

**A RESEARCH ON THE MOTIVATION OF CHINESE PEOPLE
TO TRAVEL IN THAILAND DESPITE NEGATIVE NEWS**




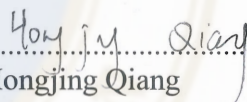
**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
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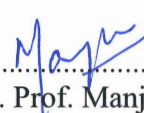



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We come from all over the world, but we have come together because of this valuable learning experience. This memory is like a beam of light shining through the mist, gently and firmly guiding me in the direction I am moving forward.

Hongjing Qiang

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the motivation of Chinese tourists to travel to Thailand even when facing negative news. Through the use of qualitative research methods including focus group discussions, supplemented by literature review and analysis, a comprehensive analysis was conducted on the multiple factors that influence Chinese passenger decision-making. Through in-depth interviews with Chinese tourists who travelled to Thailand after January 2025, the study revealed the interaction between driving and pulling factors, and how to jointly guide Chinese tourists to create motivation for Thai tourism. The main findings of the study indicate that despite negative news, Chinese tourists continue to choose Thailand mainly because their personal emotions and cultural identity reduce their sensitivity to negative information, while Thailand's high cost-effectiveness, convenient geographical location, and strong tourism infrastructure provide enormous appeal.

KEY WORDS: CHINESE TOURISTS/ NEGATIVE NEWS/ THAILAND TOURISM/
TRAVEL ABROAD/ CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

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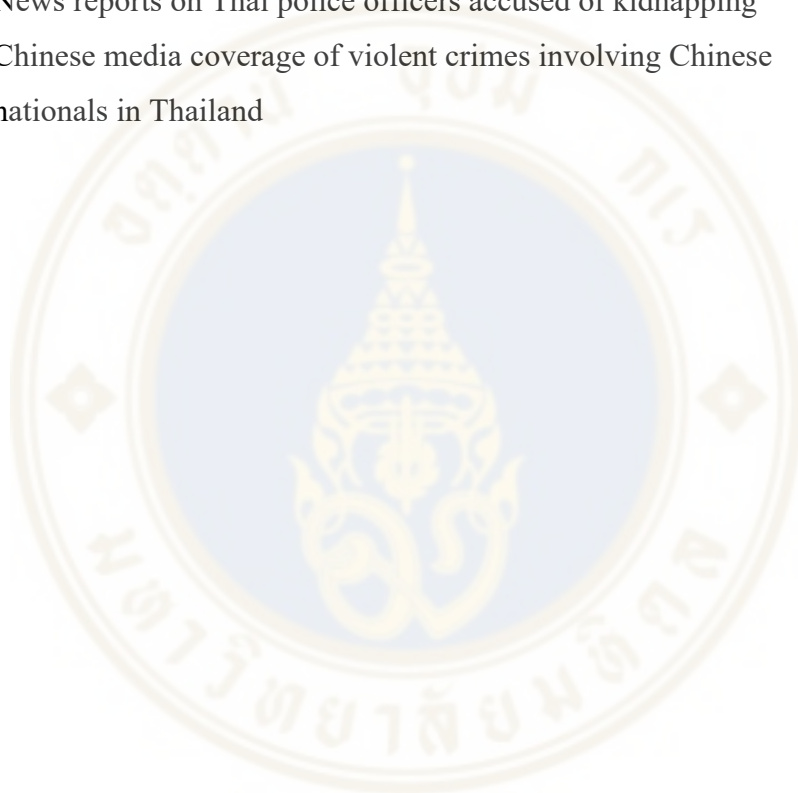
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and problem statements

Tourism in Thailand has always been a favorite of Chinese people, with millions of people flocking to it every year. However, the situation has changed slightly in 2023. In February 2023, major celebrities and internet celebrities flocked to Thailand for tourism. However, a month later, this resort became a city of sin in the eyes of some people.

The cause was that Bilibili million blogger "Heart Doctor Lin Lin" released a video about exposing Thailand's tourism fraud, population trafficking, and organ buying and selling, which caused panic. Although the video was later deleted, the concept of the danger of Thailand's tourism was widely circulated. At the same time, the Chinese government's vigorous search for the "Myanmar fraud case" caused a sensation in China. On March 20, 2023, the Tripartite Conference on Human Trafficking, jointly organized by the Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China, the National Police of the Republic of Myanmar, and the National Police General of Thailand, was held in Bangkok, Thailand. In recent years, online gambling and telecommunications fraud have caused a series of chain social problems in Myanmar, including murder, kidnapping, human trafficking, illegal immigration, telecommunications fraud, online gambling, and more. Most of the crimes are committed by criminal groups and the victims are mostly Chinese. The cross-border crackdown was originally intended to crack down on crime, but it brought negative news about Thailand: on August 19, 2023, "Sina History" released details about the Three Kingdoms fraud case: Myawadi, located on the eastern border of Myanmar, borders Thailand, and is separated by only a small river. Therefore, this place has become a gathering place for illegal immigrants, and a large number of tourists and job seekers who were deceived into Thailand have been sold to the fraud park in Myawadi through this river. According to reports, many tourists who travel to Thailand suffer from drugging and fainting. When they wake up, they have already passed through the Thai Myanmar border. They are

often lured by overseas high paying job scams, free travel traps, and other temptations, and are transported from Thailand to Myawadi. This news caused many people's concerns about the safety of tourism in Thailand at that time.



Figure 1.1 Online posts exposing scams and trafficking at the Thailand–Myanmar border

In addition, dangerous news about Thai tourism continues to spread: on March 22, 2023, Weibo "vista sees the world" issued a news report stating that "four Thai immigration police officers are suspected of kidnapping a Chinese man, and the Thai police have applied for an arrest warrant." On March 21, Ms. A (Thai nationality, translated as) recently reported to the police station, claiming that she and her Chinese male employer were kidnapped by a group of people dressed as police officers, who extorted millions of baht. Afterwards, the employer ran back to China to live with her son, and she was afraid of being harmed again by this group, so she sought help from the police.



Figure 1.2 News reports on Thai police officers accused of kidnapping

On April 2, 2023, the "Headline News" reported: "A 22-year-old Chinese female student studying abroad was kidnapped by Chinese nationals in Thailand, and extortion was unsuccessful. She was brutally killed and her body was thrown. According to Thai media reports, on April 1st, the BangMaeNang police station in Nuanburi province, the police received a report that a plastic bag containing a female corpse was found in a lotus pond ditch near Ton Chuek Salaya temple, with hands and feet tied and signs of being beaten. After preliminary investigation by Thai police, the deceased was Chinese international student Jin Can, who went missing earlier. The suspects are three Chinese men who have fled back to China.

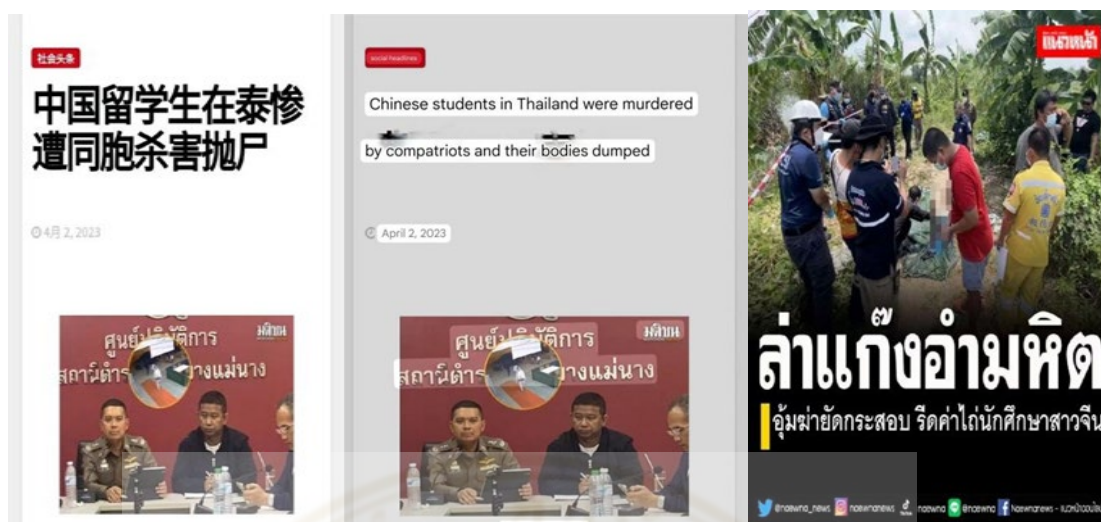


Figure 1.3 Chinese media coverage of violent crimes involving Chinese nationals in Thailand

On October 5th, 2023, news about the Bangkok shooting incident went viral on Weibo. The Chinese Embassy in Thailand confirmed on the evening of the 3rd that a Chinese citizen had unfortunately died and another Chinese citizen had been injured in the shooting incident that occurred at the famous shopping mall in Bangkok, Thailand, the Palace of Belle in Siam.

Actor Xing Wang disappeared at the Thai Myanmar border on January 3, 2025.

On the late night of January 5, 2025, actress Wang Xing's girlfriend, Ms. J, posted on social media seeking help, stating that her boyfriend Wang Xing went to Thailand to join a filming crew and went missing at the Thai Myanmar border around noon on January 3 Beijing time. After the incident, she immediately reported to the police in Shanghai and sought help from the Chinese Embassy in Thailand and the Consulate General in Chiang Mai. On January 5, 2025, Ms. J's post attracted attention from the industry, and a large number of actors and celebrities reposted information about Wang Xing's disappearance. Due to Wang Xing being a public figure, the news spread widely and had a huge impact.

However, it is strange that despite many negative news about tourism in Thailand on the internet, there are still many people traveling to Thailand. According to data from the Thai Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the number of Chinese tourists

visiting Thailand from, from January 1 to December 29, 2024, Thailand welcomed a total of 35.32 million foreign tourists, with Chinese tourists being the largest group at 6.7 million, accounting for approximately 19% of all foreign tourists, Chinese tourists remained the largest source of visitors to Thailand.

1.2 Objectives

The tourism industry is an important economic sector in Thailand, creating employment opportunities, reducing poverty, promoting infrastructure and development in many destinations, and benefiting society. Therefore, the number of international tourists plays a crucial role in the economic and social development of Thailand's tourist destinations. Among them, Chinese tourists account for a large proportion and have a significant impact on Thailand's tourism industry.

Why do so many Chinese still travel to Thailand despite the huge negative news? What is the motivation of Chinese people to travel to Thailand? What kind of motivation can overcome the negative news on the Internet? This is the main focus of this article. This article uses qualitative research methods to investigate and select Ctrip tourists for interviews.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Literature Review

2.2.1 Distance

The distance between the usual place of residence of an individual and the destination is an especially important criterion due to the clearly inherent spatial dimension of tourist destination choice. One train of thought holds that distance—or geographical position of the tourist relative to destinations—is considered a restriction or a dissuasive dimension of destination choice, as the displacement of an individual to the destination entails physical, temporal and monetary cost (Taylor & Knudson, 1976). This is the result reached by the studies of Wennergren and Nielsen (1968), Perdue (1986), Borgers et al. (1989), Fesenmaier (1988), Adamowicz et al. (1994) and Schroeder and Louviere (1999).

Thailand is one of the Asian countries that is closer to China. The closest straight-line distance between Thailand and China is about 918.28 kilometers, and the distance between Bangkok and Kunming, China is about 1260.38 kilometers. It takes about 4 or 5 hours to fly from Beijing and Shanghai to Bangkok, about 2 hours to fly from Yunnan to Bangkok, and less than 3 hours to fly from Guangdong to Bangkok. Compared to European countries or other Asian countries, this distance is relatively close. This factor is generated by the geographical location of the two countries, and regardless of the time and whether there is negative news, it has always been one of the main factors affecting motivation.

2.1.2 Cost Performance

One line of thought holds that demand for tourism products is that of an ordinary good, in such a way that price increments diminish consumption (Lanquar, 2001; Serra, 2002; Smith, 1995), meaning that price is considered as a factor which reduces the utility of a destination. At an empirical level, a negative relationship between

price and destination choice is found by Morey et al. (1991), Dubin (1998), Train (1998), Riera (2000) and Siderelis and Moore (1998).

Compared with other popular tourist countries in Asia such as Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, Thailand's goods and airfare prices are relatively low, with airfare from different regions of China to Bangkok costing almost 400 to 1000 RMB now. Therefore, compared to other countries in Europe or Asia during the same period, the cost-effectiveness of traveling to Thailand is relatively high, which can attract tourists even in negative news.

2.1.3 Cultural Integration

Culture has largely been ignored as a potential predictor of tourists' destination choice (Jackson, 2001; Jackson, White, & Schmierer, 2000). This is surprising as it has long been recognized that culture influences people's decision-making processes (Hofstede, 1980; Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973).

At 13:36:37 on June 26, 2023, "CCTV news " released a news article titled "What is the secret to the remarkable achievements of Thai Chinese in various fields as global Chinese businessmen gather in Bangkok?" which mentioned that as of 2023 approximately 14% of the total population in Thailand has Chinese ancestry. Due to the large number of Chinese people in Thailand and the close proximity between the two countries, there are some cultures that are similar, such as Thai people believing in Buddhism. China is a country with free religious beliefs, but among all religions, the largest number of people believe in Buddhism. Due to this type of culture, many Chinese people believe that since Thailand is a Buddhist country and Buddhists are all kind people, online news about the dangers of tourism in Thailand cannot be fully trusted.

2.1.4 Emotional Attachment

Emotional attachment refers to the emotional connection established by tourists towards a certain tourist destination, including factors such as a sense of belonging to the destination, nostalgia, personal experiences, and cultural identity. This emotional attachment can enhance tourists' loyalty to the destination, making them still willing to visit the destination when faced with negative news.

Emotional attachment is a psychological connection that is typically influenced by past travel experiences, personal memories, cultural similarities, and social relationships (Yuksel et al., 2010). Especially for Chinese tourists, the similarities in history, culture, cuisine, religion, and other aspects with Thailand, as well as the fact that many tourists have visited Thailand more than once, their previous travel experiences (such as good service, food, scenery, friendliness of locals, etc.) will deepen their emotional connection with Thailand, thereby reducing the impact of negative news. Research has shown that the higher the emotional attachment of tourists to their destination, the higher their tourism loyalty, and even if negative news appears, they may still be willing to revisit (PraYAG&Ryan, 2012).

2.2 Framework

The conceptual framework of this study integrates tourism motivation push-pull theory and emotional attachment theory to explain why Chinese tourists continue to travel to Thailand despite facing negative news. The Push Factors represent the intrinsic motivations that drive tourists to Thailand, including: 1. emotional attachment (past positive experiences create strong connections) 2. cultural integration (shared religious beliefs, food, and language enhance familiarity). Pull factors refer to destination specific attributes that attract tourists, such as 1. distance (short flight distance, easy access to Thailand) 2. Cost Performance (Thailand's affordability compared to other destinations)

However, negative news and risk perception play a moderating role, which may deter tourists from traveling to Thailand due to concerns about crime, fraud, and political instability. The final decision on whether to travel to Thailand depends on to what extent push-pull factors outweigh risk perception. If the internal motivation and external attraction remain strong enough, Chinese tourists may continue to visit Thailand despite negative reports. This framework provides a structured approach to understanding the complex interplay between motivation and perceived risk in tourism decision-making.

Based on the framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Push Factor Hypotheses

- H1: Emotional attachment positively influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.

- H2: Cultural integration positively influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.

Pull Factor Hypotheses

- H3: Cost performance positively influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.
- H4: Short distance influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methods

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to analyze the motivations of Chinese tourists traveling to Thailand despite negative news. Qualitative methods allow for an in-depth exploration of the psychological, emotional, and practical factors influencing travel decisions, providing rich, contextual insights into tourists' motivations.

3.2 Data Collection

In order to obtain first-hand insights, this study conducted interviews with Chinese tourists who have recently visited Thailand. The majority of respondents are Ctrip users who book travel after 2025. This targeted sampling ensures that participants have genuine travel experiences and decision-making insights.

Participant screening criteria: To ensure relevant answers I using two screening questions:

1. Do you know any negative news about Thailand?
2. Do you care about negative news in Thailand?

Based on these two screening questions, I selected tourists who know and care about negative news in Thailand but still choose to travel here as my interviewees.

3.3 Interviewees

Table 3.1 Interviewee Information

Name	Gender	Hometown	Date
Jamie	Female	Zhe jiang	1.21
Wu	Male	Yun nan	1.24
Xia li	Female	Xin jiang	1.26
Jia ming	Female	Xin jiang	1.26
Miss Tang	Female	Wu han	2.02
SU	Male	Xia meng	2.04
Miss Wang	Female	Long yan	1.31
Gu	Male	Guang zhou	2.03

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1 Push Factors

Push factors refer to the intrinsic motivations that drive Chinese tourists to choose Thailand as a travel destination despite negative news. These factors stem from personal experiences, emotional connections, and cultural familiarity, enhancing tourists' resilience to negative perceptions.

4.1.1 Emotional Attachment

Many Chinese tourists develop a deep emotional bond with Thailand due to past positive travel experiences. These experiences often include interactions with friendly locals, previous life and work experiences in Thailand, participation in cultural activities, and enjoyment of the country's entertainment industry. Thailand offers opportunities for close interactions with celebrities, frequent fan meetings, and concerts, further strengthening tourists' emotional dependence on the country.

- Xiali: "I first learned about Thailand through Thai dramas and variety shows, which sparked my interest. After actually traveling there, I discovered that Thailand has a rich entertainment culture, with frequent concerts and fan events. So, I visit Thailand often, and for me, Thailand doesn't feel scary at all."

- Su: "I came here almost every year in the three years before the COVID-19. The people here are very enthusiastic. The real experience makes me look at Thailand more objectively."

- Jamie: I have a deep emotional connection to Thailand, especially the experience of chasing stars, which has left many beautiful memories here. I met some like-minded friends in Thailand, and together we followed stars, tasted Thai cuisine, and visited filming locations. These experiences gave me a special sense of belonging to Thailand."

- Wu: I have been to Thailand many times, and every experience has been great. The service industry here is very enthusiastic, the food is delicious, and the overall atmosphere is very relaxed. "
- Jiaming: The locals in Thailand are friendly and the scenery is beautiful, which has given me a strong emotional attachment to Thailand. I have also made many friends here, which makes me more willing to travel to Thailand again. "
- Miss Tang: The experience in real life is more important than news on the internet. I have lived and worked in Thailand for a long time, and I am well aware that Thailand is generally safe, so I am not easily influenced by the media. "

4.1.2 Cultural Integration

The cultural similarities between China and Thailand significantly influence tourists' decision-making. The two countries share similar values, religious beliefs, and lifestyle habits, making Chinese tourists feel comfortable and familiar when traveling in Thailand.

- Miss Tang: Thailand is a country with strong cultural inclusiveness and a large Chinese community. There are many Chinese restaurants, shopping malls, and tourist attractions with Chinese signs, which makes it easier for Chinese tourists to adapt here. "
- Wu: "Both Thai and Chinese cultures have a tradition of respecting elders, valuing family and paying attention to etiquette. This similarity makes me feel at home when I travel in Thailand. The social atmosphere is very friendly, and many Thais can simply communicate in Chinese, making communication more convenient."
- Xiali: The cuisine in Thailand is very similar to that in China, and it is easy to find food that suits your taste. In addition, Thailand's Buddhist culture has many similarities with China's traditional culture, which makes me feel very familiar. "
- Jiaming: "Thailand has a high degree of cultural integration. I don't feel like a foreigner here, whether it's diet, social habits or daily communication."
- MissWang: "There are many restaurants in Thailand that have Chinese menus. Even the vendors in the night market can speak some Chinese. There are also many foods that meet the tastes of Chinese people. Sometimes it makes me feel like I haven't gone abroad."

4.2 Pull Factors

Pull factors refer to Thailand's external advantages that make Chinese tourists choose it as a travel destination despite negative news. These factors include cost-effectiveness, geographical proximity, and well-developed tourism infrastructure.

4.2.1 Cost Performance

Thailand's high cost-performance ratio remains one of the primary attractions for Chinese tourists. Compared to other Asian destinations such as Japan and South Korea, Thailand offers lower travel costs while maintaining high-quality travel experiences.

- Xiali: " The airfare and accommodation costs in Thailand are much cheaper compared to other Asian countries, and this high cost-effectiveness is an important reason why I have chosen to travel to Thailand many times."
- Wu: " Compared to destinations such as Japan or Europe, Thailand can offer high-quality travel experiences at lower prices, which is very attractive for budget limited tourists like me."
- Su: " When I travel to a place, I definitely need to make a travel guide. I need to check the airfare, hotels, attraction tickets, etc. in advance, and have a rough idea of how much it will cost and whether the budget is met. The airfare from China to Thailand is very cheap. The airfare from Xiamen Gaoqi Airport to Bangkok Don Mueang Airport is about 700 yuan per trip, which is slightly cheaper than the price from Xiamen to Xinjiang in China. The accommodation and food in Thailand are also very cost-effective, especially seafood, which is much more suitable than in China. Therefore, I think the overall consumption level in Thailand is moderate, and I can enjoy high-quality services. Miss Tang: The overall travel cost in Thailand is lower than other popular destinations. Accommodation, dining, and entertainment are all very affordable, making it a cost-effective choice."

4.2.2 Distance

The distance between Thailand and China significantly affects travel decisions. Short haul flights and convenient visa policies make Thailand an ideal choice for Chinese tourists, without the fatigue and additional costs of long-distance travel.

- Miss Tang: " If there is an emergency, I can quickly return to China from Thailand. Short trips reduce my worries about being away from my family."
- Wu: " Thailand is very close to China, with frequent flights, short flight times, and low travel costs. This makes Thailand a convenient and easily accessible travel destination, reducing travel fatigue and concerns about unexpected situations."
- Jamie: " Being able to quickly reach Thailand makes it the first choice for short distance vacations, which is more practical than going to farther countries."
- Gu: " It only takes me 2-3 hours to fly from Guangzhou Baiyun Airport to Thailand, which is similar to flying from Guangzhou to Hainan in China. It's really convenient."
- Su: " I am usually very busy with work and can only travel during holidays, but holidays in China are rare and short. There are only long (7 days) holidays during National Day and Chinese New Year. If the tourist destination is too far away, my time will be delayed on the road. I don't want to spend rare holidays on airplanes. Thailand is closer to China, with shorter flight times and more flight options. Generally, I can travel from Xiamen Gaoqi Airport to Bangkok in about three and a half hours, so when traveling abroad, I usually choose Thailand."

Based on the above analysis, Chinese tourists continue to choose Thailand as a travel destination despite negative news, primarily due to two categories of factors: push factors and pull factors. Push factors involve tourists' personal emotions, experiences, and cultural identity, while pull factors refer to Thailand's objective advantages as a tourist destination.

First, push factors mainly include emotional attachment and cultural integration. Many Chinese tourists have developed a deep emotional connection with Thailand through past travel experiences, such as living or working in Thailand or frequently participating in entertainment activities like fan meetings and concerts. These experiences create a sense of belonging, making them less likely to change their perception of Thailand due to negative news. For instance, some tourists mentioned that their experiences in Thailand allowed them to recognize the friendliness and hospitality of the locals and the high-quality services provided, which influenced their judgment more than online news reports. Additionally, the cultural similarities between Thailand and China—such as the emphasis on family values, shared Buddhist traditions, and the presence of a large

Chinese community—make it easier for Chinese tourists to adapt when traveling in Thailand, thereby reducing concerns arising from negative media coverage.

Second, pull factors refer to Thailand's competitive advantages in the tourism market, including cost performance, geographical proximity, and well-developed tourism infrastructure. The high cost-effectiveness of traveling in Thailand is a key attraction for Chinese tourists. Compared to destinations like Japan, South Korea, or Europe, Thailand offers lower costs for flights, accommodation, and dining, allowing tourists to enjoy high-quality travel experiences on a relatively small budget. Some tourists noted that flights from Chinese cities like Xiamen to Thailand are even cheaper than domestic long-haul flights, while the cost of seafood and accommodation in Thailand is significantly lower than in China. Furthermore, Thailand's geographical proximity to China is another major advantage. With short flight times (typically only 2-3 hours), Thailand is an ideal choice for short holiday trips, especially for those with limited vacation time due to busy work schedules. Additionally, frequent flight options and convenient visa policies further reduce travel time and uncertainty.

In summary, Chinese tourists continue to choose Thailand despite negative news mainly because their personal emotions and cultural identity reduce sensitivity to negative information, while Thailand's high cost-effectiveness, convenient location, and strong tourism infrastructure provide significant appeal. This dual influence ensures that Thailand remains an attractive destination for Chinese tourists, even amid negative publicity, allowing its tourism market to maintain steady growth. This also indicates that in the global tourism industry, travelers' decisions are influenced not only by external information but also by their past experiences, cultural identity, and practical needs. To further strengthen its appeal in the Chinese market, Thailand should continue to enhance the travel experience, optimize service quality, and promote a positive image through cultural exchanges and social media. At the same time, leveraging its cost and geographical advantages will help attract even more Chinese tourists in the future.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study explores the motivations of Chinese tourists who continue to visit Thailand despite negative news concerning safety issues, fraud, and crime. Through qualitative research and focus group interviews, the study identifies key push and pull factors influencing tourists' decisions.

Push factors, such as emotional attachment and cultural integration, play a critical role in tourists' resilience to negative media coverage. Many respondents have had positive past experiences in Thailand, fostering familiarity and attachment to the country. Their affinity for Thai culture, religious similarities, and appreciation of the hospitality of local people encourage them to continue choosing Thailand as their travel destination. Additionally, the presence of a large Chinese community and the availability of Chinese-language services further enhance tourists' comfort and sense of security.

Pull factors, including Thailand's affordability, geographical proximity to China, and well-developed tourism infrastructure, also impact travel decisions. Compared to other international destinations, Thailand offers high cost-effectiveness, making it an ideal choice for budget-conscious travelers. Convenient travel options, frequent flight connections, and a relatively simple visa application process further enhance its appeal. Despite the presence of negative news, many Chinese tourists believe these factors outweigh potential risks.

Although this study identifies influential factors, risk perception remains a moderating element in travel decisions. While some tourists are unaffected by negative reports, others remain cautious and may require additional safety assurances before deciding to visit Thailand. This highlights the need for effective risk management and proactive communication from Thai authorities and tourism stakeholders to maintain trust and confidence among Chinese travelers.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research

This study primarily relies on qualitative research methods, focusing on Chinese tourists who have already chosen to visit Thailand. While their perspectives provide valuable insights, the findings may not fully represent the views of potential travelers who decided against visiting due to negative news. Future research could incorporate quantitative methods to measure the extent to which different factors influence decision-making across a larger sample.

Additionally, this study focuses on the motivations of Chinese tourists but does not delve into the effectiveness of specific marketing and crisis management strategies employed by Thai tourism stakeholders. Future research could examine how Thailand's tourism industry responds to negative news and whether targeted strategies, such as social media campaigns, safety assurances, and influencer promotions, help alleviate concerns and sustain tourism growth.

5.3 Recommendations

For Thai Tourism Authorities and Government

1. **Enhancing Safety Measures and Public Communication** Given that safety concerns remain a significant factor for some travelers, Thai authorities should strengthen security measures in major tourist areas and improve emergency response mechanisms. Clearly and transparently communicating these measures through official tourism websites and social media platforms will help reassure potential visitors.

2. **Strengthening Bilateral Cooperation on Crime Prevention** Thailand and China should enhance cooperation in combating fraud, human trafficking, and other crimes affecting tourist safety. Promoting joint law enforcement actions, establishing hotlines, and advancing cross-border crime prevention initiatives can demonstrate Thailand's commitment to ensuring visitor security.

For Thai Tourism Operators and Businesses

3. **Providing Cultural Sensitivity Training for Tourism Industry Staff** Offering cultural awareness training for hotel staff, tour guides, and transportation service providers can enhance the experience of Chinese visitors. Addressing concerns in a culturally appropriate manner can help reduce tourists' anxieties.

4. Customizing Marketing Strategies for Chinese Tourists Thai tourism stakeholders should leverage Chinese social media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, and Chinese TikTok to counteract negative news and highlight positive travel experiences. Collaborating with Chinese travel influencers and bloggers can help rebuild trust and promote Thailand as a safe and desirable destination.

5. Offering Travel Assurance Packages To further alleviate concerns, tourism businesses could introduce travel assurance packages, including insurance coverage for unexpected incidents. Providing options such as guaranteed refund policies in case of unforeseen disruptions can encourage hesitant travelers to proceed with their plans.

In summary despite challenges posed by negative news, Thailand remains a preferred destination for many Chinese tourists due to its affordability, cultural familiarity, and accessibility. While some tourists may hesitate due to safety concerns, proactive measures by Thai authorities and businesses can help sustain and even increase visitor confidence. By strengthening security, improving communication, and leveraging digital marketing strategies, Thailand can continue to attract Chinese tourists and maintain its position as a leading travel destination in Asia.

Future research should continue to examine evolving travel trends and the long-term effects of risk perception on Chinese outbound tourism. With strategic improvements, Thailand has the potential to further solidify its reputation as a welcoming and secure destination for global travelers.

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QUESTIONS

Screening Questions:

1. Do you know any negative news about Thailand?
2. Do you care about negative news in Thailand?

Push Factors

Emotional Attachment

H1: Emotional attachment positively influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.

1. Have you traveled to Thailand before? If so, what was your overall impression of the experience?
2. Do you have any special emotional connection to Thailand, such as memorable experiences, family or friends living there, or a strong interest in Thai culture?
3. Do you think your past positive experiences in Thailand have strengthened your trust in the country, making you less affected by negative news?
4. What aspects of Thailand (e.g., cultural environment, food, service) give you a sense of belonging or emotional connection?
5. When planning a trip, do you prioritize countries you have visited and are familiar with? If so, why?
6. What aspects of traveling in Thailand make you willing to ignore negative news reports and still choose to visit?

Cultural Integration

H2: Cultural integration positively influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.

1. What similarities do you see between Thai and Chinese cultures? Have these similarities influenced your decision to choose Thailand as a travel destination?
2. Do you feel that Thailand is a culturally familiar and welcoming country? Why or why not?

3. What are your thoughts on Thai Buddhist culture? Has it influenced your perception of Thailand's safety?

4. When traveling in Thailand, do you find it easier to access food, language, or social environments that match your habits? Has this affected your travel decisions?

5. How do you perceive Thai people's attitudes toward Chinese tourists? Has this impression influenced your overall view of Thailand?

Pull Factors

Cost Performance

H3: Cost performance positively influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.

1. How important is the cost factor when choosing a travel destination?
2. How do you compare Thailand's overall travel costs (flights, accommodation, food) with other Asian countries? Is this one of the reasons why you choose to visit Thailand?
3. Do you usually check travel expenses online before deciding on a destination? What aspects of Thailand's cost performance attract you the most?
4. In your opinion, does Thailand offer a cost-effective travel experience? For example, compared to other countries, do you feel you can get a better experience for the same price?
5. Would you be willing to overlook potential risks due to negative news because of Thailand's high cost-effectiveness? Why?

Distance

H4: Short distance influences Chinese tourists' decision to travel to Thailand despite negative news.

1. When choosing a travel destination, how important is distance to your decision? Why?
2. Do you think Thailand's geographical location makes it more attractive than other distant countries? Why?
3. Compared to traveling to Europe or the Americas, do Thailand's shorter flight times and lower costs make it an easier decision for you?

4. Do you consider Thailand a convenient and accessible travel destination?

Does the short travel time reduce your travel concerns?

5. Do you think the convenience of traveling to Thailand outweighs the concerns raised by negative news, making you still willing to visit?

