

## Identification of Revisit Intention for Long-stay Tourism in Thailand: An Instagram Survey on Resort Towns in Thailand during COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis

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### Abstract

This study aims to investigate international tourists' revisit intention for a long-stay at Thailand's four famous resort towns. Variables include: cost of living, medical infrastructure, perceived image of Thai people and their help, destination image, perceived norm of same community, tourists' satisfaction, rejuvenation plan, length of stay and tourists' motivation. Employing non-probability purposive and convenience sampling with 203 respondents of long stay international tourists who visited Hua-Hin, Krabi, Pattaya, or Phuket Thailand more than once. Questionnaire distribution was conducted via the respondents' Instagram accounts of which recent hashtags (#), about 2 to 3 years past, relate to the locations, pin point location and activities under this study. Descriptive and inferential analyses, Pearson's correlation, Simple Linear Regression and Multiple Linear Regression are used to compute the hypotheses testing. With skewness and kurtosis methods, the variable of rejuvenation plan was removed. The results of research show that, perceived image from people and their help (.659), destination image environment (.214), perceived norm of same community (.413) form the factors that create the repeat-visitors' satisfaction (.506) and linkage to motivation (.369) for their repeated visit for a long stay.

**Keywords:** Long stay tourist, Perceived norm of the same community, Rejuvenation plan, Revisit intention

### Introduction

A recent development in global tourism has been the emergence of repeat tourists and this form of tourism has caught the attention of tourism planners and stakeholders. The marketing terms for instance customer loyalty, relationship marketing, or the 80/20 scheme seem to be employed to induce more visitors towards a certain destination. Generally, repeat-tourism occurs at a certain destination, which is recognized as a globally renowned

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destination, especially those offering recreations or rejuvenation such as ski resorts or health retreat venues. In the past three decades, Thailand has stood on the world map of tourist destinations with fascinating location offerings such as Hua Hin, Krabi, Pattaya or Phuket, for which visitors would have no second thought to relate them to extensive arrays of recreation and unique characteristics conducive to their repeat-visit with long-stays. National Statistical Office of Thailand (2020) shows the rise in numbers of repeat tourists, whose averaged sojourns amounted to nine days per trip, from the averaged 10 million tourists in the year 2010 to 26 million in the year 2019. This report also illustrates the amount repeat tourists has constituted from 59% to 66% of the total tourists received in each year during this period of nine years. Tourists having a repeat visit to Thailand therefore contributed not only to a consistent revenue to the Thai tourism industry, but also helped the country as referential marketing as well as sustainable development to the country. Although the pandemic of COVID-19 has caused a halt on tourism worldwide since 2020 till now, every tourist destination, including Thailand, has taken opportunity from this dormant period of tourism to prepare for a gradual rebound. Thailand's solid preparation should encompass not only views from repeat tourists on their long stay exposure, but also infrastructure necessary in developing and improving conditions and environment for those who have enjoyed visiting the country before. The attributes to bring back visitors are the nature of people and environment in the tourism industry. Thai people are perceived to be easy going and attempt to help visitors, even though they do not know much English (Sunanta, 2005). stated that Thai food represents the culture of Thai people and their livelihood, which was also supported by Wright-St Clair et al. (2004).

The factors making the four locations in Thailand unique are environment, such as climate, natural resources, architecture and culture. Every year Thailand's climate is considered generally hot and humid during March and April. However, Hua Hin, Krabi, Pattaya and Phuket still have sea breeze to help cool down the heat and as well as help to create the atmosphere of recreation for tourists and locals (Krabi-Thailand, 2002; Na Rong, 2018; Phuket, 2018; Yongcharoenchai, 2017).

All four cities have different natural resources, but they are the same such as, sea, beaches, forests and mountains from which, tourists can choose various activities during their holiday such as snorkeling, sunbathing, discovering wildlife or rock climbing.

Thailand's architecture is deeply rooted in its traditional design and influenced by its neighboring countries. However, the trend is growing with an emerging pace towards a contemporary aesthetic. It has integrated transitional space of both interior and exterior to facilitate the intensity of tropical climate.

Thai culture has a unique cultural combination with strong Indian and Chinese traditional influences, along with the attributes that are distinctively Thai. Having a spring boarded geography, local friendliness, and stunning

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scenery, the “Land of Smiles” is one of the must-see destinations in Southeast Asia.

### **Popular Sea-Side Destinations for Repeat-Visit**

This research study focused on four key sea-side destinations, namely Hua-Hin, Krabi, Pattaya and Phuket. The locations were developed because of the ambition in people, who want to lead a better life, which leads to the beginning of the development of these locations as tourist destinations. The locations were developed based on their uniqueness and have become attractive destinations to both local and foreign visitors alike. Afterwards, the government has seen opportunities, public utility was developed such as transportation, road, electricity, and water systems. There were few government policies to support conducting business, which attracted investors to invest in each location to create business and promote Thailand to international platform and such cycle has been repeated on itself.

### **COVID-19 pandemic crisis preparation for Thailand**

At beginning Thailand provides “Special Visa” which provide 90-day length of stay for tourist and two extension available for 90 day each, which mean 270 day maximum with 14-day quarantine in limited vicinity of their hotel (Thaiembassy, 2021). At present, Thailand pass play major role to reduce 14-day quarantine to one-day for Test and Go Program or five-day for Sandbox Program (Thaiembassy, 2022). Both of the requirement force tourist to be long stay.

1. To describe the factors influencing repeat-visitors’ satisfaction for long stays Tourism in Thailand.
2. To describe the extent to which the factors influencing the repeat-visitors’ satisfaction and plans are related with the tourists’ intention to return for a long stay in Thailand’s seaside destination.
3. To identify the extent to which those factors have influence upon the repeat-visitors’ intention to return for a long stay in Thailand’s seaside destination.

### **Scope of the Research**

The scope of the study aimed to explain why international visitors, who have experienced long stay (from one week or above), want to revisit either of the four destinations of Thailand namely Hua Hin, Krabi, Pattaya, or Phuket. Factors to analyzed influential attributes to the visitors’ revisit include cost of living, medical infrastructure, perceived image, destination image, perceived norm of the same community, tourist satisfaction, rejuvenation plan, and tourist’s motivation. Population of this research is selected from repeat visitors who are from all around the world. As this study is undertaken from late 2020 to November 2021, information provided by the visitors is based on their experiences before COVID-19 pandemic. Access to the informants or distribution of questionnaire therefore is conducted via online platform, since on-site survey is not possible.

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## Definition

### Long Stay Tourist

Long-stay tourist in Thailand usually stay for 2 to 3 months, which is equivalent to the numbers of days allowed for visitors with tourist visa. A long stay means multiple destinations for visitors, who may choose to move around the country, although this study looks for those who stay at one destination for about 10 days or more, in accordance with Kummaraka and Jutaporn (2011), and Anantamongkolkul et al. (2017) on their research studies of long stay.

### Revisit Intention

Revisit intention refers to visitors or tourists who intend to repurchase to Thailand for a visit as a result of their satisfactory experiences on their previous visits, their perceived values on the destinations, or their seasonal plan for vacation at the same destinations.

## Literature Review

### Independent Variables

#### 1. Determinant Factors of Revisit Intention for a Long Stay

##### 1) Cost of Living

From the study of Ali (2013) and Mechinda, Serirat et al. (2010) depicted the price of hotel and restaurant in Thailand are reasonable and get more value than the costs that the tourist pays. Many studies highlighted that tourist's money is worth spending in Thailand and there have been instances of some tourists bargaining with Thai people in the local market (Yiamjanya & Wongleedee, 2014; Mechinda, Serirat et al., 2010). With a reasonable price and worthy of investment on their demand, it is easier for tourists to plan for long-stay or revisit Thailand.

##### 2) Medical Infrastructure

The rising number of tourists came to Thailand with insurance, the study of Na Ranong, (2011) explained the rise of foreigners coming to private hospitals and development of those hospital began in 2001, continued through 2015. The researcher explained that a tourist can get a proper cooperation between Thai medical services and international insurance agencies (Na Ranong, 2011; Ali, 2013). It is because the medical service in Thailand is reliable and the tourists can claim insurance with their service providers, allowing tourists to travel independently (Na Ranong, 2011; Ali, 2013).

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## 2. Perceived Image from People and their help

Many studies have explained the behavior of Thai people to be friendly, welcoming and always having a smile on their face. Some tourists cannot forget about Thais helping foreigners during Tsunami in 2004 (Sangpikul et al., 2017; Rittichainuwat, 2008; Mechinda, Serirat et al., 2010). From what described their experience in the way that support this variable with Thais, tourist can feel that Thais are providing welcoming atmosphere with true smile of Thai people. It has influenced some tourists to learn Thai culture and speak Thai with Thais (Sangpikul et al., 2017; Rittichainuwat, 2008; Yiamjanya & Wongleedee, 2014).

## 3. Perceived Norm of Same Community and Community of Foreigners

Studies from Seyanont (2017), and Yiamjanya and Wongleedee (2014) showed that perceived norm of same community and community of foreigners, tourist come and exchange their information with each other who are not Thai and make friends with people from other nations. It is important in enhancing perceived norm of same community and community of foreigners. It is because perceived norm of same community and community of foreigners come across to make friends and exchange information (Seyanont, 2017; Yiamjanya & Wongleedee, 2014). Tourists used to come to other countries to have a night life as well.

## 4. Tourist Satisfaction

Studies from Sangpikul et al. (2017), Herstanti et al. (2017) and Mechinda, Sirivan et al. (2010) explained that tourist's satisfaction can be defined as the satisfaction derived from the tourist experience being higher than the anticipated satisfaction. Wongleedee (2016), and Thiumsak and Ruangkanjanases (2016) in their research studied what made tourists return to their favored destinations and what factors satisfied them.

## 5. Rejuvenation Plan

Tourists rejuvenation plans mean escape from the bad environment as a study of Wongleedee (2016), and Yiamjanya and Wongleedee (2014), explained about relaxation and recreation during their trip but there is a gap on tourist satisfaction and motivation that want tourists to revisit-intention. It is because in this study, it is not mentioned on tourist health feelings during the trip except (Seyanont, 2017) mentioning about full-filling ego, reset and relax.

## 6. Tourists Motivation

Studies from Yiamjanya and Wongleedee (2014), and Thiumsak and Ruangkanjanases (2016) showed that tourist to travel to Thailand for a long-stay is to enhance relationship, satisfy their eminence and get away from the day by day schedule to bring sightseers return to Thailand. Vacationer inspiration vitally affect location steadfastness estimated by the probability of return to goal and informal proposal (Thiumsak & Ruangkanjanases, 2016).

## Dependent Variables

### Long-Stay Revisit Intention

The concept of long-stay revisit intention is defined as visitors' act of satisfaction and willingness to return to stay for an extensive period at the same destination as in their previous trips. Such destination—be it country or resort—is where their positive experiences are built previously and becoming their good memory. The concept also includes visitors' seasonal plan for traveling to or vacation at the same destination for a certain period of time. Studies from Seyanont (2017), Herstanti et al. (2017), Wongleedee (2016), and Thiumsak and Ruangkanjanases (2016) showed that if tourists keep revisiting the same destination, they tend to have high loyalty towards the destination and stay there for a longer period on their next visit.

## Research Conceptual Framework

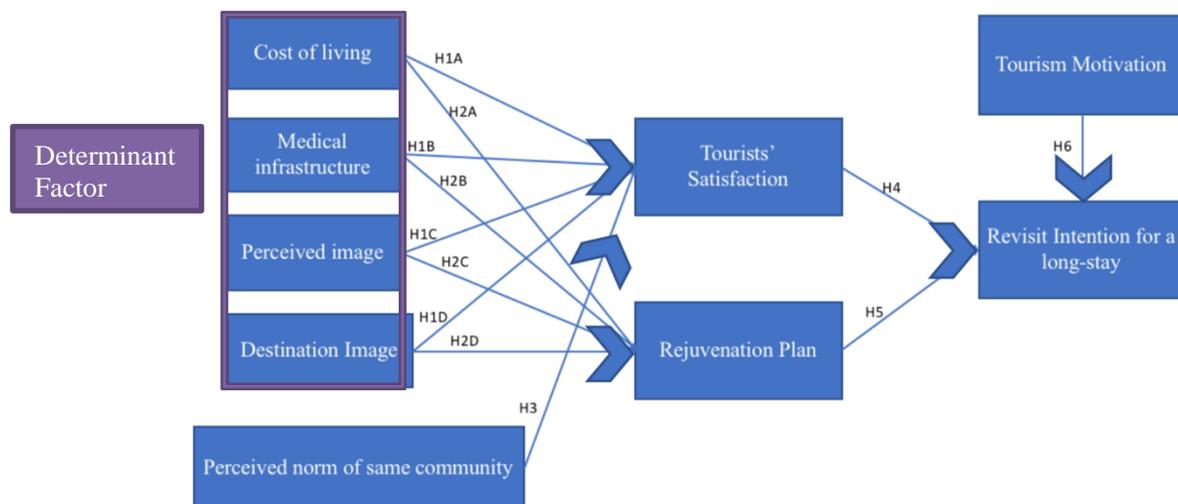


Figure 1 The conceptual framework by researcher

The conceptual framework is constructed in line with literature, previous studies and theoretical framework. The framework is used to identify the revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand from revisited for a long stay international tourist. The construct identified the relationship between determinant factor (cost of living, medical infrastructure, perceived image of people and their help, and destination image environment), perceived norm of the same community, tourist satisfaction, rejuvenation plan, tourist's motivation and revisit intention for a long-stay.

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The literature review has directed to the development of the following hypothesis:

H1: Determinant Factors have influence on long-stay tourists' satisfaction in Thailand.

H1A: Cost of living, as a determinant factor, has influence on tourists' satisfaction

H1B: Medical infrastructure as a determinant factor, has influence on tourists' satisfaction

H1C: Perceived image from people and their help as a determinant factor, has influence on tourists' satisfaction

H1D: Destination image environment as a determinant factor, has influence on tourists' satisfaction

H2: Determinant Factors have influence on long-stay tourists' rejuvenation plan upon their revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand.

H2A: Cost of living, as a determinant factor, has influence on long-stay tourists' rejuvenation plan.

H2B: Medical infrastructure as a determinant factor, has influence on long-stay tourists' rejuvenation plan.

H2C: Perceived image from people and their help as a determinant factor, has influence on long-stay tourists' rejuvenation plan.

H2D: Destination image environment as a determinant factor, has influence on long-stay tourists' rejuvenation plan.

H3: Perceived norm of same community and community of foreigner has influence on tourists' satisfaction upon their revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand

H4: There is significant relationship between Tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand.

H5: There is significant relationship between Rejuvenation plan and revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand

H6: There is significant relationship between tourism motivation and revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand

## Methods

In this study, the researcher used a quantitative approach with five-point Likert scale questionnaires for better understanding of the respondents. There were eleven sections with 63 questions in total. The primary data were derived from a structured questionnaire designed to identify the relevance from the responses. The questionnaire survey method was crucial as it captures respondent' perception and recent experience— 2 to 3 years prior to 2019—to revisit four destinations such as Hua-Hin, Krabi, Pattaya, and Phuket by using Instagram keywords (hashtag) and pinpoint location to discover respondents. Moreover, the questionnaire is easy to conduct and analyze as well, the

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respondents filled out the questionnaire by themselves without a time limit.

Though the numbers of repeat tourists in during the years from 2017 to 2019 are 22.75 million, the numbers of those visiting the selected four sea resort towns—or the target population—are unknown. As the survey period fell on the pandemic crisis with no tourist activity, this study adopted the convenience sampling method, hence reaching out to the samples via online approach as follows:

1. Creation of keyword to match tourists' hashtag or pin-point locations under the terms: Pattaya, Krabi....;
2. Viewing the tourists' photos and randomly identifying potential respondents.
3. Contacting the selected respondents via their Instagram or emails. If they are available, then they would be approached for survey request.
4. Tourists filling up the questionnaire and returning it to the researcher, via email or Instagram.

Some respondents agreed to help in this online survey by snowballing the questionnaire to their acquaintances who also experienced long stay in Thailand.

In any case, the two screening questions ensure that all respondents experienced their long stay at the respective resort towns. They are: Have you visited the destination more than once?; and, For how long did you stay at the destination?

### **Sampling Size: Convenience Sampling**

The sample size of 203 international tourists is proposed. The proposed size agrees with the concept that Kotler (2000) and Malhotra (2004) recommend an estimation of sample size to be comparable to those of research studies of similar nature with similar channel of survey.

A study of Satisfaction of European tourists in relation to destination loyalty in Phuket by Sangpikul (2017) surveyed 225 individual respondents, while Thiumsak's (2016) Study of Factors influencing international visitors to revisit Bangkok, Thailand consists of total of 189 individual respondents. A sample size of 227 respondents on Herstanti's (2014) Study of three modified models to predict on the intention of Indonesian tourists to revisit Sydney also helps affirm an appropriate size compatible to this study. The three research works above underwent online survey approach.

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## Presentation of Data

The amount of proves data in this research is 203 respondents. The first will classify by general information of respondent.

**Table 1** General information of respondent

Respondents' Sample Profile	Findings (%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	46%
Female	54%
<b>Age</b>	
Below 40	85%
From 41 to 55	11%
From 56 to 65	2%
From 66 to 75	2%
<b>Race</b>	
European	63%
South African	10%
North American	9%
Australian	13%
Asian	5%
<b>Occupation</b>	
Retiree	5%
Investor	2%
Business Owner	20%
Corporate personnel	19%
Freelance	18%
Other	36%

It categorized by gender 46% are male and 54% are female. Age of respondent divided into four groups. Ranking from the highest to lowest, most participants are aged below 40 at 85%, and second from 41 to 55 years old, consisting of 11% and third from 66 to 75 years old at 2%. Lastly fourth from 56 to 65 years old consisting of

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2%. The race of respondent can divide in to five group. Ranking from highest to lowest will be European 63%, Australian 13%, South African 10%, North American 9% and Asian 5%. Occupation of respondent divide into six groups. Ranking from the highest to lowest, participants mostly are other (Teacher, Model, Pilot, Music/Film Producer, tourist and house wife) account for 36%, those who are business owners account for 20%, those who are corporate personnel account for 19%, those who are freelancers account for 18%, those who retirees account for 5%, lastly those who are investor for 2% respectively.

Expense of respondent, mostly spend below USD 5,000 account for 53%, those who mostly spend from USD 5,001 to 9,000 account for 37%, those who mostly spend from USD 9,001 to 15,000 account for 6% and lastly who mostly spend above USD 15,000 account for 4% of the respondents respectively. Travel Associates of respondent, mostly travel alone account for 34%, those who mostly travel with friend account for 21%, those who mostly travel with lover or partner account for 20%, those who mostly travel with Spouse account for 14% and participants who mostly travel with family member for 11%. Traveling alone accounts for the largest number of participants. 203 respondents categorized from four cities. Hua-Hin for 32 respondents (16%), Krabi 75 respondents (37%), Pattaya 36 respondents (18%) and Phuket 60 respondents (30%).

### **Screening the Data: Skewness and Kurtosis**

During the initial screening of the data the fifty-five items that were generated to measure revisit intention were screened for skewness and kurtosis. Nine items in three sections showed extreme skew and kurtosis. Logarithmic transformations did not show any improvements in the distribution. Hence, the nine items were eliminated, which one from tourist's satisfaction, five from rejuvenation plan, and two from long stay revisit intention.

In case of, items in rejuvenation is less than three, also the hypothesis of Determinant Factors have influence on long-stay tourists' rejuvenation plan had to reject. It is because, it cannot be calculated or any improvement. Hence, the hypotheses 2 and 5 are removed from this study.

### **Hypothesis Testing**

H1, the value of R-value is .757. This is considered a strong relationship between determinant factors and revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand. With further analysis by using ANOVA to see the relationship to tourist's satisfaction the F value of 66.380 is significant at the 0.000 level.

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Determinant factors (cost of living, medical infrastructure, perceived image from people and their help and destination image environment) are related to tourist's satisfaction for revisit intention for a long-stay. This can help to ensure that the framework is valid. There is validity of a strong positive relationship among independent variables, but the standard coefficient value shows that perceived image from people and their help has a bigger influence on tourist's satisfaction, accounting for .659 and is significant at the 0.000 level. The second variable related to tourist's satisfaction is destination image environment, which accounted for .214, and is also significant at 0.000. However, cost of living and medical infrastructure has influence on tourists' satisfaction. Perceived image from people and their help is the most influential factor contributing towards tourist's satisfaction. Lastly, the null hypothesis is rejected.

H3, R-value of 0.413, which means that there is a moderate positive relationship between the variables, which perceived norm of same community and community of foreigner has influence on tourists' satisfaction upon their revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand.

H4, the significant value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis rejected and can be concluded as saying that there is relationship between tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention for a long stay in Thailand.

H6, the significant value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis rejected and can be concluded as saying that there is relationship between tourism motivation and revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand. Pearson Correlation of .369 means that there is a weak positive relationship between tourism motivation satisfaction and revisit intention for a long stay in Thailand. From these findings, it can be concluded that the two variables move in the same direction.

## Conclusion

This research study concentrates on four sea-side destinations in the country where repeat visitors show their frequency in repeated long-stay: they are, Krabi, Hua-Hin, Pattaya and Phuket. Results from this investigation is hoped to enable tourist stakeholders at home and abroad to postulate what Thailand and her stakeholders need to be comprehensively aware of in order to deliver the best solution for the country's planning on repeat visit with long-stay tourism.

Six independent variables are used to identify their influence and relationship with the repeat visitors who experienced long-stay and wish to return for a long-stay at the four destinations in Thailand. Among four sub-variables in Determinant Factors Variable, two—perceived image and destination image—appear to have strong influence on the repeat visitors' intention to revisit, whereas cost of living and medical infrastructure have no

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influence on their intention to revisit. Long-stay repeat visitors' response on Perceived Image of Thai people and their help scores significantly high, along with their response on Perceived Norm for Community of Foreigner. This explains the degree to which the repeat visitors—single, couple, or group—seek and enjoy communication, interaction and exchange of views with the locals and fellow visitors amongst the amicable environment of the four destinations.

The overall result of hypotheses testing shows that, determinant factors—especially perceived image from people and their help, and, destination image environment—have influence on the long-stay tourists' satisfaction. The study reveals that the repeat visitors' perceived norm of same community has moderate influence on their satisfaction and their revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand. More notably, the five components of tourist motivation—relaxation, enhancement of relationship, fulfillment of prestige, enhancement of social life, and escape from mundane—show significant relationship between the repeat visitors and their revisit intention for a long-stay in Thailand.

## Recommendations

As shown by the results, perceived image of Thai people and their help, destination image environment and perceived norm of same community form the factors that create visitors' satisfaction and linkage to motivation for their repeated visit. Tourism Authority of Thailand or other tourism related agencies can use this information to communicate to future visitors by illustrating more about Thai people's characteristics, unique service characters, and, destination image of certain resort towns. Highlights of advertisement or video trailers may show more of Thai people's livelihood and their characteristics appealing to the visitors.

At the same, there are some structural areas that government should develop and improve to support the locales to cater for their repeat visitors. As the tourists' impression on the issue of destination image environment soar highly in the study, tourist authorities may need to improve the local public transportation, accessibility and facilities to transportation, as well as basic infrastructure comprehensive enough to sustain the efficient service and contingency management.

Although long-stay tourists in this study show no significant concern on medical infrastructure, this does not mean medical services are not important to their visits. Perhaps it might have occurred that those respondents experienced no problem on their health, accident, or any troubles. So, they were not able to recognize any medical service, safety, or insurance claims. Such effect may owe it to unnoticeable billboards or inconspicuous publicity of medical services and assistance. Therefore, intermediaries—i.e. insurance, health related businesses, public security agencies—should realize that poor publicity or unnoticeable signage may cause the visitors to overlook the service

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providers' intention, thereby reducing their confidence in the destination. Medical infrastructure and its peripheral entities should stand out vividly and physically to the visitors' mind and sight, as they arrive at and roam around the vicinity of the town, thus creating greater awareness of the destination's health care, safety and security.

Post COVID-19 prediction

Many of studies focus on hygiene, wellness and

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