

ABSTRACT

The overall objective of this study was to investigate the difference in the perception of senior pleasure tourists about travel experience, travel behavior, and overall travel experience of visiting Thailand in terms of age, marital status, and education. In order to understand the difference of these variables, relevant theories and concepts were reviewed and synthesized to form the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

In this study, the researcher used the sample survey method as the methodology and 384 sets of questionnaires were distributed at the Bangkok International airport, the Grand Palace, Wat Phu, and to tour operators. The target population in this study was senior foreign tourists who were traveling to Bangkok. The researcher used non-probability judgment sampling as the sampling technique. Kruskal-Wallis and Chi-Square test are employed to access the perception of senior pleasure tourists about travel experience, travel behavior and overall travel experience in terms of age, marital status, and education.

From the study, it can be concluded that most of the respondents came to Thailand because of information they received through the internet and from advice of travel professionals. They like to travel with people of the same age, and they stayed in Thailand for almost 4-5 days. They preferred to stay in a hotel. Most of them liked to travel on a package tour and a coach as the preferred mode of transportation. They preferred walking as an outdoor activity. They came to travel in Thailand for a change in their normal routine, and to experience a new culture as the greatest benefit derived from their travel.

Their travel experience indicated that they did not consider their health as a problem for travel, even though their health prevented them from participating in certain activities. Most of the respondents were concerned about personal safety at their destinations. Language difference was a serious problem while traveling in Thailand but the tour guide and the local people helped them overcome their problem barriers. Lists of itineraries were easy to follow but they needed more time to get ready to leave and they needed more time at each destination. They were uncomfortable on long rides traveling on a coach and there were not enough footrests. The majority of them were comfortable with Thailand's political and economic condition and most enjoyed their traveling in Thailand.

Recommendations based on these findings suggest strategic implications for travel companies and travel organizers.

