

Factors Influencing Thai Tourists' Travel Decisions to Japan: A Study on Marketing Strategies and Service Quality

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Abstract

This study examines the factors influencing Thai tourists' decisions to visit Japan, focusing on the distinct roles of "Marketing Quality" and "Service Quality" within the research framework. Using survey data from 400 respondents and regression analysis, the findings highlight the significant impact of digital marketing on travel intentions ($\beta = 0.42$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.55$). Marketing Quality is conceptualized as a strategic pre-travel factor, encompassing digital engagement and cultural campaigns, while Service Quality emphasizes operational aspects such as responsiveness and cleanliness. The revised framework also incorporates "Unique Attractions" including cultural heritage and modern innovations, as critical pull factors shaping tourist satisfaction and travel intention. These insights underscore the importance of tailored marketing strategies, superior service standards, and the promotion of unique attractions to enhance satisfaction and strengthen Japan's appeal to Thai travelers in a competitive global tourism market.

Keywords: Japan tourism, Marketing strategies, Service quality, Thai tourists, Travel intentions

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive global tourism landscape, understanding the factors that influence tourists' destination choices is essential for creating effective marketing strategies and improving service quality. Tourism serves as a critical driver of economic growth for many countries, making it vital to identify and address the preferences of specific traveler segments. Thailand, as a major source of outbound tourists in Southeast Asia, represents a significant market for destinations like Japan. According to the Japan National Tourism Organization (2024), approximately 1.32 million Thai tourists visited Japan in 2019, reflecting a steady growth trend over the past decade. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020–2021 led to a significant decline in international travel, with outbound tourism from Thailand to Japan temporarily halted due to travel restrictions. As travel gradually resumed in late 2022, tourism began to recover. Japan National Tourism Organization (2024) reported that in 2023, the number of Thai visitors to Japan reached 497,100. Projections for 2024 indicate a strong rebound, driven by pent-up demand and strategic marketing campaigns that emphasize Japan's unique cultural and technological attractions. This recovery highlights the enduring appeal of Japan as a preferred destination for Thai travelers and underscores the importance of understanding shifting travel preferences in the post-pandemic era.

Thai tourists exhibit distinct preferences when selecting travel destinations, rooted in their cultural values, lifestyle, and travel motivations. These preferences align closely with Japan's unique offerings, establishing it as a favored destination for Thai travelers. A key factor in Japan's appeal is its ability to seamlessly blend traditional cultural heritage with modern technological advancements, catering to Thai tourists' dual motivations for cultural exploration and urban sophistication. Heritage sites such as Kyoto's temples

and shrines, traditional festivals, and culinary experiences resonate strongly with Thai travelers' desire for authentic and immersive cultural experiences, which are often regarded as prestigious and enriching. Japan's unique combination of cultural heritage, advanced technology, and breathtaking natural landscapes appeals to Thai tourists seeking a holistic travel experience. This blend of attractions—ranging from historic temples and seasonal festivals to efficient public transportation and cutting-edge entertainment—enhances Japan's status as a top destination. Despite its popularity, limited research has focused on how specific factors, such as targeted marketing strategies and service quality, directly influence Thai tourists' travel decisions. Existing studies on outbound tourism tend to broadly explore cultural motivations or seasonal trends, often overlooking the specific impacts of marketing initiatives and service quality enhancements on Thai tourists. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the relationship between these factors and Thai tourists' decision-making processes when choosing Japan as a destination.

Despite its popularity, limited research has directly explored how specific factors such as marketing quality, service quality, and unique attractions influence Thai tourists' travel decisions. Existing studies often focus broadly on cultural motivations or seasonal trends, overlooking the strategic impacts of targeted marketing initiatives and service quality improvements. This study addresses these gaps by distinguishing marketing quality as a strategic pre-travel influence, emphasizing digital engagement and cultural campaigns, and service quality as an operational factor focusing on responsiveness and cleanliness. Additionally, the research incorporates unique attractions as a pull factor, reflecting the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and Push-Pull Theory (Dann, 1977; Lam & Hsu, 2006). These theoretical frameworks provide a robust foundation for examining

how internal motivations (push factors) and external attributes (pull factors) shape Thai tourists' preferences.

Understanding the factors influencing Thai tourists' decisions to visit Japan is crucial in today's competitive tourism landscape. While marketing quality and service quality are pivotal, their distinct roles remain unclear in existing research. This study addresses these gaps by redefining marketing quality as a strategic pre-travel factor, focusing on digital engagement and cultural campaigns, and service quality as an operational factor, emphasizing responsiveness and cleanliness. Additionally, unique attractions, including cultural heritage and modern innovations, are incorporated as pull factors to provide a more comprehensive framework. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior and Push-Pull Theory, this study explores how internal motivations (push factors) and external attributes (pull factors) shape satisfaction and travel intention. The refined framework aims to provide actionable insights for tourism professionals to enhance marketing strategies and service standards, ensuring Japan's continued appeal to Thai tourists in the global market.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the factors that influence tourists' destination choices is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies and delivering high-quality services. This section examines key theoretical frameworks related to travel decision-making, including the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Push-Pull Theory, and Satisfaction Theory. Additionally, it reviews existing research on the effects of marketing strategies and service quality on travel decisions, providing a foundation for the present study.

A. *Theory of Planned Behavior*

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), introduced by Ajzen (1991), explains how behavior is influenced by intention, which is shaped by attitudes, subjective

norms, and perceived behavioral control. While TPB has been applied widely across tourism research, its relevance in cross-cultural contexts, such as Thai-Japan tourism, necessitates adaptation. For instance, perceived ease of travel, including streamlined visa processes and transportation infrastructure, plays a more critical role for Thai tourists visiting Japan compared to other markets. Additionally, the cultural affinity between Thailand and Japan, stemming from shared values and a long history of cultural exchange, further shapes subjective norms and attitudes. Several recent studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of TPB in explaining travel intentions. A study by Chen and Tung (2019) highlights that positive destination branding and social influences significantly enhance travel intentions in Asian contexts. For Thai tourists, targeted digital marketing campaigns, coupled with positive online reviews of service quality, can create favorable attitudes toward Japan, thereby strengthening travel intentions.

B. *Push-Pull Theory*

The Push-Pull Theory (Dann, 1977; Lam & Hsu, 2006) categorizes travel motivations into internal (push) and external (pull) factors. Push factors, such as a desire for adventure or relaxation, drive tourists to seek new experiences, while pull factors, such as a destination's unique attractions, draw them to a specific location. Push factors often include psychological drives like the need for relaxation, adventure, or cultural discovery. On the other hand, pull factors are the unique features of a destination that draw tourists. In the Thai-Japan tourism context, pull factors like Japan's rich cultural heritage, advanced technology, and high safety standards have a particularly strong influence. However, the traditional Push-Pull framework lacks specificity regarding how modern marketing channels like social media and travel blogs amplify these factors. Recent studies,

such as Setiawan and Azizah (2024), provide robust evidence that social media—especially Instagram and TikTok—shapes destination image and travel motivation among Gen Z and Millennial tourists. It found a strong correlation between visual engagement on digital platforms and tourists' desire to visit specific destinations, underscoring how pull factors are made more visible and influential through social content.

C. Satisfaction Theory

Satisfaction Theory suggests that positive travel experiences lead to repeat visitation and word-of-mouth promotion (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). For Thai tourists, satisfaction with service quality—such as cleanliness, responsiveness, and convenience—plays a pivotal role in determining loyalty to Japan as a destination. While prior studies have established the connection between satisfaction and repeat visitation, recent research (Seow, Foroughi, & Choong, 2024) underscores how service quality—augmented by digital interactions such as e-word-of-mouth and online feedback—plays a crucial role in shaping satisfaction and loyalty.

Marketing quality and service quality are essential constructs in understanding the factors influencing tourist behavior. Marketing quality encompasses strategic pre-travel efforts aimed at shaping tourist perceptions, leveraging frameworks such as SERVQUAL and digital marketing theories. Key dimensions include digital engagement through social media and influencer campaigns, experiential marketing that promotes immersive cultural experiences, and value communication focusing on cost-related appeals via digital and print media. In contrast, Service quality emphasizes the on-ground experience during a tourist's visit, including operational standards such as cleanliness, responsiveness, and ease of transportation. It also incorporates customer service excellence, emphasizing hospitality and access

to reliable information, and technology integration, with tools like mobile apps enhancing convenience and seamless trip management. Additionally, Unique Attractions serve as critical pull factors, encompassing Japan's cultural heritage, natural scenery, and modern innovations, such as historical landmarks (e.g., Kyoto temples), seasonal events (e.g., cherry blossoms), and urban sophistication (e.g., advanced transportation systems). The integration of these dimensions aligns with theoretical frameworks such as Push-Pull Theory, which highlights the interplay of internal motivations (push) and external destination-specific factors (pull), and the Theory of Planned Behavior, which explains how these elements shape tourist intentions through attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. By synthesizing these perspectives, this study provides a clearer understanding of how marketing strategies, service quality, and unique attractions collectively influence satisfaction and travel intention.

D. Marketing and Service Quality Impact on Travel Decisions

In the digital age, marketing strategies are central to shaping tourists' perceptions. Social media platforms and travel blogs are especially influential, enabling destinations like Japan to showcase their attractions directly to Thai tourists. A recent study by Yuan, Surachartkumtonkun, and Shao (2024) examines how playful TikTok content enhances mental imagery, which positively influences users' attitudes toward destinations and their intent to share content. The findings emphasize the persuasive role of TikTok videos in shaping destination appeal—especially relevant to younger travelers in Asia. The SERVQUAL model by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) identifies five dimensions of service quality—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—which are particularly relevant to Japan's tourism sector. For

instance, Japan's high levels of cleanliness and safety, paired with reliable transportation and empathetic customer service, contribute significantly to its appeal among Thai tourists.

The Theory of Planned Behavior, Push-Pull Theory, and Satisfaction Theory provide robust frameworks for analyzing travel decision-making. By integrating these frameworks with recent findings on digital marketing and service quality, this study explores how targeted strategies and high-quality services influence Thai tourists' travel decisions.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to explore how marketing strategies and service quality influence Thai tourists' travel decisions regarding Japan. Based on the theories outlined, the following hypotheses have been developed:

A. Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this hypothesis asserts that specific dimensions of marketing strategies, such as social media advertising, influencer endorsements, and interactive travel blogs, significantly influence Thai tourists' intentions to visit Japan. These strategies are expected to enhance favorable attitudes, strengthen subjective

norms (e.g., recommendations by peers), and improve perceived behavioral control (e.g., ease of access to travel information), resulting in higher travel intentions.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Grounded in the Push-Pull Theory, this hypothesis posits that the key dimensions of service quality, including responsiveness, cleanliness, reliability, and cultural appeal, act as pull factors that significantly influence Thai tourists' satisfaction with Japan as a destination. These factors are expected to not only enhance satisfaction but also foster loyalty, leading to repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

B. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach to examine the factors influencing Thai tourists' satisfaction and travel intentions toward Japan. The research framework, as illustrated in Figure 1, integrates three core dimensions: Marketing quality, service quality, and operational quality, which collectively influence the outcome variable—Thai tourists' satisfaction and travel intentions. To address these objectives, a structured questionnaire was developed as the primary data collection instrument.

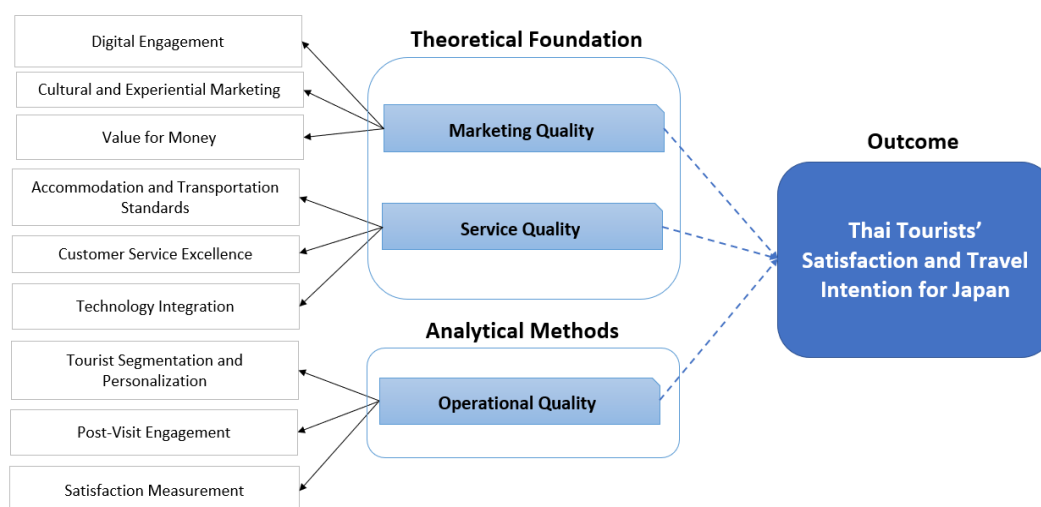


Figure 1: Tourist behavior analysis framework

The questionnaire consisted of four main sections. The first section captured demographic data such as age, gender, income, and travel history. The second section focused on marketing quality, measuring exposure to digital campaigns, social media advertising, influencer engagement, and travel blogs. The third section addressed service quality, including dimensions such as cleanliness, responsiveness, transportation standards, and customer service excellence. The final section explored operational quality, assessing post-visit engagement and satisfaction levels. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

To ensure validity and reliability, a pre-test was conducted with 30 respondents, whose feedback was used to refine the questionnaire for clarity and relevance. Construct and content validity were established by mapping questionnaire items to well-known theoretical frameworks such as TPB and SERVQUAL, and by consulting three academic experts specializing in tourism research. Reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha testing (Cronbach, 1951), with values for Marketing Quality ($\alpha = 0.89$), Service Quality ($\alpha = 0.91$), and Operational Quality ($\alpha = 0.87$), all exceeding the 0.70 threshold, indicating strong internal consistency.

The theoretical framework in Figure 1 establishes clear connections between sub-factors under marketing quality and service quality, demonstrating their contributions to Thai tourists' satisfaction and travel intentions toward Japan. Marketing quality comprises elements such as digital engagement, which includes social media advertising, enabling visually appealing content and testimonials to foster positive attitudes and subjective norms. Similarly, online travel blogs and vlogs, falling under cultural and experiential marketing, offer detailed travel recommendations, enhancing tourists perceived behavioral control and confidence in planning trips. In contrast, traditional

channels like print media serve as supplementary tools within the value-for-money context but have relatively lower engagement due to their limited interactivity compared to digital platforms. Service quality, on the other hand, integrates essential aspects such as accommodation and transportation standards, which improve ease of travel and perceived convenience, influencing travel intentions and satisfaction. Sub-factors like customer service excellence—emphasizing responsiveness and cleanliness—are critical for shaping tourists' loyalty by ensuring high levels of satisfaction. Additionally, technology integration, including the availability of travel assistance through apps or digital tools, reduces uncertainty and enriches the overall travel experience, especially for first-time visitors. These interconnected sub-factors, as depicted in Figure 1, collectively drive the outcome of enhanced satisfaction and increased travel intentions, emphasizing the importance of an integrated approach in tourism strategies.

The study adopted purposive sampling to target Thai tourists who had either visited Japan or expressed an intention to visit. Respondents were recruited through social media platforms and travel forums, yielding a total of 400 valid responses. While non-probability sampling limits generalizability, efforts were made to minimize sampling bias by targeting participants across diverse demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The robust sample size met the requirements for regression analysis and hypothesis testing. Data analysis followed a systematic approach. Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) was performed using Python to clean and visualize the data, identify missing values, and detect outliers. Statistical techniques, including correlation and multiple regression analyses, were employed to examine the relationships between independent variables (e.g., digital engagement, service quality dimensions) and dependent variables (travel intention

and satisfaction). Robustness checks were performed to validate the reliability of the regression results. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis was used to confirm the absence of multicollinearity issues, with all VIF values falling below the acceptable threshold of 2, indicating that the independent variables were not excessively correlated (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Additionally, the Breusch-Pagan test was conducted to verify homoscedasticity, ensuring that the residuals of the regression models were evenly distributed, which enhances the reliability of the findings (Breusch & Pagan, 1979). These tests support the robustness of the models, ensuring that the results accurately reflect the relationships between the variables analyzed.

This methodological approach ensures a rigorous and comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing Thai tourists' travel decisions. The findings are expected to provide actionable insights for refining digital marketing strategies, enhancing service quality standards, and implementing effective post-visit engagement programs to attract and retain Thai tourists in Japan. By aligning the analysis with the research framework, the study contributes to advancing both theoretical understanding and practical applications in the field of tourism management.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis results, followed by a discussion on how these findings relate to established theories and their impact on marketing strategies and service quality in tourism. The survey responses from Thai tourists visiting Japan reveal important demographic trends and the effects of marketing and service quality on travel choices. These insights are valuable for tourism stakeholders in Japan who aim to attract and retain Thai visitors.

A. Demographic Profile and Travel Behaviors

Table 1 : Demographic characteristics of respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	220	55.0
	Female	180	45.0
Age Group	18-25 years	80	20.0
	26-35 years	140	35.0
	36-45 years	110	27.5
	46-55 years	50	12.5
	56 years and above	20	5.0
Income Level (THB)	Below 30,000	90	22.5
	30,001-50,000	160	40.0
	50,001-70,000	100	25.0
	Above 70,000	50	12.5
Education Level	High School or below	60	15.0
	Bachelor's Degree	220	55.0
	Master's Degree	100	25.0
	Doctorate or above	20	5.0

A comprehensive understanding of the demographic characteristics of respondents is fundamental for interpreting the travel behaviours of Thai tourists visiting Japan. This section presents a detailed demographic breakdown based on variables such as gender, age, income, and education level, as summarized in Table 1. These demographic attributes are pivotal for identifying patterns and trends that can inform effective marketing strategies and enhance service provision tailored to the needs of specific tourist groups.

The analysis reveals that the majority of respondents are young, middle-income, and possess higher education qualifications. Specifically, 55% of respondents are male, and the most represented age group is between 26-35 years (35%). Additionally, 55% of respondents

hold a Bachelor's degree, while 40% report monthly incomes ranging between 30,001-50,000 THB. These data indicate that the typical Thai tourist visiting Japan is likely a young professional with disposable income. Such insights are critical for developing targeted marketing campaigns that emphasize cultural and experiential attractions tailored to this demographic profile, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 3 delves into the travel behaviours of Thai tourists, providing critical insights into their preferences and habits. The findings reveal that 60% are first-time visitors, underscoring an opportunity for tourism authorities and service providers to implement strategies aimed at converting them into repeat tourists. Additionally, 50% of respondents prefer stays lasting 5–7 days, indicating a preference for week-long vacations, while

30% opt for longer stays of 8–10 days. When it comes to travel companions, 45% of tourists travel with family and 35% with friends, suggesting that group and family-friendly travel packages would align well with these preferences. As for accommodation preferences, 70% of respondents favour hotels, followed by guesthouses (20%) and homestays (10%). This suggests that enhancing the quality and diversity of accommodation options could increase satisfaction levels and encourage repeat visits to Japan.

The demographic and travel behavior analysis provide valuable insights into the preferences and tendencies of Thai tourists. These findings are essential for tourism marketing professionals and service providers looking to craft tailored strategies that align with the characteristics and behaviors of this demographic group.

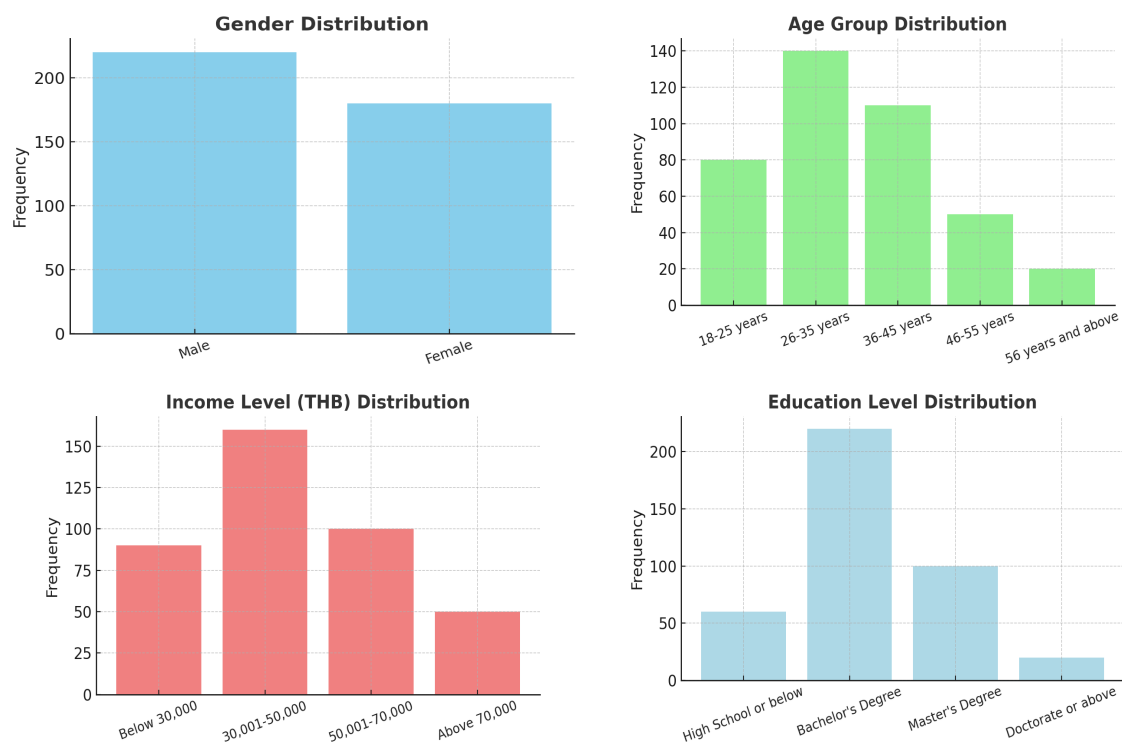


Figure 2: Demographic profile of respondents

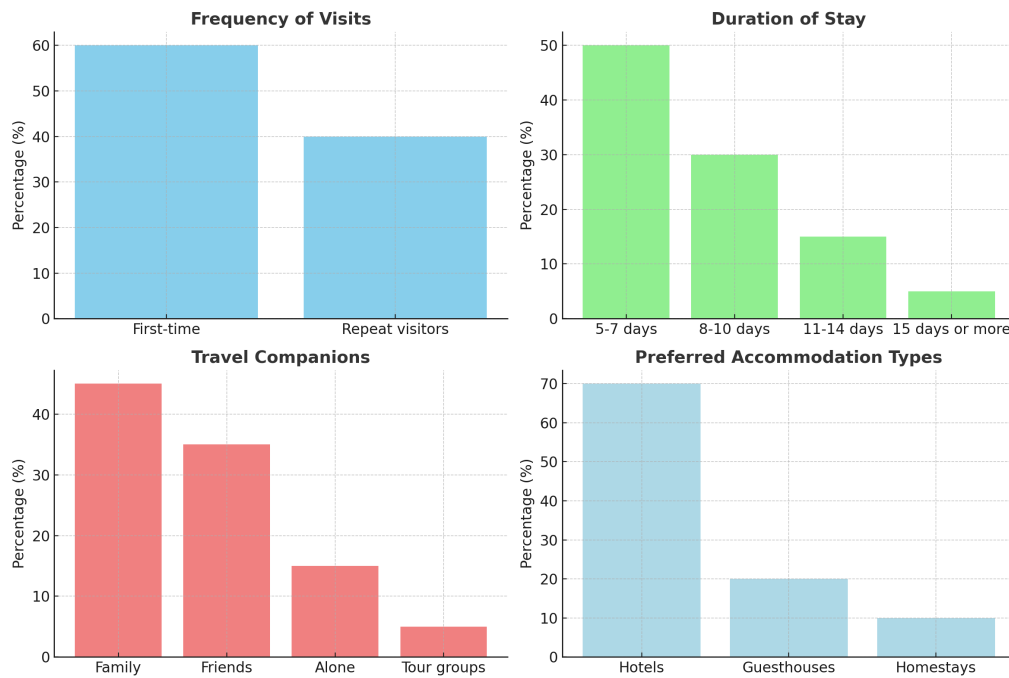


Figure 3: Travel behaviors of Thai's tourists to Japan

B. Impact of Marketing Strategies on Travel Intentions (H1)

Understanding the influence of marketing strategies on travel intentions is crucial for tourism stakeholders. Effective marketing campaigns can significantly shape tourists' decisions, especially when they align with the cultural values and travel expectations of the target audience. For Thai tourists considering Japan as a travel destination, strategies that resonate with their preferences are likely to enhance their travel intentions. Table 2 summarizes Thai tourists' exposure to various marketing channels, highlighting the most effective means of reaching this audience.

The highest exposure rates were found for social media advertising and online travel blogs/vlogs, underlining the growing importance of digital marketing channels in shaping travel intentions. Table 3 shows the correlation analysis results, revealing the relationship between exposure to these marketing channels and Thai tourists' intentions to visit Japan. The correlation coefficients and p-values demonstrate the strength and significance of each marketing channel in influencing travel decisions.

Table 2: Exposure to marketing channels

Marketing Channel	High Exposure (%)	Moderate Exposure (%)	Low Exposure (%)
Social Media Advertising	65.0	25.0	10.0
Television Commercials	40.0	35.0	25.0
Travel Fairs and Exhibitions	30.0	40.0	30.0
Online Travel Blogs/Vlogs	55.0	30.0	15.0
Print Media (Magazines, etc.)	20.0	30.0	50.0

Table 3: Correlation between marketing exposure and travel intentions

Marketing Channel	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value
Social Media Advertising	0.65	< 0.001
Television Commercials	0.45	< 0.001
Travel Fairs and Exhibitions	0.38	< 0.001
Online Travel Blogs/Vlogs	0.58	< 0.001
Print Media (Magazines, etc.)	0.20	< 0.001

A significant positive correlation was observed between exposure to marketing channels and travel intentions. Social media advertising had the strongest correlation ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.001$), followed by online travel blogs/vlogs ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). These findings emphasize the effectiveness of digital marketing in influencing Thai tourists' decisions to visit Japan. Table 4 outlines the results of the multiple regression analysis, assessing the impact of these marketing channels on travel intentions.

The findings of this study extend beyond statistical significance to provide practical insights into how specific marketing and service quality factors shape Thai tourists' decisions to visit Japan. Digital engagement, with a significant impact on travel intention ($\beta = 0.42$), plays a critical role in shaping tourist behaviour, while cultural campaigns further enhance the perceived appeal of the destination. Social media campaigns that emphasize Japan's unique cultural experiences, such as traditional festivals or cherry blossom season, can significantly enhance destination appeal. Similarly, the strong impact of service quality dimensions, such as responsiveness ($\beta = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$), highlights the importance of staff training and maintaining hygiene standards to create a satisfying travel experience. Figure 4 graphically presents the standardized coefficients, illustrating the relative influence of each marketing channel.

Table 4: Multiple regression analysis of marketing channels on travel intentions

Predictor Variable	Standardized Coefficient(β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Social Media Advertising	0.42	0.05	8.40	< 0.001
Online Travel Blogs/Vlogs	0.30	0.04	7.50	< 0.001
Television Commercials	0.18	0.05	3.60	< 0.001
Travel Fairs and Exhibitions	0.15	0.04	3.75	< 0.001
Print Media	0.05	0.03	1.67	0.096
R-squared	0.56	-	-	-
Adjusted R-squared	0.55	-	-	-

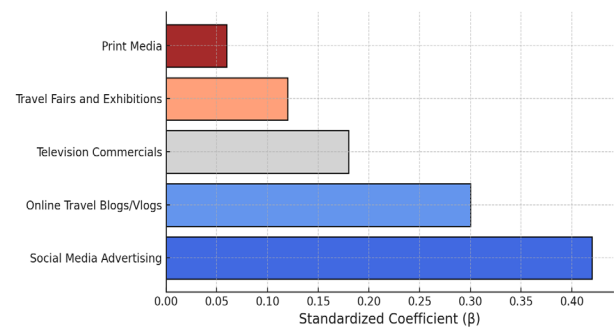


Figure 4: Standardized coefficients of marketing channels impacting travel intentions

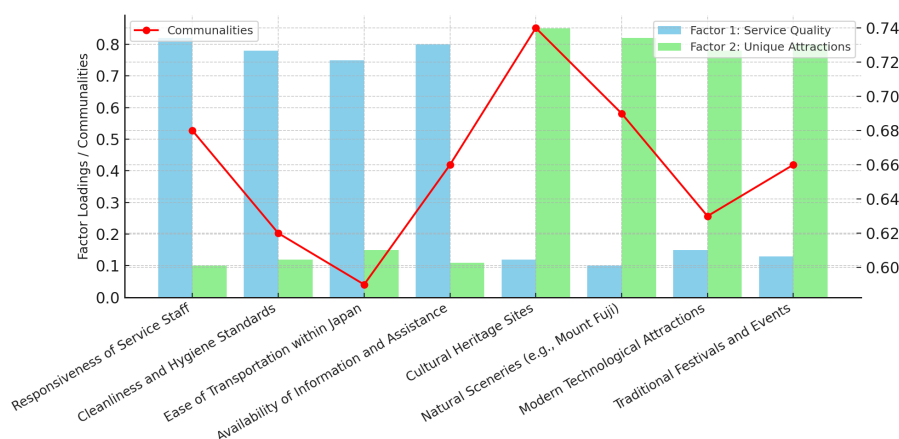


Figure 5: Factor analysis results for service quality and unique attractions

Table 5: Factor analysis results for service quality and attractions

Items	Factor 1: Service Quality	Factor 2: Unique Attractions	Communalities
Responsiveness of Service Staff	0.82	0.10	0.68
Cleanliness and Hygiene Standards	0.78	0.12	0.62
Ease of Transportation within Japan	0.75	0.15	0.59
Availability of Information and Assistance	0.80	0.11	0.66
Cultural Heritage Sites	0.12	0.85	0.74
Natural Sceneries (e.g., Mount Fuji)	0.10	0.82	0.69
Modern Technological Attractions	0.15	0.78	0.63
Traditional Festivals and Events	0.13	0.80	0.66

C. Influence of Service Quality and Unique Attractions (H2)

This section assesses the influence of service quality and distinctive attractions on the travel decisions of Thai tourists visiting Japan. Factor analysis and regression analysis were employed to examine how these dimensions affect destination choice, providing insights for the development of targeted marketing strategies. The results of the factor analysis, presented in Table 5, highlight the key components of service quality and unique attractions that significantly shape the experiences of Thai tourists in Japan.

For Thai tourists, marketing and service quality factors are not isolated influences but work synergistically to affect travel behavior. Digital marketing strategies create awareness and interest, while service quality dimensions ensure satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat visitation. For

example, effective digital engagement can attract first-time visitors, while superior service experiences encourage them to return and recommend Japan to others. Figure 5 illustrates the factor loadings, emphasizing the items most strongly associated with each factor. This visualization offers valuable insights into the components that contribute to service quality and unique attractions, aiding in the optimization of travel experiences for Thai tourists. Such information is essential for tailoring strategies that enhance satisfaction and engagement.

Table 6 present the outcomes of the regression analysis, evaluating the impact of service quality and unique attractions on the destination choices of Thai tourists. These findings provide a comprehensive assessment of the factors influencing travel decisions, offering insights for refining tourism strategies.

Table 6: Regression analysis of service quality and unique attractions on destination choice

Predictor Variable	Standardized Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p- value
Service Quality	0.48	0.04	12.00	< 0.001
Unique Attractions	0.42	0.05	8.40	< 0.001
R-squared	0.62			
Adjusted R-squared	0.61			
F-statistic	320.50			< 0.001

The results of the regression model indicate that both service quality and unique attractions have a significant impact on destination choice. These findings underscore the importance of these factors in shaping Thai tourists' travel preferences and decision-making processes. Service quality has a standardized coefficient of $\beta = 0.48$ ($p < 0.001$), while unique attractions exhibit a coefficient of $\beta = 0.42$ ($p < 0.001$). Together, these factors explain 61% of the variance in destination

choice (Adjusted R-squared = 0.61), with an F-statistic of 320.50 ($p < 0.001$). These results confirm that high-quality services and distinct attractions positively motivate Thai tourists to choose Japan as their travel destination. This finding supports Hypothesis 2, emphasizing the importance of improving service standards and promoting Japan's unique cultural and natural attractions. Enhancements in service quality, such as maintaining responsiveness and cleanliness, combined with marketing efforts showcasing Japan's rich heritage and scenic beauty, are likely to enhance tourist satisfaction and foster repeat visits. To ensure the validity and reliability of the regression results, a series of robustness checks were conducted. First, multicollinearity was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), with all predictor variables (e.g., social media advertising, responsiveness) showing VIF values below 2, confirming that the independent variables were not excessively correlated. Second, heteroscedasticity was evaluated using the Breusch-Pagan test, which validated homoscedasticity, ensuring that the residuals of the regression model were evenly distributed and reliable. Lastly, the regression model demonstrated strong explanatory power, with marketing quality accounting for 55% of the variance in travel intentions (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.55$) and service quality, along with unique attractions, explaining 61% of the variance in destination choice (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.61$). Cultural and natural attractions show a strong correlation with travel intention ($\beta = 0.42$), and integrating these constructs accounts for 61% of the variance in satisfaction and travel intention ($R^2 = 0.61$), highlighting the robustness of the refined framework.

The findings have significant implications for the Japanese tourism sector, particularly in leveraging digital marketing strategies to attract Thai tourists. Figure 6 highlights the role of social media advertising as the strongest predictor of travel intentions,

emphasizing the importance of utilizing platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to showcase Japan's unique cultural and technological attractions. Japanese tourism authorities can collaborate with Thai influencers to promote iconic destinations, including cherry blossoms, traditional festivals, and advanced transportation systems, aligning with Thai travelers' preferences.

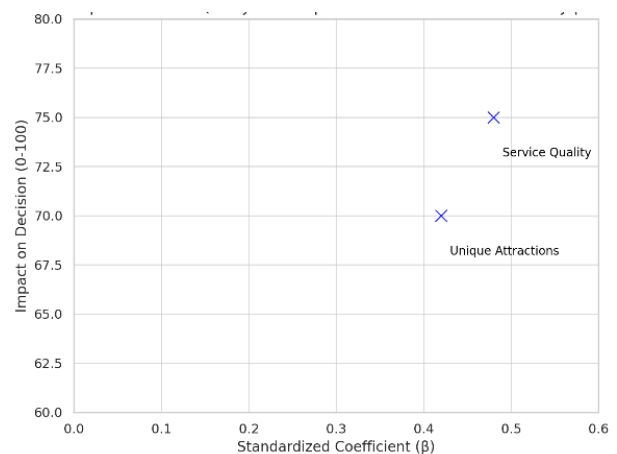


Figure 6: Impact of service quality and unique attractions on decision to visit Japan

Similarly, online travel blogs and vlogs provide an opportunity to deliver authentic and personalized content, fostering perceived behavioral control by guiding tourists through detailed travel planning. Service quality, as depicted in Figure 6, underscores the importance of responsiveness and cleanliness, necessitating high standards in accommodation, public spaces, and transportation. Ensuring access to reliable information and assistance, particularly for first-time visitors, enhances overall satisfaction and encourages repeat visitation.

Additionally, the integration of technology-driven solutions—such as mobile apps for real-time assistance and seamless booking systems—meets the growing demand for convenience among Thai tourists. These findings reinforce existing literature on marketing and service quality in tourism. The emphasis on service



quality aligns with research on the SERVQUAL model, which links responsiveness and reliability to tourist satisfaction. This study contributes valuable insights by contextualizing these findings within the Thai-Japan tourism framework, offering specific and actionable recommendations for improving Japan's tourism appeal to Thai travelers.

V. CONCLUSION

This study has provided a detailed analysis of the factors influencing Thai tourists' decisions to visit Japan, with a specific focus on marketing strategies and service quality. The findings reveal that social media advertising and online travel blogs/vlogs are the most impactful marketing channels, while responsiveness, cleanliness, and ease of transportation are critical dimensions of service quality that shape tourists' satisfaction and travel intentions. Distinctive cultural experiences and high service standards further contribute to positive perceptions of Japan as a travel destination, confirming the importance of these elements in influencing travel decisions. From a theoretical perspective, the results support the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by demonstrating how marketing strategies enhance attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, which together shape travel intentions. The findings also align with the Push-Pull Theory, highlighting how internal motivations (push factors, such as the desire for cultural exploration) and external attractions (pull factors, such as Japan's unique cultural heritage) influence destination choice. This study bridges gaps in the literature by applying these theories to the Thai-Japan tourism context and extends their applicability to a cross-cultural setting.

Based on the findings, the following practical recommendations are proposed to guide Japanese tourism stakeholders in attracting Thai tourists effectively. Social media advertising should be intensified by

utilizing platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to highlight Japan's unique cultural and technological attractions. Campaigns should feature visually rich content, including videos of cultural festivals, natural landscapes, and modern innovations, while collaborations with Thai influencers and travel bloggers can further enhance reach and engagement. To improve service quality, emphasis should be placed on maintaining high standards of cleanliness and responsiveness in accommodations and public spaces, supported by staff training programs focused on hospitality and cultural sensitivity to align with Thai tourists' expectations. Technology-driven solutions such as mobile apps offering real-time assistance, navigation tools, and seamless online booking systems should be developed to enhance convenience, particularly for first-time visitors. Additionally, customized travel packages combining visits to heritage sites, modern attractions, and family-friendly experiences can cater to diverse preferences, while loyalty programs and post-visit engagement through personalized content and repeat-visit discounts can foster long-term relationships. Lastly, incorporating sustainable tourism practices, such as eco-friendly accommodations and promoting off-season travel, can improve Japan's image as a responsible destination, resonating with environmentally conscious travelers. These targeted strategies, rooted in the study's findings, provide actionable insights for tourism managers and policymakers to enhance marketing efforts, improve service delivery, and sustain Japan's competitiveness in the global tourism market.

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