

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.

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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%)
Gender	Male	232	58.0%
	Female	168	42.0%
Age	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%
Marital status	Single	216	54.0%
	Married	152	38.0%
	Divorced/Separated/Widowed	32	8.0%
Education	High school or lower	72	18.0%
	Bachelor degree	236	59.0%
	Master degree or higher	92	23.0%
Occupation	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%
Monthly Income	US\$ 1,000 or lower	48	12.0%
	US\$ 1,001 – 2,500	104	29.0%
	US\$ 2,501 – 3,500	132	33.0%
	US\$ 3,501 – or higher	116	26.0%
Regional base	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 (χ^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	(χ^2)	Sig.
Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)			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%		
Trip arrangement to Thailand			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%		
Number of visits to Thailand			27.92	0.00*
1 times	21.3%	58.3%		
2-3 times	43.8%	25.9%		
4 times	34.8%	15.7%		
Length of stay in Thailand			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%		

Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand			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%		
Person accompanying the trip to Thailand			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%		
Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok			1.19	0.87
North (e.g. Chiang Mai)	33.7%	34.3%		
Northeast (e.g. Nakornratchasima, Khon Kaen)	1.2%	2.9%		
Central (e.g. Ayuthaya, Kanchanaburi)	12.0%	8.6%		
East (e.g. Pattaya)	15.7%	15.2%		
South (e.g. Phuket, Samui)	37.3%	39.0%		
Preferred leisure activities			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%		
Average daily expense for accommodation			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%		
Preferred accommodation			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%		
Average daily expense for food and beverage			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%		

Average daily expense for shopping			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%		
Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand			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%		
What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand			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%		
Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years			10.17	0.45
Yes	84.3%	74.2%		
No	2.2%	3.7%		
Not sure	13.5%	22.1%		
Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand			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
Factor 1: Novelty seeking ($\alpha = 0.82$)		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			
Factor 2: Escape ($\alpha = 0.79$)		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			
Factor 3: Socialization ($\alpha = 0.69$)		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
Factor 1: Novelty seeking ($\alpha = 0.83$)		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			
Factor 2: Escape and relaxation ($\alpha = 0.79$)		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			
Factor 3: Socialization ($\alpha = 0.76$)		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
Factor 1: A variety of tourist attractions & activities (<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			
Factor 2: Travel costs (<i>alpha</i> = 0.80)		2.30	10.88%	3.58
Low cost of living	0.78			
Travel costs to Thailand	0.75			
Factor 3: Safety and cleanliness (<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
Factor 1: A variety of tourist attractions & activities ($\alpha = 0.82$)		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			
Factor 2: Cultural and historical attractions ($\alpha = 0.87$)		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

Factor dimensions	Asian respondents	European respondents
Push factors	1) Novelty seeking 2) Escape 3) Socialization	1) Novelty seeking 2) Escape & relaxation
Pull factors	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 (χ^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)	(χ^2)	Sig.
Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)				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%		
Trip arrangement to Thailand				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%		
Number of visits to Thailand				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%		
Length of stay in Thailand				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%		
Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand				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%		

Person accompanying the trip to Thailand				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%		
Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok				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%		
Preferred leisure activities				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%		
Average daily expense for accommodation				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%		
Preferred accommodation				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%		
Average daily expense for food and beverage				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%		
Average daily expense for shopping				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%		

Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand				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%		
What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand				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%		
Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years				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%		
Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand				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)	(χ^2)	Sig.
Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)			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%		
Trip arrangement to Thailand			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%		
Number of visits to Thailand			4.49	0.17
1 times	24.6%	22.9%		
2-3 times	44.7%	52.0 %		
4 times	30.7%	25.8%		
Length of stay in Thailand			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 ore more	28.3%	25.8%		
Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand			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%		
Person accompanying the trip to Thailand			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 (patents and children)	21.7%	20.5%		
Parents	2.8%	3.3%		
Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok			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%		

Preferred leisure activities			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%		
Average daily expense for accommodation			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%		
Preferred accommodation			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%		
Average daily expense for food and beverage			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%		
Average daily expense for shopping			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%		
Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand			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%		
What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand			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%		

Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years			3.89	0.14
Yes	77.4%	93.5%		
No	3.8 %	0.0%		
Not sure	18.9%	6.5%		
Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand			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%		

*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 (χ^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)	(χ^2)	Sig.
Number of overseas travel (within 1 year)			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%		
Trip arrangement to Thailand			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%		
Number of visits to Thailand			1.30	0.52
1 times	54.4%	62.7%		
2-3 times	26.3%	25.5 %		
4 times	19.3%	11.8%		
Length of stay in Thailand			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 ore more	47.6%	40.8%		
Person influencing travel decisions to Thailand			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%		
Person accompanying the trip to Thailand			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 (patents and children)	4.5%	10.9%		
Parents	2.5%	3.1%		
Preferred destination/region, except Bangkok			1.14	0.56
North (e.g. Chiang Mai)	35.2%	37.0%		
Northeast (e.g. Nakornratchasima, Khon Kaen)	3.5%	3.8%		
Central (e.g. Ayuthaya, Kancanaburi)	4.5%	5.3%		
East (e.g. Pattaya)	15.7%	17.2%		
South (e.g. Phuket, Samui)	41.1%	36.7%		

Preferred leisure activities			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%		
Average daily expense for accommodation			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%		
Preferred accommodation			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%		
Average daily expense for food and beverage			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%		
Average daily expense for shopping			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%		
Source of travel information motivating to visit Thailand			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%		
What would be recommended to family or friends about Thailand			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%		

Chance to revisit Thailand in next 1-5 years			0.88	0.95
Yes	65.5%	62.7%		
No	3.4%	3.9%		
Not sure	31.0%	33.3%		
Factors motivating repeat visit to Thailand			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%		

*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		<u>Gender</u>		T-value	p-value
		Male (107)	Female (n=73)		
<i>Push factor</i>					
(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
<i>Pull Factor</i>					
(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 <0.05

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

From table 4.13, 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)		
<i>Push factor</i>						
(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
<i>Pull Factor</i>						
(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 <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 > 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)		
<i>Push factor</i>				
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
<i>Pull Factor</i>				
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)		
Push factor						
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
Pull Factor						
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.