

**A STUDY OF THAI TOURISM TO JAPAN: COMPARING THE
PREFERRED TRAVEL MODE OF GEN Y AND BABY BOOMERS**



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PREFERRED TRAVEL MODE OF GEN Y AND BABY BOOMERS**

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ABSTRACT

In the past, Thai Baby Boomers tend to travel to Japan by Group Package. On the other hand, but now Thai Gen Y preferred to travel to Japan by FIT method. After July 2013 Japanese Government allowed Thai people travel to Japan without using Japanese Visa which create sense of traveling by FIT among Thai people. The purpose of this study is to find which dimension(s) that affect towards the increasing in trend of FIT tourists to Japan compared between people in Gen Y and Baby Boomers. In-depth interview is conducted to gather qualitative information by interviewing 19 interviewees. The results show that technological change is the most influence factor for FIT traveler in Thailand. For Baby Boomers, they understand the change, but they still prefer group package because the risk from traveling which is the most concern. By the way, Gen Y can adapt with the change and think that new experience is the most important. For managers point of view travel agents need to adapt with the trend to survive in the market.

KEY WORDS: Baby Boomers Generation/ Generation Y/ Technology Improved/ Factors Influencing Method of Traveling

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Travelling is the words that can make people feel happy because it is a time that you can relax yourself from the real world, just like you escape from one place to another place that you can experience many new things not only in your country but you can explore the world.

1.1 Research Background

Everyone love to travel but not everyone will know all the countries or can get information about the beautiful place that they want to go, how to access, what kinds of local food they can taste, culture, people, so travel business happen by some sort of these problems.

About Thai people, they love to travel to all over the world, they just like all human that want to relax themselves from their work, normal life and to go to explore new things. From the past to present, Thai people tend to travel with group which organized by travel agency as Thai people used to have someone to take care and they feel comfortable and safety to travel with travel agent. Because travel agent will do everything started from create itinerary, booking hotels and restaurants, transportations for them by the customers just pay money only. Even during the trip, agent will provide snack, attraction information and entertain all the customers. The agents, who provide a good service and run the program smoothly, will be more popular and can attract more customers. There will be lots of new travel agents companies get into the market at that time because they can generate more profits from this business and it is a big market for them. Most of the people who travel along with group tour are the people in baby boomers because at that time technology is not good. There is no internet to communicate with other countries in the world and website is not popular for baby boomers people to search for the information, so when it is

difficult to get information about other countries, baby boomers people would love to use travel agencies for their travel because it's convenience and easy for them.

Beside that there is another type of travelling which is Free Independent Traveller or FIT, this type of travelers seems to love to travel by them. They can arrange their own itinerary, booking hotels that they want and etc. The benefits of FIT traveller are that they can adjust tour itinerary themselves because when you travel by group, you have to follow with the group and you cannot do like what you want to do but for FIT traveller, they can spend their time at each places as much as they want and they can choose restaurants, hotels that they want to use and they can manage budget by themselves. For the main FIT traveller is the people in generation Y because technology in this period is very highly improve due to the technology changed which affect human lifestyle easy to get the information from the internet and people from another part of the world can communicate with you real-time, so it makes travel is an easy thing for generation Y people. Referred to the technology improve and trend, it seems that there will be some more room in travel business along with the travelling by group. Even FIT market is very small because as for the travel behavior of Thai people that need someone to arrange everything and take care of them during the tour but the trend for FIT traveller is coming. In travel industry, there are some believe that in the next 5 – 10 years, FIT market will be the big market compared with the group travelling that tend to getting smaller and smaller.

July last year, there was a big changed for the travel business to Japan due to the Japanese Government allowed Thailand and some other countries travellers to travel to Japan without apply for Japanese Visa, so it was affected to the whole market because before that apply for Japanese Visa is a bit difficult then people tend to travel to Japan along with tour group but after no Visa, a lots of Thai people feel that it is easy to travel to Japan. The market that has a big changed is FIT market due to a lots of FIT travellers (Mostly in generation Y) want to visit Japan and with the improved of technology and huge promote from Japanese Government to attract more FIT travellers to visit Japan, surely that it will effect with the tour travelling by group and in the next few year, FIT market of Thai people travel to Japan tend to be bigger and bigger by the people in generation Y.

In this research, I picked up to study Japan instead of tourism in general, is that the issues are well-defined enough to have a clear reading of respondents' preferences with a small sample size. The alternative of studying tourism in general would bring the complication that people might prefer different modes of travel depending on the destination. This would require a larger sample size and a longer interview to cover the different preferences at length. Focusing on Japan allows for a narrow, well-defined set of issues to be studied, so that good results can be achieved within the sample size and timing limitations of this study.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to the technology changed worldwide that make an easily for new generation to access the information about the travel spots all over the world and also with the communication channel in many ways such as Skype, Line, even for the roaming package and etc. which make everything seem to be easy for everyone. Thailand also one of the countries that affects by the technology improvement and it makes travelling style of Thai people changed especially for the people in generation Y. It seems that group traveller is not a big market anymore, so I would like to conduct the research to investigate opinion of three parties which are people in baby boomers, generation Y and with the people in travel industry about this FIT trend towards the old trend (Group Package). The old trend means the travelling method that people in baby boomers generation familiar with it by travelling with travel agency in a big group and the tour leader and local guide will do everything for them, they just paid the money and will receive good service.

For this research is conducted with the dimensions as following:

- Is generation Y travelling by FIT method because of cost oriented? (Cost)
- As technology improved a lot compared with the past, generation Y feel that it is easy to travel by FIT method. (Technology)
- Generation Y tends to experience in deep detail of each place rather than travel to many place with limited time. (Experience)

- Service from travel agency is important for baby boomers generation but generation Y tends to do many things by themselves. (Service)
- Generation Y perception towards FIT is more freedom rather than travel with group package. (Flexibility)

In summary, the following are the research questions I will be investigating:

- The trend of FIT tourists to Japan in generation Y is increasing compared with Baby boomers generation?
- Which dimension that affect towards the trend?



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the key words which related to the topic are Baby Boomers, Generation Y, Tourists (Included FIT or Free Independent Traveller, Group Tourist), and Technological Improvement in the aspect of increasing in trend of FIT (Free Independent Traveller) tourist for Thai people (Generation Y) compared with Thai people (Baby Boomers) combined with factors influencing method of travelling between Group Tourists and Free Independent Traveller.

2.1 Baby Boomers Generation

This generation was born between 1946 and 1964 or during the Post-World War II period. They were raised in a strong economy with a chance for jobs and education. Characteristics of Baby Boomers are loyal and dedicated to work or “workaholics” (Sarah J. Young, Jill r. Sturts, Craig M. Ross and Kyoung T. Kim, *Managing Leisure*, 2013).

The term ‘baby boomer’ from aspect of other researcher in Australia is the person who born in the post-war period or describe a person born after the World War II. In this 20-year period of unusual birth rates from the result of high marriage and for the rate of return of soldiers from the war, it represents the largest demographic in developed countries (Elisabeth McLeod, *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society*, Vol 7, No. 1, 2009).

The characteristic of Baby boomers are focus on their family and material comfort. They are well-dressed, clean and neat. About the technology, when mobile phones introduced to the world around 1990, baby boomers were in the midst of careers and have so many burdens to do. They portrayed as being “overwhelmed” and “intimidated” by new technology. They are different from Gen X (born 1965-1981) and Gen Y (born 1982-2001) because they did not grow up with mobile and high

technology, so they have to adopt themselves with the technology during their adulthood. Baby boomers labeled themselves as “technology laggards” when compared with Gen X and Y (Elisabeth McLeod, *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society*, Vol 7, No. 1, 2009).

2.2 Generation Y

Generation Y was the person who born between 1981 and 2000. People in this generation have many channels to communicate with others such as face-to-face, mobile phone, e-mail. In this period, generation Y lives in the technology era, they have many social media networks which provide them to access information immediately. Generation Y also shared same vision towards work from Generation X in achieving a work-life balance (Sarah J. Young, Jill r. Sturts, Craig M. Ross and Kyoung T. Kim, *Managing Leisure*, 2013).

In some research said that generation Y is the first generation that uses e-mail, instant message and cell phones from the beginning of their life or you can say that they are tech savvy. They are familiar with technology and feel comfortable to adapt it in their life. The tools that they familiar included mobile phone, windows, Bluetooth, laptops, e-mail and text message or you can said that they are the generation of multimedia, multitasking generation. They are the generation which internet consumption higher than television consumption (Timothy H. Reisenwitz, Valdosta State University, Rajesh Iyer, Bradley University, *Differences in Generation X and Generation Y*).

Table 2.1 Generational Age Cohorts

Group	Age
Baby Boomers	46 – 64 years old
Generation X	30 – 45 years old
Generation Y	29 years old and below

(Sarah J. Young, Jill r. Sturts, Craig M. Ross and Kyoung T. Kim, *Managing Leisure*, 2013).

2.3 Tourists

Outbound travel can be divided into two types of travel pattern. The first one is the Group Package Tour (GPT) or Group Inclusive Tour (GIT), and the Free Independent Traveller (FIT) or the Independent Traveller (Mark A. Bonn, Howook “Sean” Chang, Jerome Agrusa, Leslie Furr, Woo Gon Kim and Hae Young Lee, *FIU Review* Vol.27 No.1).

2.3.1 Group Package Tour or All-Inclusive Package Tours

Group Package Tour (GPT) can be defined as an all-inclusive package tour with a specified minimum group size, so it can all as a group and this group is traveling based on the scheduled and air transportation. It combines with many elements for example, air and ground transportation, baggage size, accommodations, meals, attractions and other items which sold to consumer at a single price (Mark A. Bonn, Howook “Sean” Chang, Jerome Agrusa, Leslie Furr, Woo Gon Kim and Hae Young Lee, *FIU Review* Vol.27 No.1).

The definition of an all-inclusive package tour or group tour defined as a trip that well planned by travel agencies which paid in advance for all the service during the trip, covering transportation, accommodations, meals, sightseeing spots. For transportation, it included in many ways such as air (Included International Air Ticket, Domestic air Ticket), land (i.e. coaches, taxi, etc.) or may be cruise or boat. These package can help travellers increased convenience and value, and reduce risk that may occur from travel by themselves. It can create a sense of safety and security, social benefits of travelling by group is because travel agencies will provide an escorted throughout the trip in order to take care and manage and create smoothly trip.

Travellers can achieve their goal, because they can visit the largest number of attractions but on a restricted time schedule referred to the itinerary which they accept to pay their money from the beginning which can guarantee that the products and services listed in the tour brochure will be provided (Louisa Yee-Sum Lee, Henry Tsai, Nelson K.F. Tsang, Ada S.Y. Lo, Journal of China Tourism Research).

These kinds of travels is very popular within the group of senior citizen now which is the citizen in baby boomers generation because the primary reason that make them purchase the tour is convenience. The free independent travel is quite inconvenient and demanding for the people with the age like them. Free independent requires them to purchase ticket by themselves, travel for long distance with heavy baggage and so many things that you can imagine when you travel by yourself in the place that you are not familiar with. The reasons above indicate that joining all-inclusive package tour appears to be the better option for baby boomers generation (Louisa Yee-Sum Lee, Henry Tsai, Nelson K.F. Tsang, Ada S.Y. Lo, Journal of China Tourism Research).

From the perspective of baby boomers traveler's, joining all-inclusive package tour provides them with great benefits of safety and security and it is worry-free because everything is well prepared by travel agency. In addition, being unfamiliar with search engine technology and foreign languages, it is easy for them to leave those things with the travel agency to manage it. Lack of travel companions is another factor that they don't like. At this age, they prefer to join group tour for socialize and meet new friends (Louisa Yee-Sum Lee, Henry Tsai, Nelson K.F. Tsang, Ada S.Y. Lo, Journal of China Tourism Research).

2.3.2 Free Independent Traveler

As the technology nowadays, it is very easy to access with the general public information via the internet; this is a huge changed to the world travel market as it become easier to get more information to plan for leisure / pleasure travel for the Free Independent Traveller (FIT). With internet, FIT's can book airlines tickets, rental cars or reserve the hotel rooms direct from suppliers. They don't have to rely on travel agents as they did in the past.

The benefit for these kinds of travel is the represent a customized trip. They can gather the information from their friends, review from the website; communicate with specialty providers and other methods. Most of FIT's are defined as individuals over 35 years old with high income and love to travel on their own. They don't prefer to travel with big group, most of the time they travel like a couples or small group in order to customize their trip and to avoid packages offered by travel agencies. They tend to explore the world by their own travel experience, ideas, people, and knowledge and to share to others (Mark A. Bonn, Howook "Sean" Chang, Jerome Agrusa, Leslie Furr, Woo Gon Kim and Hae Young Lee, FIU Review Vol.27 No.1).

2.4 Technology Improved For Both Generations (Baby Boomers, Generation Y)

At present time, technology always keep changing since in the past until now and still changing every day. Nowadays, the World Wide Web acts in a role of modern life and affect to business, e-commerce, government, education, and life style of people. Everyone need to adapt themselves with the technology included both baby boomers and generation Y also had an affected from the technology changed.

With the continual growth of online market and e-commerce which need to compete in an "increasingly crowded market". Every company can get more benefits from this changed. If you look into baby boomers generation (Age 46 to 64) in USA, can be considered as 35% of internet population and they also considered as the largest generation in USA with the huge spending power over USD 2 trillion. To compare baby boomers generation with generation Y which consider age 19 to 33, this generation represent 30 % of internet population, it shows that generation Y is the large internet user in USA when compared with the population size between both generations.

Both generations are experienced major changed for technological advances as baby boomers grew up with television and generation Yers experienced internet. For the internet, it different from television because internet can provide 24/7, two-way communication with other across the world, face-responded, but television can't do it. With this technology that is not available to baby boomers during their

childhood and at the time of introduction to the internet, baby boomers generation is not a kid to be the fast learner, so it is quite difficult for them to learn this major breakthrough compared with generation Y (Soussan Djamasi, Marisa Siegel, Jeanine Skorinko, and Tom Tullis, *International Journal of Electronic Commerce / Summer 2011*, Vol. 15 No. 4 pp. 121-157).

2.5 Factors Influencing Method of Travelling

When people plan their travelling method, most of the time they are based on their personality and characteristics. Some researchers (Alvarez and Asugman, 2006) explained about factors which influencing method of travel as following; risk taking, attitude about new experience, planning process before the trip, variety seeking. They classified travelers into two categories which are “Spontaneous Explorers” and “Risk-Averse Planners”

2.5.1 Spontaneous Explorers

This type of travelers can be considered as FIT or free independent traveller. Because they are risk-taking and their behavior is highly involvement and want to explore new things. Spontaneous Explorers is the person who want to get involve with something in details and want to know deep inside, they do not fear with the risk because they can learn from it and with this point, they can see varieties of things such as attractions, food, people. (Mark A. Bonn, Howook “Sean” Chang, Jerome Agrusa, Leslie Furr, Woo Gon Kim and Hae Young Lee, *FIU Review Vol.27 No.1*).

2.5.2 Risk-Averse Planners

For risk-averse planner type, this group tends to travel via package tour. Some study shows that woman and elderly people would like to travel along with tour group (Li). Another research (Wickens, 2002), mentions that reasons for going with package tour can determine by “Security” and “Familiarity”. Because travelling with group package can create sense of “security” and “familiarity” by the leader of the group is tour escort and local guide, so woman and elderly people feel safe with these

people cause they are professional who travel a lot and know the way to solve when problems occur while woman and elder people are in the place that they are not familiar with. Tour escort and local guide can help them familiar with the place and feel safe when they have person to take care of them. (Mark A. Bonn, Howook “Sean” Chang, Jerome Agrusa, Leslie Furr, Woo Gon Kim and Hae Young Lee, FIU Review Vol.27 No.1).



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is conducted to collect information from people in baby boomers generation, generation Y, and travel agency in Thailand towards the increasing in trend of free independent traveller rather than group package to Japan. I will pick some perspectives to investigate an increasing in trend of free independent traveller as following: technology improvement, risk taking, cost oriented, flexibility, experience, and easy to go. For example; nowadays, technology can help you to connect with the world easily and easy to access to the information from internet, so it's very helpful for FIT travellers and most of FIT travellers are looking for the low cost air ticket and some budget hotels to stay in Japan. They do some reviews to explore the attractions, food, and people in order to create their own itinerary that suit with them. They have to take risk when travel to Japan because the barrier of language. They might feel that it is easy to go by themselves instead of waiting for the group package that might not operate because of lacking the customers. Plus with the campaign of Japanese Government which allow Thai people to go to Japan without using visa to attract FIT traveller. Consequently, those factors can boost more and more generation Y travel as FIT rather than group package as baby boomer generation in the past.

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

In this research, I will use qualitative research method to collect the data from target audience in order to understand their perspectives and factors; technology improvement, risk taking, cost oriented, flexibility, experience, and easy to go, towards their opinion to study that it can change the trend of travel method from group package in baby boomers generation into increasing in FIT traveller with generation Y.

About the data collection, consumer semi-structured and manager semi-structured interview will be used to collect data. About the consumer semi-structured will be divided into two groups; baby boomers generation (46 -64 years old) and generation Y (29 years old and below) with the sample size of 8 persons from each group in order to understand their opinions from the perspective of consumers between these two generations with the mode of travel between group package and free independent traveller. By this method, it will help us to explore opinions from consumers' side with the factors that affect the change of travel method by increasing in FIT traveller.

For the manager semi-structured, it will need 3 sample sizes from the manager who work in the tourism industry to listen to their opinion towards the change in trend of travel method and their opinion to prove that the increasing in FIT trend can impact the tourism industry by creating new market or the blue ocean in this business.

Referred to the interview, open-ended questions will be used for the researcher to understand the interviewee by using “wh” and “how” questions and we will love to let them feel free to put their opinions during the interview freely.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This thematic paper, “The increasing in trend of FIT tourists to Japan compared between people in generation Y and Baby Boomers. Which dimensions that affect towards the trend?” I conducted X in-depth consumer interviews and Y in-depth interviews with managers. These interviews helps to understand more about the criteria or point of view towards the differences in travelling methods even in the same generation and between Baby Boomers generation and Generation Y. Also it provided insight of the travelling trend.

4.1 Research Finding

4.1.1 Demographic Data

I divided interviewees into two groups which are consumer interviews that consist of two age groups, Baby Boomers generation and Generation Y and manager interviews. The total respondents are consisting of 8 baby boomers, 8 generation Y and 3 managers. First of all, I have to check their age to make sure that they are all match with my target which are Baby Boomers and Generation Y. Except manager side that their age are in generation X and Baby Boomers.

4.1.2 General Information

Every participant had been checking for the qualification to make sure that they used to travel abroad. For example, this research required the interviewees who had an experience in traveling to Japan. As the main purpose of this study is to study the trend change for FIT traveler compared with Group package in generation Y and Baby boomers and which factors that affects towards the trend.

4.2 Data Analysis

4.2.1 Baby boomers Generation Interviews

I interviewed eight interviewees to collect Baby boomers generation data. I divided interviewees into two males and six female. Their age is around 60 – 64 year old. They all love to travel but not all of them travelling by both Group package and FIT. I interviewed them under the topic “The increasing in trend of FIT tourists to Japan compared between people in generation Y and Baby Boomers. Which dimensions that affect towards the trends?” let see their answer.

- Baby Boomers Generation aspect
 - At their age, all of them had already retired from work and spend time at home, so they all have time and money to use after the retirement.
 - All of them choose to travel by Group package as at this age, they need more convenience during the trip and somebody to take care of them. They prefer to travel as a group that provide professional tour leader and arrange everything for them. Beside that they can make new friends from the group.
 - Only few of them used to travel by FIT method. But they have to travel with their kids who can take care of them. If they have to travel with their friends, they prefer Group package first.
- Travelling method to Japan
 - All of them will think of Group package first. As they just pay for the money and do not have to do anything and let travel agent arrange all for them.
 - At their age, security, convenience and comfortable is important for them. Group package can response to their need as Group package provide tour leader and guide to travel along with the group and arrange accommodations, restaurants, coach to service their customers.
 - Some of them used to travel by both method but they are not familiar with FIT method as they said that they can travel by FIT but they need to have their children travel together and their children need to arrange everything for them.

- Differentiation between Group package and FIT to Japan

Group Package

- They think that they can travel with lower budget if they travel by Group package rather than FIT method.
- Travel agents will arrange everything for their customers such as airline ticket, hotels, restaurant, and transportations. More than that they think travel agent will choose the best attractions or introduction good things to them.
- For group package, travel agents will fix everything for them, so they do not have flexibilities, no freedom, have to wait for other group members, no planning. But it exchange with more security and convenience which provided by professional tour leader and guide.
- They understand that travel agent will select the attractions that it is worth to see. On the other hands, sometimes customers want to stay at this place more but they cannot make it due to the time limitation and schedule that travel agents plan.
- Travelling by group can give them a chance to meet new friends from the group members. But sometimes travelling by Group package, group members may not match with you. It does not mean that they are bad but you do not like the way they do and it make you feel uncomfortable with that trip.

FIT

- They mention that FIT different from Group package by providing more flexibilities, freedom, and control budget. They can choose base on their want and need. For example, you can choose accommodations based on your budget or you can select restaurant that you want to try.
- FIT method is travelling with small group, so they can select people to travelling with. Most of people who travel by FIT method will have something in common such as love Japanese food, onsen, events, etc. It should be fun if you travel with someone who likes the same thing with you.

- Travel by FIT method is worthiness for the money as you can spend your time at the place you like and study more on details. You may meet something special by accident.
- They also mention some limitation for travelling by FIT method which is the language that most of Thai people cannot speak Japanese. Travel by FIT is very tired as you have to plan everything well and carry your own luggage from point to point as you may miss the train if you are late.
- Security is one of the factors that they concern because for FIT, you do not have tour leader or guide but they also understand that FIT cannot predict on what you will face from the trip, so you will have low expectation on it.
 - Technological change
 - Technological change can provide more benefits to them as it can add more channels to access information and help to book online. As in the past, you have to book everything via travel agents and you do not have more choices to compare with
 - They can study some information before the trip.
 - Some of them do not think that technological change will affect them as they will travel with Group package anyway. Some of them mention that they do not have problem with technological change because they have their family and they will ask their children to help.
 - Factors to choose travelling method

Same as Generation Y that I provide them 4 factors (Risk from travelling (included language, direction, people, and food), new experience, planning process before trip, and variety seeking) to measure which factor is the most important for them to decide to travel to Japan, you can see it below:

- The first factor that they choose is risk from travelling as they mention that at this age, they want something that convenience and comfortable for them, so they think about their security first then they decide to choose to travel by Group package.

- Next factor that they think of is new experience cause everyone who decide to travel, they also need something that new for them to escape from the routine world which everyday almost do the same thing.
- For the third factor is variety seeking, they also want more varieties for their life as they pay money for it, so varieties also important for them but not that much.
- The last one is planning process before trip as they state that they do not want to think much for the program cause in their life, they have so many things to think of then they just pick up tour package that seems worth for their money and let travel agents work on it.

4.2.2 Generation Y Interviews

I interviewed eight interviewees to collect the data. My interviewees divided into five males and three female. Most of them are age between 27 – 28 years old which are in generation Y. Everyone love to travel and they all used to use both Group package and FIT as their travelling method. Let see their opinion towards topic “The increasing in trend of FIT tourists to Japan compared between people in generation Y and Baby Boomers. Which dimensions that affect towards the trends?”

- Generation Y aspect
 - Most of them used to travel with both travelling method.
 - But when asked for more details most of them prefer to use FIT method if they are travelling by themselves or with friends. Only a few prefer Group package when they think they do not know language of that country.
 - The reason that they travelled with group package is because they travelled with their family, so their parents (Baby boomers generation) chose it. They also do not know much about the place that they will go.
- Travelling method to Japan
 - Most of them will choose FIT method to Japan.
 - Reasons for choosing FIT method are because they do not think that Japanese language will create some problem for them as they can use technology to help them such as internet and smart phone. It is flexible

as they can choose what they want and they can control budget, also with they can organize and arrange their own trip. They also believe that Japanese people are willing to help foreigners in their country.

- All of them will choose to travel with friends first for FIT.
- Some of them will use Group package if they have to travel with their family and they do not think that they can communicate with Japanese people with Japanese language.
- Differentiation between Group package and FIT to Japan

Group Package

- Group tour used to arrange tour program to go only the famous places in Japan and they do not include new places that much.
- Limited time in each place due to the tight program.
- Tour package arrange everything started from booking airlines, restaurants, hotels, coaches, attractions, professional guide and tour leader, which is convenience for their customers.
- Group package is more security than FIT as they provided tour leader and guide to take care group.
- Some travel agents give some discount to customers.

FIT

- FIT is flexible for tourists as they can choose how long to stay in each places.
- Tourists can experience more in-depth with local people, local food, culture, local place that is not go there with group package. They can gain more experience that never get from group package.
- Tourists can control their cost as they can choose hotels, restaurant, transportations, airlines, etc. by themselves, so they know what they want.
- Tourists have to plan their trip before depart from Bangkok because FIT do not have travel agent to take care of them, so they have to make sure that they will be safe when they arrive Japan.

- FIT has to help their own-self for the whole trip such as they have to carry their own luggage, use public transportation, etc.
- Technological change
 - In the past, technology is outdated as no smart phone, no internet, so it is very difficult to decide to travel by FIT method.
 - Now as technology improve a lot such as smart phone, WIFI internet, 3G, 4G, Line, and Skype that can make the world easy to get information.
 - Online booking has been involved a lot in FIT market; many tourists use it to book their accommodations, transportation which creates a sense of travelling by FIT method.
 - GPS, Google map and Google translate technology also can help FIT tourists a lot in terms of travelling to Japan or even in their own country as it can provide the direction to the target places. It also helps FIT tourists to plan their trip before travel to Japan.
 - Internet also provides many websites that FIT tourists can reviews bloggers previous trip, restaurant, place to go that can help them to plan their trip.
- Factors to choose travelling method

I gave them 4 factors (Risk from travelling (included language, direction, people, and food), new experience, planning process before trip, and variety seeking) to measure which factor is the most important for them to decide to travel to Japan, you can see it below:

- The first factor that most of them chose is new experience. They want to see new city that different from their own city and they want to learn and understand Japanese culture which they do not familiar with. Even they may get lost in Japan but they can take it as getting lost is consider as an experience and they may get some new friends.
- The second majority factor is risk from travelling as they considered the risk from travelling to Japan is low. They know that now Japan try to get more tourists from foreign countries, so they improved their city a lot such as put more English sign board, public transportation is not

complexity and easy to access. Also Japanese people are willing to help you if you ask them for help; you will be surprised from their help that they have to make sure that you can get to your place safely.

- The second runner up is variety seeking as they want to go in-depth in details of each area such as they may looking for something they interested like Japanese food that they want to try or art museum that they want to see.
- The last one is planning process before trip. Because they have to think about what they want and the risk first before they start to plan the trip, so this factor come for the last one.

4.2.3 Manager Interviews

I interviewed 3 managers, two of which have been in the travel business for about almost 10 years, one of which for 40 years. The manager interviews confirmed all the findings from the consumer interviews, but just some factors that they considered different from the consumer which is planning process before trip which is less important for both Generation Y and Baby boomers generation. For additional insight about the trends, managers' point out as following:

- Generation Y would consider to use Group package when travel with their family especially with their parents.
- Some of generation Y would consider Group package if they travel to the country, they are not familiar with and it is their first time.
- There is a chance that Generation Y who prefers FIT method would prefer Group package in the future as they are getting older and older.

Let see their opinion towards topic “The increasing in trend of FIT tourists to Japan compared between people in generation Y and Baby Boomers. Which dimensions that affect towards the trends?” It can be divided into 3 dimensions as follow:

Generation Aspects: Baby Boomers Generation

- This generation, they have money and time to travel.
- At their age, they need someone to take care of them for everything, so travel with group package can answer their need. Because travelling

with group package, they just choose the program and pay money. Travel Company will arrange everything for them such as booking air ticket, restaurants, and hotels. They also provide tour leader and guide to give information and make sure that everything goes smoothly.

Generation Aspects: Generation X

- Generation X is the age that still working hard to build family and want to get some promotion in the company, so they want more convenience and they travel more with the company such as company trip or business trip.
- They can be considered as 50 / 50 for the FIT and Group package as some of them cannot get long holiday and do not have time to plan but some can do it as they work as a freelance or work that not strict much in the office.

Generation Aspects: Generation Y

- They are still young, powerful and have a little money in their saving, so they tend to travel by FIT.
- They can control budget and they don't want to stay in luxury hotels. They need to explore the world.
- It is not all Generation Y that prefer to travel by FIT method.
- Some believe that when Generation Y is getting older and older, they will change their travel method into group package as they will have more money and they need some convenience and comfortable which provide by group package.

Trend: Method of travelling change

- Back for 30 – 40 years ago, the principle of travelling for Thai people, they travel with multiple countries such as Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong within the same trip and travelling as group.
- In the past five years, length of travel tends to be shorter like two countries in the same trip such as Taiwan and Japan or Hong Kong and Japan.

- Two years ago, most of travellers tend to travel only one country in one trip with the length of stay about five to six days due to the increasing in direct flight to Japan from Thai Airways.

Trend: Japanese Government regulation change

- Last year in July 2013, Japanese Government announces that Thai people are allowed to go to Japan without Japanese Visa for tourist type with the limitation 15 days per time.
- This year, Japanese government is highly promoted on each prefecture by joining in many travel trade fair and organize seminars in Bangkok.
- They try to promote their prefecture in social network even their own websites are now providing in Thai language.

Trend: Technology Change

- Technology change very rapidly, back to last ten years that people still using normal mobile phone and the internet was not as fast as these days. You can see a lot of change all over the world. Now you can see that people have to use smart phone.
- With internet Wi-Fi that use for searching information, read a review from web blog, Google map, Line Application, Skype which can make the world getting smaller and smaller and easy to go there.

Trend: Outbound Market share to Japan in Thailand

- Travel by Group package can be divided into two types which are incentive group and collective group.
- Collective group is like the group that travel agent collect their customers and fill them in the group until the group can operate. This type of group will be affected by the trend of increasing in FIT traveller because people will choose to travel by their own as it is flexible and more control.
- About the incentive group, this type is like the reward group which provide by company such as they provide to their dealer who reached the sales target. It will not affect by the increasing in trend of FIT traveller because it is a part that company have to provide to their

customers, dealers, staff in order to attract them to strict with the company.

- About the market share, market share for Group package is bigger than FIT market since in the past until now.
- But now FIT market can steal more shares from Group package.
- It believes that the FIT trend will keep increasing but even the share from Group package market was stole from FIT market but inside Group package market is consists of incentive and collective market. The share that FIT market can steal is the share from collective market as Japan is easier to travel by own, so the size of the Group package market will be reduce but only in a part of collective market but incentive side is still strong in Thailand.

Factors to choose traveling method

For the factors that can affect decision making between FIT and Group package, I divided into four factors which are risk from travelling, new experience, planning process before trip and variety seeking.

- Risk from travelling is about their opinion towards Japan country has high or low risk in terms of language, direction, people, and food.
- New experience is that consumers want to explore or gain new experience from the trip that they never met before.
- Planning process before trip is about the time that they spend to search for more information and decide where to go.
- Variety seeking is about that consumers want more varieties from the trip such as they want to try varieties of food, meet local people, different attractions during the trip.

Factors to choose traveling method: FIT

- New experience comes first due to the FIT tourists, they want to explore the world more and this travel method help them to select where they want to see, food they want to try, so it is the first factor in their mind to select FIT method.
- Second is the planning process before trip, because when they know the destination to travel, they love to plan by themselves such as how long

they will spend at that place, these places?, transportation they will use? Where to stay, etc.

- The third one is variety seeking as they want to explore the world, so they have to looking for more varieties during their trip.
- The last one is the risk from travelling as they would consider that it is not a problem for them. They can take risk from the travelling as it can be considered as new experience that they can come back and tell others for long time.

Factor to choose traveling method: Group Package

- In the opposite way, people who travel with the group package would consider risk from travelling as the first priority. As they concern about the Japanese language which they can't speak. They also do not know the direction and they wonder that if they lost, Japanese people will help them or not and how they can communicate.
- Second is the planning process before trip, they choose planning process because travel with group, they don't have to arrange anything; they just select program and pay money to the travel agency.
- For variety seeking and new experience, they do not concern much about it because they know that group package will put only the famous attractions into the program and they just want to relax themselves from work, so they do not think much about it.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion for Baby boomers Generation Interviews

Most of Baby boomers generation had already retired from work, so they have plenty of time to travel and with the capital resources. But in their age, technology is not as good as the present time, so that they tend to familiar to travel with Group package. Group package is convenience and comfortable for them by provided tour leader and guide with fully arrangement everything by travel agent. They also comment that they can travel by FIT method but their children need to travel with them and arrange everything for them.

They also understand the different between FIT and Group package and even technology in present time is fully support for the FIT traveler but they still prefer to travel by using Group package as they do not want to learn the new technology that they are not familiar with. For the most important factor that they concern is about the risk from travelling as they want security, more convenience and comfortable during the trip which FIT cannot provide for them. The less concern factor is planning process before trip as they select Group package from the travel agents, so they do not need to plan or arrange anything.

5.2 Conclusion for Generation Y Interviews

Generation Y is familiar with both Group package and FIT method but they will choose to use FIT method when travelling with friends and Group package if travel with family. They think that Japan country is suitable to travel with FIT method due to their facilities provided in English and public transportation is good and technology can help to provide information a lot. But some of them still think that language is a problem to travel to Japan. They all agreed that FIT method can provide

flexibility, in-depth details in each place and they can control their budget as they do not have much money to travel at this age.

For the factor that they think it is very important for them is new experience from the trip as the main purpose for them to travel is to explore the world, so they want new experience that they cannot get it in Thailand. Follow by the risk from travelling as they considered the risk to travel to Japan is low, so if they do not know Japanese language, they can still survive during the trip. The less concern factor is planning process before trip as they think that they have to have other factors first in order to motivate themselves to plan the trip.

5.3 Conclusion for Manager Interviews

Travel styles changed from generation to generation as the style changed from travel with multiple countries to two countries then one country and now reduce group size into FIT traveller. Additional with more factors that make it easy to travel to Japan by own, so the trend of FIT is getting more and more start from now and in the future. Managers of the travel company describe that from their experience people who decided to travel by group. They will concern about their security first as travelling with the group, they will have tour leader who can give information and lead them to Japan while that they don't need to know Japanese language and the direction. The second thing that people think of is the planning process which they don't have to plan for the trip, they just choose package and pay money for their trip. After the work, it seems like they just want to relax themselves from work that why they are not concern much about variety seeking and new experience that they will get from the package. Then they explained that for FIT traveller, they start to think about the new experience that they will experience from the trip then they start their planning process about the accommodation, seasons, airlines, restaurants, route, etc. For the risk from travelling is seem that it is the last thing, they will concern because FIT travellers are the people that ready to take risk and explore new things. So travel companies have to adapt themselves with the trend in order to survive in the market.

5.4 Recommendation

In terms of travel agents, it seems that to survive in this business world, they need to adjust themselves with the trend change in this business as it always changes from time to time. For example, as Generation Y tend to use more technology in their life, travel agents should adapt themselves to social media, create their website, online booking in order to capture this new market which still growing and may become big market in the future.

By the way, even the new trend for FIT is coming but it still in the growth process, so travel agents cannot forget people in Baby boomers generation who buy Group package as it is the biggest market in Thailand now. From time to time, company has to learn new things and adapt themselves before their competitors if company wants to successful in the business. To study the trend change and which factor that makes the trend change is important as referred to this study, technological change is the most influence factor towards FIT trend in Generation Y and other generation.

5.5 Limitation

The limitation of this research are about the interview questions that might not clear to everyone such as the word risk from travelling is it high/low risk that make interviewees confused with the questions or some questions that need to adjust after interviewed. Also with the number of participants that participants in Baby boomers are difficult to find if compared with participants in Generation Y.

5.6 Further Research

For the future research, the trend change for more FIT travelers should be conducted. As people in Baby boomers generation are getting older and older, so in next 5 - 10 years, they might want to stay at home with their grandchild and their family, so generation Y will have an important role to the travel market. Because they will have more resources to travel and if travel agents can predict the trend change in

travelling method, it should make them to cope with the change and success in their business.



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APPENDIX A: Interview Questions (Consumers)

The interview questions are related to research topic “Increasing in trend of FIT tourists to Japan compared between people in generation Y and Baby boomers. Which dimensions that affect towards the trend?” in the point of consumers view.

Questions:

1. Which generation are you? (Baby Boomers 46 -64 , Generation X 30 -45, Generation Y 29 and below)
2. Do you love travelling?
3. What is the method of travelling (Group Package, FIT) that you usually use to Japan?
4. How about your last vacation trip, which travels method (Group Package, FIT) do you use and what are the criteria for your decision making?
5. If you have a chance, are you going to use the same travel method or not and why?
6. How about your last Japan trip, which travels method (Group Package, FIT) do you use and what are the criteria for your decision making?
7. If you have a chance, are you going to use the same travel method to Japan or not and why?
8. In your opinion, what are the different between group package and FIT to Japan?
9. In your opinion, how technologies affect your generation towards travel method and decision to Japan?
10. Please rank which factor is the most important for you to choose your travelling method to Japan: risk from travelling (High/Low) (language, direction, people, food, etc.), new experience, planning process before the trip, variety seeking, etc.
11. Do you think that Japan is suitable for FIT traveler to travel or not? Why?

APPENDIX B: Interview Questions (Managers)

The interview questions are related to research topic “Increasing in trend of FIT tourists to Japan compared between people in generation Y and Baby boomers. Which dimensions that affect towards the trend?” in the point of managers view.

Questions:

1. Which generation are you? (Baby Boomers 46 -64 , Generation X 30 -45, Generation Y 29 and below)
2. How long are you in travel business to Japan?
3. From your experience, how the trends of travelling to Japan change in group package to FIT from the past to now and the future?
4. How do you handle with the change of this trend?
5. Which factor do you think that it affect this change?
6. Which factor do you think that influence this change?
7. Do you think the different generation can affect the trend to Japan? Why?
8. In your opinion, which market (Group Package or FIT to Japan) will become bigger?
9. Which factor is the most important for your customers to choose to travel to Japan for both group package and FIT in your opinion? Please rank: risk from travelling (language, direction, people, food, etc.), new experience, planning process before the trip, variety seeking, etc.