking’ and ‘cultural & historical attractions’ were regarded as the major push and pull factors. Thus, destination marketers need to tie the motives (push factor) with the activities that the destination can offer (pull factor) and then package them to better satisfy the targets’ needs. Like the Asian tourists, destination marketers may develop marketing programs (e.g. advertising, communications) by stimulating the needs of novelty seeking and satisfy those needs with Thailand’s cultural and historical attractions. This can be done by designing appropriate marketing programs or advertisements (e.g. TV ads, travel guides/books, brochures). One of the possible marketing or tourism themes for this market could be, for example, “Explore Thailand: Discover and Experience the Treasure of Southeast Asia” or “Discover the Kingdom of Thailand: the Land of Exotic and Unique Culture”. The themes might help stimulate the needs of novelty seeking (something new, different or exciting), at the same time, attract or persuade them to discover and experience the cultural heritage of Thailand. It is hoped that the suggestions here could be helpful for the industry practitioners to get some ideas of how to develop or design the marketing plans/strategies.

Like the Asian tourists, some observations have been made from European tourists’ behaviors, and this might be useful for destination marketers to develop appropriate marketing strategies for European market. For example, many European tourists traveled abroad frequently each year (more than once a year). This may provide marketing opportunities for destination marketers to develop appropriate marketing programs to attract more European tourists to Thailand by designing attractive packages corresponding to their needs and expectations. It is also interesting to note that most European tourists planned to stay in Thailand longer than Asian tourists (e.g. 16 days or longer). This information may be important for destination marketers to prepare and provide all necessary travel information about Thailand to the European travelers. Due to their long stay, travel information is vital for European travelers in terms of accessibility (where they can get the information) and availability (sufficient distribution). Although it seems that many European travelers are interested in cultural tourism, the information given should include all types of tourism activities in Thailand such as nature-based tourism/ecotourism,

beach tourism, health tourism, cultural tourism and other leisure activities to present other tourism activities among European tourists. Information of other regions such as the north and the south should be the highlights since many of them preferred to travel to those regions. Based on the results of travel expenses (e.g. accommodation, food & beverage, shopping), the findings revealed similar results with Asian tourists focusing on medium-priced products and services. Thus, the travel information given to the targets should reflect their needs and wants. Similarly to Asian tourists, many European travelers searched the information on the Internet. Hence, the Internet should be used as the major channel to promote tourism activities in Thailand. Travel business targeting at European travelers may provide various European languages (based on their target markets) on their websites to reach their targets.

### **5.2.3) Other Recommendations**

Although major marketing theme for attracting international tourists to Thailand has been provided, it could be useful to address some other recommendations based on the current findings. According to the factor analysis of push factors (travel motives), it seemed that ‘rest & relaxation’ was emerged as the second important motives among international tourists both Asian and European tourists. Besides focusing on the major motive like ‘novelty seeking’, the second motive such as ‘rest & relaxation’ could provide tourism marketers another marketing implication or option for doing marketing programs to attract both Asian and European travelers. Since the current results indicated differences of travel motives (push factors) among international traveler subgroups, thus, ‘rest & relaxation’ could be the major motive for many international tourists when traveling overseas (despite the major one is novelty seeking). Thus, the second marketing campaign could be designed in the way that conveys the message promoting or marketing Thailand as the land of holiday vacation for rest and relaxation purposes with a variety of leisure activities. Similarly to the major recommendation above, the marketing or tourism theme for the second campaign, could be, for example, “Enjoy Your Holidays in Thailand - the Heaven/Paradise on Earth” or “Thailand – the Land Where You Experience Endless Happiness”. As this theme serves rest and relaxation travelers, destination marketers should design the products and services corresponding to the needs of the target tourists. The second theme might be used for various targets such as repeat visitors, leisure tourists, long-stay travelers, senior travelers, honeymooners or those who seek for rest and relaxation purposes (e.g. natural attractions, beach tourism).

In addition to the above recommendations, the study has revealed some differences of travel motivations and travel behaviors among demographic subgroups both Asian and European tourists (e.g. gender, education, income) as discussed in chapter 4. The findings may help tourism marketers realize travel differences among international tourists based on these demographic variables. Heung et al. (2001) suggested that in order to create effective marketing strategies for products and services in the tourism market, a better understanding of customers is necessary. Since this study has indicated differences of travel motivations and travel behaviors among Asian and European travelers based on demographic characteristics, tourism marketers need to understand these differences in order to effectively satisfy the diversified needs of each subgroup (either Asian or European subgroups). It could be useful for tourism marketers to note that Asian and European travelers with different demographic characteristics may have differences in tourism activities, travel preferences, accommodation type, travel costs, and other related activities as reported in chapter 4. Thus, the current findings could help tourism marketers design appropriate tourism products and programs catered for a particular target group if they wish (e.g. higher income travelers or niche market/segment) as well as to meet customers' needs and expectations.

### **5.3 Theoretical/Literature Contributions**

In addition to the practical contributions, the results of the current study have added to the theoretical/literature contribution in the area of comparative studies of international tourists' motivations and travel behaviors, particularly in Thai context. Despite there are a number of empirical studies examining international tourists in Thai context, little effort has been attempted to investigate and compare travel motivations and behaviors of international tourists to Thailand. The current study is one of the few studies that employed the push and pull motivations theory to examine and compare travel motivation of overseas inbound travelers by focusing on Asian and European tourists. With little literature (research work) on comparative studies of international tourists, the current study has contributed to the tourism literature by providing a new empirical study in the area of travel motivations and travel behaviors of international tourists to Thailand. According to the current results, travel motives (reasons to travel) of international tourists to Thailand are generally similar. The motives are mainly related to the need to see something new, exciting or different from their usual environment (novelty seeking). In addition to the novelty motives, the study has revealed that international tourists also travel for other reasons (other motives) such as rest and relaxation or an escape from ordinary or usual surroundings to the new destinations that they can see something different and also may take a rest or relaxation while

traveling. These findings would help better understand about international tourists' travel motivations (why they take a holiday or why they travel).

Regarding the results of pull factors (destination attractions), this study has revealed similar results with other international studies in that different groups of tourists may perceive the same destination differently. This could be because the perception of one destination may depend on several factors such as tourists' cultural backgrounds, marketing perceptions/influences, country's image, and tourists' travel preferences. The current findings could help industry practitioners realize that different groups of tourists may perceive one destination in terms of destination attractions differently, and they should be able to develop different plans or programs to respond to different targets' needs and expectations.

Finally, the push and pull motivations theory is argued to be the useful motivational theory used to examine tourists' travel motivations. It was employed in this study to investigate the travel motivations of international travelers to Thailand. Based on the findings, it can be argued and substantiated that the push and pull motivations theory is a useful theory in which one can understand why people travel or take a holiday, and why they decide to visit a particular destination. This suggests that future research may employ it to better understand travel motivations of the target markets. Travel motivation is one of the important areas of tourism research that can help researchers and marketers better understand a complex issue of tourist behaviors. Knowledge of travel motivation is important to predict travel patterns of international tourists, and then should help industry practitioners develop appropriate products and services to meet customers' needs and wants. It is hoped that the current study would be useful for future research investigating international tourists to Thailand.

#### **5.4 Limitations and Future Research Opportunities**

Although the researcher attempts to ensure that the results of the current study are reliable and valid, there are some limitations associated with the study that need to be addressed. Also, the information for future research opportunities is provided.

Firstly, this study used a convenience sampling method (non-probability sampling), thus the results may not confidently generalize to the whole population (international tourists to Thailand). In addition, due to the limitations associated with the convenience sampling method, a small number of North American and Australian tourists were collected during the surveys, and they were not included in the final data analysis. Thus, this study aimed to compare travel motivations and travel behaviors between two groups only which were Asian and European tourists (not cover other markets such as North America and Australia). Future research may

examine a larger sample size to obtain sufficient number of international samples representing major markets (regions) including Asia, Europe, North America and Australia. This may help industry practitioners get a greater benefit from the research.

Secondly, this study compared travel motivations and travel behaviors between Asian and European tourists by focusing on a regional base. This was done on the assumption that tourists from the same region (either Asia or Europe) may share some similarities or commonalities on travel related-behaviors such as travel motivations and travel preference as indicated from the literature. However, it should be kept in mind that the travel differences of international tourists (country by country) might exist, and they could be varied from one market to another (despite the same region).

Thirdly, this study collected data on site where the respondents were already in Thailand. The results may not truly reflect their actual motivations to visit Thailand because some factors such as trip experience, perceptions, and attitudes may influence the assessments of travel motivations while they were on the site locations. If possible, it would be more interesting for future research to assess tourist motivations prior to their actual journey.

Fourthly, this study collected data from some major cities (Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Pattaya), all located in the central area. This is because of the limitation of researcher team, budget and time constraint. Future research may be undertaken to cover all parts of the country covering major cities of each region (e.g. north, central, east and south).

Finally, since this is a quantitative study, the research that is based on qualitative methods examining international visitors in Thailand is still limited. Thus, qualitative research methods such as interviews, observations or focus groups should be encouraged in order to get a more refined and a better understanding of international tourists' travel motivations by sharing and exchanging real experiences with the international tourists.

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## Questionnaire

**Research Project:** A Study of Travel Motivations and Travel Behaviors of International Tourists

This research project is granted by Dhurakij Pundit University, Bangkok. The objective of the research is to survey tourist behavior and travel motivations of international tourists in Thailand. The findings of the research will be used for academic purpose and all information will be treated confidentially. The questionnaire consists of 3 parts. Please answer all the questions. Your kind cooperation and assistance is greatly appreciated. Thank you

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### 1. General Information

Instruction: Please mark (√) or circle O in each question.

**1. Which country do you come from?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Gender:** 1) male 2) female

**3. Age:** 1) 20 - 30 2) 31 - 45 3) 46 - 55 4) 56 or more

**4. Marital status:** 1) single 2) married 3) widowed/divorced/separated

**5. Educational level:**

1) High school/lower 2) Bachelor/college degree 3) Master degree or higher

**6. Occupation:**

1) students 2) company employee 3) government officer 4) business owner

5) independent/self-employed 6) unemployment 7) housewife 8) retired

9) Others, \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Monthly income:**

1) less than US\$ 1,000 2) US\$ 1,001 - 2,500 3) US\$ 2,501 - 3,500 4) US\$ 3,501 or higher

### 2. Travel Characteristics

Instruction: Please mark (√) or circle O in each question.

**1. On average, how often do you travel abroad in one year?**

1) 1 time 2) 2 - 3 times 3) 4 times or more 4) Not sure, depending on opportunity.

**2. How did you plan your trip to Thailand?**

1) I buy package tours (air tickets and hotels).

2) I travel with a tour company.

3) I plan everything myself (travel independently)

4) Others.....

**3. How many times have you visited Thailand?**

1) First time 2) 2 - 3 times 3) 4 times or more

**4. How many days do you plan to stay in Thailand?**

- 1) 5 days or less      2) 6 – 10 days      3) 11 - 15 days      4) 16 days or more

**5. Who helped you decide to come to Thailand?**

- 1) myself      2) my couple (husband or wife)      3) my boy or girl friend  
4) my friends      5) my parents or relatives      6) others.....

**6. Who travel with you on this trip?**

- 1) travel alone      2) travel with husband or wife      3) travel with friends or relatives  
4) travel with family (husband/wife and children)      5) travel with parents

**7. Besides Bangkok, which part of Thailand do you want to visit?**

- 1) North (e.g. Chiang Mai)      2) Northeast (e.g. Khon Kaen)      3) Central (e.g. Ayutthaya)  
4) East (e.g. Pattaya)      5) South (e.g. Phuket, Samui)

**8. What is the most important activity that you want to do in Thailand? (only one answer)**

- 1) sightseeing      2) shopping      3) visiting cultural/historical places      4) visiting natural areas  
5) going to beaches/islands      6) urban traveling      7) visiting rural area      8) others.....

**9. Please estimate your daily expenditure for accommodation (e.g. hotel, guest house) in Thailand?**

- 1) 1,000 Baht or less      2) 1,001 – 3,000 Baht      3) 3,001 Baht or more

**10. Please estimate your daily expenditure for food & meals in Thailand?**

- 1) 300 Baht or less      2) 301 – 600 Baht      3) 601 Baht or more

**11. Please estimate your daily expenditure for shopping in Thailand?**

- 1) 500 Baht or less      2) 500 – 1,500 Baht      3) 1,501 Baht or more

**12. When you travel to Thailand, what type of hotel do you prefer to stay?**

- 1) luxury hotel (5-star hotel)      2) first class hotel (4-star hotel)      3) budget hotel (3-star hotel)  
4) guest house      5) friend/relative's house      6) others .....

**13. What is the most important source of information motivating you to travel to Thailand?**

**(only one answer)**

- 1) media (TV, magazines, brochures, newspaper)      2) Internet  
3) friends/relatives/parents      4) travel agent/tour company      5) travel books  
6) Thailand's tourism office      7) others, \_\_\_\_\_

**14. When you go back to your country, what would you recommend about Thailand to other people (your family or friends)?**

- 1) Thai food      2) Thai people      3) Thai culture      4) tourist attractions/places  
5) seashores/beaches      6) natural areas      7) others.....

**15. Do you think you would come back to Thailand in the next 1 – 5 years?**

- 1) yes      2) no      3) not sure

**16. If yes, please choose the most important reason why you would come back to Thailand again.**

**(only one answer)**

- 1) Thai culture            2) nature & beautiful environment    3) friendly & nice people  
 4) low cost of goods & services            5) a variety of leisure activities & entertainment  
 6) a variety of tourist attractions            7) others .....

**3. Travel Motivations**

**Please indicate the level of your opinion for the reason why you travel abroad and mark (✓) or circle O in each question on the right column.**

**Level of your opinion**

1. I travel abroad because <b>I want to travel to a country I have not visited before.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
2. I travel abroad because <b>I want to experience cultures that are different from mine.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
3. I travel abroad because <b>I want to learn new things from a foreign country.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
4. I travel abroad because <b>I want to see something new and exciting.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
5. I travel abroad because <b>I want to seek fun or adventure.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
6. I travel abroad because <b>I want to fulfill my dream of visiting a new country.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
7. I travel abroad because <b>I want to spend more time with my couple or family members while traveling.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
8. I travel abroad because <b>I want to see and meet different groups of people.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
9. I travel abroad because <b>I want to escape from busy job or stressful work.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
10. I travel abroad because <b>I want to escape from routine or ordinary environment.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
11. I travel abroad because <b>I want to rest and relax.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
12. I travel abroad because <b>I want to improve my health and well-being.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
13. I travel abroad because <b>I can talk to everybody about my trips when I get home.</b>	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree

Please indicate the level of your opinion for the factors attracting you to Thailand and mark (√) or circle O in each question on the right column.

### Level of your opinion

1. Do you think <b><u>seaside or beach</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
2. Do you think <b><u>natural attraction</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
3. Do you think <b><u>Thai culture</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
4. Do you think <b><u>Thai food</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
5. Do you think <b><u>cultural or historical place</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
6. Do you think <b><u>a variety of tourist attractions</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
7. Do you think <b><u>a low cost of living in Thailand</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
8. Do you think <b><u>travel cost to Thailand</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
9. Do you think <b><u>an availability of tourists' travel information</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
10. Do you think <b><u>a variety of shopping places</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
11. Do you think <b><u>a variety of leisure activities and entertainment</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
12. Do you think <b><u>safety and security</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree
13. Do you think <b><u>hygiene and cleanliness</u></b> is an important factor attracting you to Thailand?	1.strongly disagree	2. disagree	3. no opinion	4. agree	5. strongly agree

\*\*\* Thank you very much for your kind assistance \*\*\*