

**INTERNATIONAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION: A CASE  
STUDY OF THAI SPA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES  
IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

**Alhuda Chanitphattana**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy (Communication Arts and Innovation)  
The Graduate School of Communication Arts  
and Management Innovation  
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and Management Innovation**

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Associate Professor..... *J. Sudhivoraseth* .....Major Advisor  
(Jitraporn Sudhivoraseth, Ph.D.)  
..... *SM* .....Co-Advisor  
(Suthikorn Kingkaew, Ph.D.)

The Examining Committee Approved This Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Communication Arts and Innovation).

Associate Professor..... *Patchanee Cheyjanya* .....Committee Chairperson  
(Patchanee Cheyjanya)

Associate Professor..... *J. Sudhivoraseth* .....Committee  
(Jitraporn Sudhivoraseth, Ph.D.)

..... *SM* .....Committee  
(Suthikorn Kingkaew, Ph.D.)

Professor..... *Imron* .....Committee  
(Imron Maluleem, Ph.D.)

Professor ..... *Es Sij* .....Dean  
(Yubol Benjarongkij, Ph.D.)

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## **ABSTRACT**

<b>Title of Dissertation</b>	International Marketing Communication: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates
<b>Author</b>	Miss Alhuda Chanitphattana
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The objectives of this research, International Marketing Communications: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates are 1) To study marketing communication between Thailand and overseas in terms of product export and service of spa business in the United Arab Emirates; 2) To study beliefs, cultures, and lifestyle of the Muslim people in the United Arab Emirates; 3) To study satisfaction and expectations of spa users in the United Arab Emirates towards product and service of Thai spa businesses; 4) To study news exposure and social media application usage behaviors of the spa users in the United Arab Emirates; 5) To analyze problems, restrictions and practices Thai spa products and services in the United Arab Emirates; and 6) To analyze factors in developing international marketing communications for Thailand in terms of Thai spa product and service exports to the United Arab Emirates.

There are three pillars of research - Thai spa business, religion and culture, and international marketing communications. The focus would be on both Thai spa products and service sectors. This research used the mixed methods approach to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative studies.

The result of the qualitative study shows that the methods of marketing communications of Thai spa products and services are operated by both Thai public sector and private sector. In the public sector, international marketing communications

channels include exposure in the beauty product expos and also through an advertisement on television. In the private sector, international marketing communications channels are presented in the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) method. As the United Arab Emirates is a Muslim country in the Middle East, results of the literature review and the in – depth interview show that beliefs and cultures directly influence Thai spa products and services business.

Moreover, the result of the quantitative study shows that the Thai Spa customers received information from online media the most, followed by the word-of-mouth, TV, print media, and billboard. It was also found that the users of Thai spa products and services mostly have the account of Instagram, followed by Facebook, Whatsapps, Twitter, and Snapchat, respectively.

According to the result of comprehensive research there are six important factors, which could develop International Marketing Communications of Thai spa products and service in the United Arab Emirates. These factors are 1) demographic characteristics, 2) economics factors, 3) political and legal environment, 4) geographic characteristics, 5) culture environment and 6) communications characteristics.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS**

### **Abbreviations**

### **Equivalence**

DITP	Department of International Trade Promotion
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication
NIA	National Innovation Agency
UAE	The United Arab Emirates
SAW	Salla Allah Alaihi Wa Sallam (refers to “May Allah bless you with generosity and peace”)
SWT	Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala (refers to “Allah is pure and noble”)

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Study

In 2010, Thai government has embarked on the international economic policy reinforcing new market penetration targeting the Middle East countries. It is a significant market because the populations of the Muslim countries make up one-fourth of the global population (Isara Santisat et al., 2013a). In addition, the demography experts expect that Muslim people will increase to the proportion of 30% of the world's population by 2025 (Halal Institute Prince of Songkla University, 2014). Doubled with high income from oil trading, this region has high import potential for products and services. Significantly, it can be said that Halal product market is swiftly expanding both in qualitative and quantitative perspectives. The organizations related to Thailand's governmental economic policy reinforcement such as National Innovation Agency (NIA), Department of Export Promotion and Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) have developed Thailand's marketing strategy in Middle East. In the previous years, Thailand's important export products to the Middle East were rice, garments, shoes, air conditioner's parts, and the components of the jewels and accessories. Thailand Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives also set up new-market policy for Thailand's agricultural products in the Middle East.

The National Innovation Agency (NIA) is the agency responsible mainly in reinforcing and developing in-house technological innovation. Attempts have been initiated to promote natural products as the export products targeted to new markets in the Middle East. NIA envisions a growth in the future trend of health and natural lifestyle awareness in the Middle East. In addition, the population in the region tends to use natural dietary and non-dietary products in their consumption. NIA has conducted a study and found that the population in the region believes that natural

products are valuable, safe, and contain less synthetic substances. This has led to the double digit the market expansion for natural products within the past few years (National Innovation Agency, 2010).

Therefore, in order to create market opportunity and pilot schemes for penetrating into the Middle East, the NIA and the Department of Export Promotion have collaborated under “Middle East Market...Thailand’s New Natural Products Market” strategy to push forward the opportunity of new market expansion for innovative natural products to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which consists of the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain. This group needs natural products, particularly, the products for health and beauty from Thailand. This project categorizes innovative natural products into 3 groups- innovative food for health such as weight-control diet, energy diet, and organic food etc. natural products for beauty such as anti-aging products, whitening and moisturizing products and innovative spa products such as essential oil products, scrub, and muscle-relaxant products etc. However, NIA takes the role in this project for developing innovative new Thai natural products and promoting export. It supports the product export process and expands Thai natural products penetration into the Middle East market.

During 2011 – 2012, the Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) conducted a research on the Middle East market. The findings showed that the United Arab Emirates tended to increasingly import Thai products, especially spa products. The report from DITP in Dubai demonstrated the growing trend for the cosmetics market in the United Arab Emirates. In 2012, it showed that, due to their outstanding uniqueness, the United Arab Emirates’ import value of cosmetics and products for health from Thailand was about 1,122 million Baht. Moreover, the herbal products or natural products are very popular in the United Arab Emirates. Nonetheless, the barriers of Thai products are packaging, as well as fragrance, and color, which need appropriate adjustment to the appreciation of the Arab-countries market. They should be reasonably priced for competitiveness with the other countries’ products in the same category (MGR Online, 2013).

For the Thai labor market in the United Arab Emirates, expected the good future for market expansion, especially the opportunity for Thai labor in hotel, restaurant, and spa industries. Thai labor is superior to those from South Asia or other

countries in the Middle East. Nevertheless, what can be the problem for Thai labor is the understanding of Arab culture and religion, which is different from Thai's. Therefore, if the labor providers are well educated on the understanding and knowledge, it is anticipated that the numbers of the Thai labor in the United Arab Emirates would be raised.

As mentioned, in order to penetrate the Arab market, it is necessary to learn about the beliefs, cultures, and lifestyles of the majority of the populace who are Muslim. The important thing in marketing the "Halal" products is the development of the quality ingredients according to the Islamic prescriptions. For example, essential or therapy oil extracted with alcohol in Halal spa, cleansing and lotion products consisted of ingredients from swine or the non-Islamic slaughter animals are prohibited according to the religious prescriptions. Therefore, the products with the composition of vegetable oil or fats from non-prohibited or proper Islamic slaughtered animals are not restricted. Therefore, Thai herbal and organic products can pass Halal requirements and give the same cleansing and nourishing efficiencies as common cosmetics (Halal Institute Prince of Songkla University, 2014). This will be the opportunity for Thailand in developing the products for spa business in the Middle-East correctly according to Islamic principles. Apart from Halal products application, the spa service must also be certified with Halal. For exporting Thai masseurs or therapists to the Middle-East, they must be screened. For example, Thai male masseurs must not be gay as sexual deviation is against Islamic prescriptions. Male masseurs or therapists can service the Middle-East males only. Likewise, female masseurs or therapists can service the Middle-East females only.

With the significance of the spa business market of which its products export is likely to grow and the service is increasing in demand, in-depth market research should be conducted in order to boost the competency of Thai entrepreneurs. Another barrier in developing spa industry market is Thailand's constricted academic comprehension toward marketing or business performing with in-house or international Muslim market. Therefore, the competency and the data in marketing research of the Middle-East market are limited. This is derived from many reasons. Firstly, it is caused from the economic and social relationships between Thais and Muslims, which is limited to a small group interaction. Secondly, part of the

misunderstanding in Islam and the existing Muslim world is also influenced from the west. This is especially true from the knowledge and the perception, which has been developed from the conflict between the west and Muslim world. Thirdly, Thai society cannot produce adequate researchers and Muslim-aspect academics in timely fashion. Particularly, they are limited to the religious aspect rather than tackling more diverse areas of study. This caused the misunderstanding of the Muslim worldview, which can affect relationship development between Thailand and Muslim countries. Moreover, there's a lack of encouragement in extending knowledge in many aspects related to the Muslim world (Isara Santisat et al., 2013b).

With all these reasons, the researcher visions the importance of the research in international marketing communication of Thai spa business both in terms of product export and in-depth service in order to enhance the competencies and create the opportunity in operating businesses between Thai and the Middle-East entrepreneurs.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

1.2.1 To study marketing communication between Thailand and international markets in terms of product export and service for spa business in the United Arab Emirates.

1.2.2 To study beliefs, cultures, and lifestyle of Muslims in the United Arab Emirates.

1.2.3 To study satisfaction and expectation of spa users in the United Arab Emirates towards product and service of Thai spa businesses.

1.2.4 To study news exposure and social media application behaviors of the spa users in the United Arab Emirates.

1.2.5 To analyze problems, restrictions and practices of Thai spa products and services in the United Arab Emirates.

1.2.6 To analyze factors in developing international marketing communication for Thailand in terms of Thai spa products and services exports to the United Arab Emirates.

### **1.3 Research Problems**

1.3.1 What are the principals of international marketing communication for Thailand in terms of Thai spa products and services exports to the United Arab Emirates?

1.3.2 How are beliefs, cultures, and lifestyles of Muslim people in importing products and services of spa business in the United Arab Emirates?

1.3.3 What are the satisfaction and expectation levels of spa users in the United Arab Emirates toward Thai spa products and services?

1.3.4 How are news exposure and social media application behaviors of spa users in the United Arab Emirates?

1.3.5 What are the problems, restrictions, and practices in terms of Thai spa products and services exports in the United Arab Emirates?

1.3.6 What are the factors that can be developed in the international marketing communication for Thailand in terms of Thai spa products and services exports to the United Arab Emirates?

### **1.4 Scope of Research**

This research studies the marketing communication strategy of Thai spa business towards the United Arab Emirates. The research consists of 3 main pillars- Thai spa business, religion and cultures, and international marketing communication. The scopes could be divided into 2 parts- spa products export to the United Arab Emirates service export or labor export of Thai traditional masseurs or therapists to the United Arab Emirates and Thai spa business management in the United Arab Emirates. The business must be Day Spa or City Spa according to the categorization of the International Spa Association: ISPA – Europe.

Data collection from the sample group would be conducted in 2 parts. The first part is the domestic sample groups, which includes the National Innovation Agency, the Overseas Employment Administration Division, the spa product exporters, and the entrepreneurs of massage school for spa business. The second part of the sample groups in the United Arab Emirates which include the Office of International Trade Promotion in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, the Royal Thai Embassy, Abu Dhabi,

The United Arab Emirates (Labors), the spa entrepreneurs in The United Arab Emirates, and the spa customers or users in the United Arab Emirates.

## **1.5 Contribution of the Study**

1.5.1 Thai spa entrepreneurs can thoroughly study international marketing for Thailand in terms of spa products and services exports to the United Arab Emirates.

1.5.2 Thai spa entrepreneurs understand the problems, restrictions of practices in terms of Thai spa products and services exports to the United Arab Emirates.

1.5.3 There are opportunities for Thai spa entrepreneurs to expand the market and boost Thai spa products and services export competencies in the United Arab Emirates.

## **1.6 Technical Terms**

### **1.6.1 Belief**

It refers to the belief of a certain society and the practices, which have been long performed such as religious beliefs and social norms. In this research, belief refers to the beliefs of Islam, which affects the use of Thai spa products and services.

### **1.6.2 Culture**

It refers to the feelings, opinions, behaviors and any acts of human in one society who have the same behaviors or expressions. They have been long inherited and have become the beliefs and traditions of that society. However, the culture of each society might be influenced by religion and leads to the acts, which have been long inherited and have turned to religious cultures such as donation or zakat of Islam etc.

### **1.6.3 Expectation**

It is the individual's anticipated subjectivity toward the certain object, which should be or should happen. In this research, it refers to the expectation of the customers toward the spa services and products imported from Thailand.

#### **1.6.4 Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)**

It is the countries in the Middle East, which include the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain.

#### **1.6.5 Halal**

It refers to “Approve” in Arabic language. When it is used in religion, it means what is approved by religion such as approve to eat, drink, do, and use etc. Halal is opposite to “Harom” which generally refers to “Prohibit”. When it is used in religion, it means what is prohibited by religion (The Halal Standard Institute of Thailand, 2014).

The definition of Halal product is the product with quality ingredients, which are correct according to Islamic prescriptions such as Halal spa products. For example, essential or therapy oil extracted with alcohol is prohibited in the religious prescriptions. In general cosmetics, especially cleansing and lotion products, which consist of ingredients from swine or the non-Islamic slaughter animals are also prohibited according to the religious prescriptions. Therefore, the products with the composition of vegetable oil or fats from non-prohibited or proper Islamic slaughtered animals are not restricted. (Halal Institute Prince of Songkla University, 2014).

#### **1.6.6 International Marketing**

It refers to the communication of one country delivered to another country for marketing the certain product or service. In this research, it is Thailand’s international marketing communication for Thai spa products and service to the customers in the United Arab Emirates.

#### **1.6.7 Lifestyle**

It refers to the lifestyle of the people in a particular society, which has been long performed and has become the uniqueness or the pattern of living of the people in that society. That lifestyle might be influenced by the religious doctrines such as the religious practices of Muslim or 5 Salat times daily etc.

### **1.6.8 News exposure Behavior**

It refers to the news exposure style of Thai spa business' customers in The United Arab Emirates via multiple channels such as printed media, online media, television, radio media, billboards, and word-of-mouth etc.

### **1.6.9 Satisfaction**

It refers to the affection of the individual toward a certain object, which reduces tension and responds to the need of an individual and creates satisfaction toward that object (Taweepong Hinkam, 1998). In this research, satisfaction refers to customer satisfaction in using spa services and products imported from Thailand.

### **1.6.10 Social Media Application Behavior**

It refers to the social media application style of the Thai spa business' customers in the United Arab Emirates via Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Google + and Snapchat.

### **1.6.11 Spa**

This research is the study of Thai spa in the United Arab Emirates. It is the spa, which provides services in the same way as western spa. However, there's the mixture of Thai or eastern wisdoms in the service (Spa Business Manual, Ministry of Public Health, 2015, pp. 2-3)

This research will study the Day Spa or City Spa only. They are the spa where customers are provided with convenient, comfortable, and fast service because of its location in town or business area. This enables customers to use the services during the daytime without taking long trips. Day Spa or City Spa focuses on providing beauty service and relaxation from essential oil (Spa Business Manual, Ministry of Public Health, 2015, pp. 1-2).

### **1.6.12 Spa Product Export**

It refers to the export of spa products categorized in cosmetics export according to the categorization of the Department of International Trade Promotion. This research will study Thai spa products exported to the United Arab Emirates.

They are categorized in natural product group which are cosmetics made of Thai herbs and essential oil only.

#### **1.6.13 Spa Service Export**

It refers to the export of Thai traditional-massage masseurs or therapists who legally work in spa business in the United Arab Emirates according to Thailand's Labor Ministry.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The research on “International Marketing Communication: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates” has studied concepts, theories, and the related research works as supportive information. The data collection can be divided into 7 main aspects as follows:

- 2.1 General Information about the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.1.1 General information of the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.1.2 Economic information of the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.1.3 International trade between Thailand and the United Arab Emirates
- 2.2 Thai Spa Products and Services Market in the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.2.1 Export status of Thai cosmetics products to the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.2.2 The trend of Thai cosmetics market to the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.2.3 Export status of Thai labor market to the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.2.4 The trend of Thai labor market to the United Arab Emirates
- 2.3 Overall Picture of Thai Spa Business
  - 2.3.1 Basic information about spa business
  - 2.3.2 Products and equipment used in Thai spa
  - 2.3.3 Spa business services
  - 2.3.4 Developing strategy for the spa business
  - 2.3.5 Situation and the trend of Thai spa in foreign countries
- 2.4 Religions, Cultures, and Business Negotiation with Arabs
  - 2.4.1 Basic value of Arab
  - 2.4.2 Basic attitude of Arab
  - 2.4.3 Self-perception of Arab
  - 2.4.4 Communication with Arab
  - 2.4.5 Manners to the opposite gender of Arab

- 2.5 Theories about International Markets and Cross-culture Communications
  - 2.5.1 Marketing communications theory
  - 2.5.2 International marketing communications theory
  - 2.5.3 Cross-culture communications theory
- 2.6 Satisfaction and Expectancy Theories
  - 2.6.1 Definition of satisfaction
  - 2.6.2 Satisfaction theory
  - 2.6.3 Definition of expectation
  - 2.6.4 Expectancy theory
- 2.7 Related Articles and Research Works
  - 2.7.1 Spa business in the United Arab Emirates
  - 2.7.2 Marketing communication in the Middle East
  - 2.7.3 Online communication in the Middle East

## 2.1 General Information of the United Arab Emirates

In studying international marketing, it is essential to understand basic information about the country to be marketed such as the demographics, economic status, geography, administration, and cultural environment. As the UAE is known within the limited group of Thai entrepreneurs, it is important to study basic beneficial information in order to better the understand the context of the international market.

### 2.1.1 General Information of the United Arab Emirates

**Table 2.1** General Information of the United Arab Emirates

Information	Details
<b>Capital city</b>	Abu Dhabi
<b>Area</b>	83,699 km
<b>Population</b>	9.3 Million (2013) - Emirati 12%

**Table 2.1** (Continued)

<b>Information</b>	<b>Details</b>
	- Foreigners 88% (Most of them are labor from India, Pakistan, Iran, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and other Arab countries.)
<b>Official language</b>	Arabic and English languages are widely used, as well as Farsi language used among the population from Iran residing in the UAE.
<b>Climate</b>	- Summer (May–September) The temperature is between 32-48 °C. - Winter (October-April) The temperature is between 15-30 °C.
<b>Religion</b>	Islam (96%), Christianity, Hindu and others (4%)
<b>Currency</b>	Dirham – AED Exchange rate : 1 Dirham for 9.76 Baht (on August 2015)
<b>Gross Domestic Product (GDP)</b>	399.5 billion US Dollars (World Bank, 2014)
<b>GDP per capita</b>	43,962 US Dollars (World Bank, 2014)
<b>Administration</b>	The federation consists of 7 states Abu Dhabi, Dubai (seaport and business hub), Sharjah, Ajman, Ra's al-Khaimah, Fujairah, and Umm al-Qaiwain. UAE is a federal absolute monarchy.
<b>President</b>	H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Also sits as the ruler of Abu Dhabi
<b>Prime Minister</b>	H.H. Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum Also sits as a vice president of UAE and the ruler of Dubai.
<b>The establishment day of Thai-UAE diplomatic relation</b>	12. December 1975

**Source:** Department of South Asia, Middle East and African Affairs. (2014).

### 2.1.2 Economic Information of The United Arab Emirates

1) UAE is the country with fastest economic growth in Middle East due to its abundant energy resources. The World Economic Forum defines UAE as the country with the highest economic advancement in the world. Moreover, the UAE's owns the largest Sovereign Wealth Fund in the world, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA). The fund is worth over 627 billion US Dollars. In addition, the UAE possesses 8.3% of the world's crude oil reserves and is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> or 3.3% of the world's natural gas reserves. This abundance ensures the UAE's financial and economic stability.

2) The UAE's geographic location is between Asia, Europe, and Africa. It is the crucial factor, which promotes the UAE, especially Dubai, as the business hub in Middle East and the center of cargo transfer and delivery to other countries in the region. It is also the export hub to the out-regions markets such as Africa, Central Asia, and Europe. Currently, the UAE has 9 ports. Every state has a port, while Dubai and Abu Dhabi have more ports than the other states.



**Figure 2.1** Geographic Map of The United Arab Emirates

**Source:** Arabic Bible. (n.d.).

3) The main revenue of the UAE is from petroleum and natural gas. However, as they're the non-renewable energy, therefore, the UAE government pays

attention to the development policy for economic base extension to diversify the revenue without depending solely on the oil. However, the government attempts to advance trading and investment, as well as promoting foreign investment in the economic free zone in terms of manufacturing industry by using the UAE as the distribution base.

4) Dubai is the center of both sea and air transports. It is the business and export transfer center. It is the city, which has been swiftly developed since 1980. The value of the gross national product (GNP) of Dubai is calculated 32% of GDP. Moreover, Dubai is the financial center with massive capital flow into real estate sector and financial institutions.

5) At present, the UAE has established the New Economic City (NEC) project called Masdar City in Abu Dhabi. It is worth 15,000 million US Dollars. It has been developed from the revenue of the export of crude oil. This place will become the new innovation experiment center of renewable energy such as solar power and seawater distillation, etc.

6) The UAE is the member in the customs union of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). As a result the import duty is increased within the group from 4% to 5% for common products while the tax on food is exempted. Moreover, the important factors, which attract the foreign entrepreneurs to the UAE, are the exemption of value-added tax, profit tax, and personal income tax, as well as the policy, which allows free money flow in and out of the country.

### **2.1.3 International Trade between Thailand and the United Arab Emirates**

The UAE is number 1 trade partner in the Middle East and oil exporter of Thailand. The trading status between Thailand and the UAE in 2012 shows that Thailand's total export value was 2,870.58 million US Dollars. The export products were radio and television receivers, automotive parts, computer equipment and parts, air conditioner equipment and parts, compositions of jewelries and accessories, steel, chemicals, cloth, and thermoplastic.

The export products of the UAE to Thailand were crude oil, iron ores, scrap metal, petroleum, natural gas, diamond and gems, jewelries, silver bar, gold bar, chemicals, steels, jewelries and accessories, fertilizer, and pesticide. The total value

was 15,662.70 million US Dollars. The balance of trade between Thailand and the UAE in 2012 was -12,792.13 million US Dollars as shown in the table below (Department of Trade Negotiation, 2015).

**Table 2.2** Thai Trade Statistic - The United Arab Emirates

Thai trade statistic – The United Arab Emirates (Million US Dollars)				
Year	Trade value	Export	Import	Trade Balance
2552	9,126.16 (-34.56%)	2,459.53 (-11.96%)	6,666.63 (-40.22%)	-4,207.11
2553	11,498.46 (+25.993%)	2,843.57 (+15.61%)	8,654.89 (+29.82%)	-5,811.32
2554	17,230.70 (+48.19%)	2,761.77 (-2.88%)	14,468.92 (+64.73%)	-11,707.15
2555	18,533.28 (+7.56%)	2,870.58 (+1.25%)	15,662.70 (+8.25%)	-12,792.13

**Source:** Department of Trade Negotiation (2015).

## 2.2 Thai Spa Products and Services Market in the United Arab Emirates

In the past, the Halal standard was known only and mainly for food standard certification. However, at present, there's a change in Halal standard certification. Muslim consumers are increasingly willing to pay for the products or services, which are appropriate to Islam. Halal product certification was then extended to other products and services such as financial industry, banking, packaging, and especially other products in the cosmetics group. These products were also increasingly demanded in Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Nonetheless, with the growth of beauty and health market in the UAE, which had diverse demography, customers with high, average, and low purchasing power, as well as multiracial populations, the multiple forms of marketing for exporting products and services of the entrepreneurs were initiated (DITP in Dubai, 2013). Thus, it is important to understand the status of cosmetics market and the overall image of labor of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates.

### 2.2.1 Export Status of Thai Cosmetics Products to the United Arab Emirates

Dubai's import statistics of the products categorized in cosmetics group in 2012 showed the total value of 37.4 million US Dollars or 2% of all products imported. The top 10 imported products are shown in the following table.

**Table 2.3** Imported Cosmetics Products to Dubai in 2012

SL	HS Code	Description	Weight/Tons	Value /\$US	Market share of all Thai products (.S %)
1.	33049990	Cosmetics and facial and skin nourishing cream and lotion (Beauty or make – up preparations & preparations for the care of the skin [other than medicaments], including sunscreen preparations)	1,698	15,204,954	40.7
2.	33049930	Skin lotion (Preparations for moisturizing softening the skin)	438	4,764,298	12.8

**Table 2.3 (Continued)**

<b>SL</b>	<b>HS Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Weight/Tons</b>	<b>Value /\$US</b>	<b>Market share of all Thai products (.S %)</b>
3.	33049110	Facial powder (Baby powder)	452	4,554,493	12.2
4.	32061010	Toothpaste (Toothpaste)	417	2,821,597	7.6
5.	33059090	Hair and hair nourishing products (Preparations for use on the hair)	284	2,176,401	5.8
6.	33074910	Air fragrant freshener (Preparations for perfuming or deodorizing rooms, excluding those which operate by burning, in evaporated vessels)	35	1,019,690	2.7
7.	33073000	Shower cream (Perfumed bath salts & other bath preparations)	267	866,593	2.3
8.	33069010	Mouth wash (Mouth washes & oral perfumes)	163	762,997	2.0
9.	33074110	Incense (Agarbatti & other odoriferous preparations which operate by burning, liquid)	47	701,680	1.9

**Table 2.3** (Continued)

<b>SL</b>	<b>HS Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Weight/Tons</b>	<b>Value /\$US</b>	<b>Market share of all Thai products (.S %)</b>
10	33074990	Fragrant candle and frankincense (Preparations for perfuming or deodorizing rooms, excluding those which operate by burning, excluding those in evaporated vessels & activated coal)	68	659,675	1.8
	Sub Total	3,868	33,532,679	89.8	
	Others	611	3,808,949	10.2	
	<b>Thailand total import</b>	<b>4,480</b>	<b>37,341,629</b>	<b>100</b>	
	Dubai Total Import		1,870,518,241		

**Source:** DITP in Dubai (2013, p. 1).

### **2.2.2 The Trend of Thai Cosmetics Products to the United Arab Emirates**

Thai spa products are categorized in cosmetics group, which is constantly popular up to the present. However, the study of the Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai (2014, p. 3) indicates marketing trend in order to boost the potential of Thai entrepreneurs as follows:

1) Thai products in cosmetics category- the cosmetics with herbal mixtures are likely to receive higher acceptance. Furthermore, herbal spa products and

other natural products are also popular because of the uniqueness of Thai herbs, which are different from other countries. Furthermore, the increase of import values from Thailand shows positive growth. Currently, Thai products are cheaper than the products from Taiwan and Korea (DITP in Dubai, 2010, p. 4).

2) The features of cosmetics and Thai spa products which need attention are packaging development, pattern, fragrance, and colors. They need to satisfy the requirements of the UAE customers to enable the competitiveness with the products from Europe or other countries in Asia.

3) Thai products should be reasonably priced to be able to compete with the products in the same level and to allow importers to sell and export products to other countries in the Middle East. However, low and high priced cosmetics tended to have better sales volumes compared to the average-priced cosmetics due to the different target customers (DITP in Dubai, 2010, p. 5).

4) The recommended marketing plan of the Dubai DITP is the participation in trade fair and exhibition such as annual Beauty World Middle East, Gulf Beauty, or Global Village in Dubai. In addition to promoting Thai products, it could also provide the opportunities for the entrepreneurs to explore the market and price of the competitors and to directly survey product preference of the customers. Moreover, Thai entrepreneurs will be able to promptly meet with the importers. This is the good opportunity for them to further their business with the Arabs.

### **2.2.3 Export status of Thai labor market to the United Arab Emirates**

The Middle East was second region chosen among Thai labors after the Asian region. Out of all Thai labor overseas, there were 22.64% of Thais in the Middle East in 2009 (Overseas Employment Administration Division, 2013, p. 39).

However, in 2009, the countries in the Middle East encountered a financial crisis, especially in Dubai part of the United Arab Emirates. A lot of mega projects were halted. With this reason, some employers terminated employment contract with their employees, including some Thai laborers who had to come back to Thailand.

Nevertheless, the employment status in the Middle East had been resumed due to the recovery and the extension of Dubai's economy. Doubled with the upcoming World Cup in Qatar in 2022, the employment of foreign laborers in this region has

returned to its growth state. This would be the opportunity for Thai laborers especially half and skilled craftsmen to work in those countries. Overseas Employment Administration Division by Department of Employment (2012:40) expected that more Thai laborers particularly half and skilled craftsmen would work in Middle East in 2013 and 2014 in construction and service industries.

There are 9,211 legal Thai laborers in Middle East in 2012 or 11.57% of all Thai laborers overseas. They are 8,402 males (10.55%) and 810 females (1.02%) (Overseas Employment Administration Division, 2013, p. 40).

Among the top 5 countries in the Middle East, the United Arab Emirates was ranked the first among countries where Thai people work the most in 2012 (Overseas Employment Administration Division, 2013, p. 40).

**Table 2.4** 5 Middle East Countries with Thais Employed

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
The United Arab Emirates	3,707	4.66
Israel	3,059	3.84
Qatar	1,350	1.70
Kuwait	526	0.66
Bahrain	308	0.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,950 People</b>	

For travelling, the majority of them were arranged by recruitment agencies. They could be divided into 5 methods as presented in the following table (Overseas Employment Administration Division, 2012, p. 40).

**Table 2.5** Travelling Methods of Thai Laborers to Middle East

<b>Traveling methods</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Recruitment agency	4,467	48.50
Self-travelling	2,168	23.54
Department of Employment	2,102	22.82
The declaration from the foreign employers to work at headquarters or subsidiaries overseas	452	4.91
Foreign employers send the employers for an internship.	22	0.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,211 People</b>	

As mentioned above, Thai laborers mostly went to the United Arab Emirates. The statistics of the Thai labor export in 2012 classified the information of Thai laborers in the UAE by region, province, field of jobs, and educational level as presented in the following table (Overseas Employment Administration Division, 2012, pp. 41-42).

**Table 2.6** Thai Laborers in the United Arab Emirates Classified by Region

<b>Thai Regions</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Northeastern Thailand	2,000	53.95
Northern Thailand	995	26.84
Eastern Thailand	304	8.20
Central Thailand	294	7.93

**Table 2.6** (Continued)

<b>Thai Regions</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Western Thailand	68	1.83
Southern Thailand	46	1.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,707 People</b>	

**Table 2.7** Thai Laborers in the United Arab Emirates Classified by Top 5 Provinces in Thailand

<b>Provinces</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Udon Thani	354	9.55
Lampang	287	7.74
Nakhon Ratchasima	234	6.31
Khon Kaen	207	5.58
Buriram	174	4.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,256 People</b>	

**Table 2.8** Thai Laborers in the United Arab Emirates Classified by Top 5 fields of Job

<b>Field of Job</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Skilled operators in multiple businesses	2,559	69.03
Operators in factory for machine controlling and parts assembly	402	10.84

**Table 2.8** (Continued)

<b>Field of Job</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Technicians and related operators	223	6.02
Basic careers which are the labors in manufacturing, construction, and agriculture etc.	214	5.77
Service staff and salesperson in shops and markets	169	4.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,567 People</b>	

**Table 2.9** Thai Laborers in the United Arab Emirates Classified by Educational Level

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Amount (People)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Pratom 6	1,711	46.16
Mathayom 3	1,025	27.65
Mathayom 6	436	11.76
Bachelor's degree	186	5.02
High vocational certificate	161	4.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,519 People</b>	

The tables above could explain that the majority of Thai labors in UAE or 53.95% were from Northeastern Thailand and 9.55% came from Ubon Ratchathani. About 69.03% of Thai labors worked as the skilled operators in multiple businesses and 46.16% of them graduated in Pratom 6.

#### **2.2.4 The Trend of Thai Labor Market to the United Arab Emirates**

Currently, there are about 15,000 Thai laborers in the UAE. Most of them work in the construction industry such as construction and extension project of oil refinery, natural gas separation plant, water tunnel construction, etc.

In addition, in service the sector, there are many Thai people in several fields of job such as chefs, spa masseurs, beautician, spa reception, tailors, airhostess of Emirate airlines, Etihad Airways, etc. In manufacturing industry, the majority of Thai labors work as the staff in Crown Emirates, the affiliate of Crown Holdings of the United State of America, which is the world's number 1 canned food and drink manufacturer (Overseas Employment Administration Division, 2012, p. 42).

According to the information of Overseas Employment Administration Division (2012, p. 42), labor market requires more Thai labors to work in the United Arab Emirates to support mega projects for completion in 2030. It is the development project for Abu Dhabi according to the National Economic and Social Development Plan or Abu Dhabi 2030. According to the plan, there will be many projects including construction, residences, community infrastructures, Khalifa Port and Khalifa Industrial Zone, the extension project of Abu Dhabi airport, system planning for subways, skytrain, and tram, the project of renewal energy, and the project for public health. Thus, it is the opportunity of Thai laborers, especially the half and skillful labors which are very much demanded among employers because of their good skills, dedication, patience, and modesty.

In addition, National Economic and Social Development Plan 2030 will promote the employment in service industry. The demanded positions in the UAE's service industry are receptionists, chefs, and beauticians, and especially Thai spa masseurs. Many Thai laborers have been constantly working there and are likely to increase in the future. However, there are some Thai female laborers who illegally work there by applying tourist visa and wrongfully working in the sex industry. This has badly affected the image of Thai massage. Therefore, strict regulations must be formed for the import female Thai spa masseurs.

## 2.3 Overall Picture of Thai Spa Business

### 2.3.1 Basic Information about Spa Business

According to the information from Department of Trade Negotiations (2011), the word “spa” came from Latin language “Sanus per Aquam” or “Sanitas per aquas” which means the health from river, aqua therapy, and health care with water. It can be concluded, from the beliefs and related concepts, that it is the aqua therapy under the supervision of therapists, doctors, and experts. It is also the health resort for holistic good health.

“Spa business” means the place or clinic, which provides service for general customers with health massage, physical treatment, and aqua therapy to balance body and mind. The customers will be supported with academic appropriate services, as well as recommendations for health promotion with exercise, nutrition, international behavior adjustment, and alternative medicine (Bureau of Sanatorium and Healing Arts, Department of Health Service Support, Ministry of Public Health, n.d.).

According to the announcement of Ministry of Public Health on defining place for health or beauty, spa business can be divided into 3 groups. These are Spa for health means the business, which provides health care and support. Its main mission is health massage and utility of water for health. It might provide optional services such as meditation and yoga, exercise, therapeutic nutrition, and diet control, the use of herbs or natural products for health, along with other alternative medicines. The aforementioned announcement also adds that spa business must have a main service and at least 3 optional services such as mudpack, beauty service, and yoga.

1) Health massage is the massage, which relaxes muscles and fatigue. The services could be Thai massage (not for medical treatment) and foot massage.

2) Massage for beauty means the massage, which aims for beauty such as the massage in hair salon or beauty salon.

Apart from that, the International Spa Association (ISPA – Europe), which is the organization for knowledge and understanding of the international spa business, has classified spa into 7 types as explained in the following section (Ministry of Public Health, 2015, pp. 1-2).

1) Destination spa is the business, which provides particular health care and support with spa. This type of spa will provide complete accommodation and facilitation. Service users will have to participate in many activities provided by the spa such as tension-relief activity, meditation or mental-care activity.

2) Resort/Hotel Spa is the spa located in the resort or hotel where customers are welcomed to use service for relaxation apart from the stay at that hotel or resort.

3) Day Spa/ City spa is the spa where customers receive convenient and fast service. With the location in town or business center, it facilitates customers in using the service during the daytime with short travel. This makes it very popular among the people with time constraint or people who work in town. Day Spa/ City Spa will focus on the beauty service and relaxation from fragrant essential oil.

4) Medical spa is the spa, which provides care, treatment and curing to customers along with the medical knowledge. The customers might be patients, who need treatment and care from skillful doctors. Most of medical spa will be located in hospitals or clinics.

5) Mineral Spring Spa means the natural-originated spa such as mineral tourist destination or spring.

6) Club Spa is the spa, which provides relaxing massage simultaneously with exercise. The customers will use spa service for relaxing massage after exercise.

7) Cruise Ship Spa means the spa on the cruises, which mostly provides accommodation with fitness for their customers. They also provide food to relax customers during the trip.

The classification of spa according to the knowledge adapted in running spa business, the subcommittee of labor's skill standard, service places, Department of Skill Development, Ministry of Labor has categorized spa into 3 main types (Ministry of Public Health, 2015, pp. 2-3).

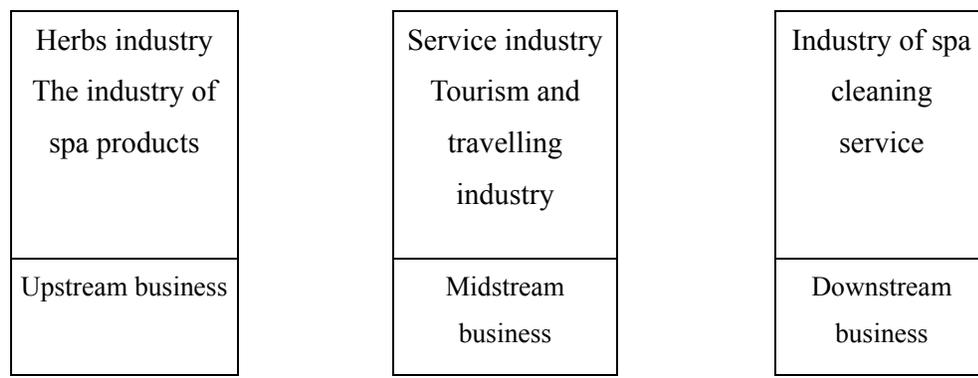
Western Spa means the spa, which mainly provides health service. Its service standard is set at the same level as western countries.

1) Thai Sabai or Thai Spaya means the spa, which provides Thai holistic health services by focusing on the use of herbal compress along with Thai massage service. For the definition, this type of spa is the place or the supportive

companions, especially on the practice and the maintaining of consciousness. The word “Spaya” in Bali language means “comfortable”.

2) Thai spa has similar service as western spa but with the mixture of Thai or eastern wisdoms in the service.

Running spa business is deemed complicated due to its involvement with many related sectors as seen in the overall image of the spa supply chain explained in the following figure.



**Figure 2.2** The Overall Image of Spa Supply Chain

The figure explains the connection of spa product business, which consisted of herbs industry and other spa products industry. The product section is the upstream business while the service section would be midstream business. The relevant service industries included resorts or hotels. Tourism and travelling industries were also included in the midstream business. The downstream business would mainly be the industry of spa cleaning service. This research will explore spa products and services only.

### **2.3.2 Products and Equipment Used in Thai Spa**

The important upstream business is the other products used in spa business, especially Thai herbs industry. This industry has raw herbs as the ingredients extracted from herbs, medicines, supplementary food, and cosmetics. This industry is very important. Thai herbal spa is very outstanding and popular, especially among

foreigners who choose Thai herbal spa or the products of Thailand over many others.

Thai herbs used in Thai spa could be used as explained in the following section (Ministry of Public Health, 2015, p. 8).

1) Facial cosmetics such as facial cleansing cream, scrub, skin lotion, nourishing cream, serum, facial massage cream, body scrub and pack

2) Body cosmetics i.e. massage oil, scrub, body pack, nourishing cream, body scrub and pack

3) Body compress (compress) is normally made in form of herbal compress with the mixture of the root of cassumunar ginger, kaffir lime skin, house lemongrass, tamarind leafs, turmeric, zedoary, soap pod leafs, salt, menthol, and borneol.

4) Body steam: such as 5 types of pollens, i.e. jasmine, rose, Indian lotus, bullet wood, and iron wood.

5) Skin nourishment such as tamarind, Tanaka (herbs from Myanmar), liquorice, black sesame, green tea, clerodendrum petasites, and Trigonostemon reidioides

6) Relaxing in warm bath such as kaffir lime, lemongrass, borneol, and galangal

7) Fragrant essential oil such as mint, ylang-ylang, frankincense, kaffir lime, sweet basil, menthol, lemongrass, and cardamom etc.

8) Herbal drink or food such as drinks or food with the mixture of banana, papaya, guava, tomato, lime, orange, hot basil, sweet basil, ginger, galangal, turnip, and watermelon.

The herbs mentioned above can be used fresh or dried. They are available directly from the herbs growers. The spa entrepreneurs can also develop their own herbal products. The Thai herbs are not the only factors driving customer satisfaction. The entrepreneurs should also consider the application of spa equipment because they can affect service format. The samples of spa products, tools, and equipment include the following:

1) Tools and equipment: massage bed, sanitizer unit, towel sterilizer, sauna and steam cabin

2) Other equipment: towel, cover, hair scarf, slippers, facial mask

brush, cotton, and containers for portioning products.

All spa products and equipment must be quality, clean, and meet the spa standard requirement.

### 2.3.3 Spa Business Services

According to the information of spa business manual of Ministry of Public Health (2015, pp. 28-29), the standard basic procedures of spa service staff are explained in the following table.

**Table 2.10** Basic Procedures of Spa Service Staff

<b>Period of Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
First Entry	<p><b>Customer Inquiry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcoming, Thai-style greeting (Wai), delivery, drink and/ or refreshing towels</li> <li>- Find out their required service.</li> <li>- Find out their available appointment time.</li> <li>- Find out their requirements of other optional spa services.</li> <li>- Query about their medical history</li> </ul>
Activities during service	<p><b>Massage-related activates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure the hygiene in the service area.</li> <li>- Appropriately prepare massage equipment according to the massage type.</li> <li>- Customers change their outfits</li> <li>- The masseurs inform massage procedures and period of time.</li> <li>- Customers change their outfits.</li> <li>- The masseurs thank to customers.</li> <li>- The masseurs clean service area.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.10** (Continued)

Period of Time	Activity
End of activity	<p><b>Other Related Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare snacks and refreshment after service</li> <li>- Take care and clean the place</li> <li>- Clean equipment and do laundry</li> <li>- Ensure the availability of place, equipment, and tools.</li> <li>- Organize the meeting among service provider team, as well as spa entrepreneurs in order to develop quality by analyzing customer's satisfaction and expectations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Say thank you</b> verbally and with hand gesture (wai). The staff might ask about the next appointment or their next interests in other spa services.</p> <p><b>The evaluation of service users' satisfaction</b> is the important factor, which is always neglected. It leads to the lack of product and service development. Questionnaires of these aspects should be used to evaluate their satisfaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environment and places</li> <li>- Safety</li> <li>- Equipment, tools, and accommodation</li> <li>- Staff service</li> </ul>

### 2.3.4 Developing Strategy of the Spa Business

Before finding out about developing strategy of spa business, the entrepreneurs should know SWOT Analysis that is described in the following table.

**Table 2.11** SWOT Analysis of Thai Spa Service

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thailand is the open country and the world's well-known tourism destination</li> <li>- Thai spa and massage business is unique and famous and is accepted among foreigners.</li> <li>- Thai spa businesses not only service foreigners in Thailand, it is also the "exportable service" which means Thai masseurs working overseas.</li> <li>- The overall picture of Thai spa, Thailand is equipped with manufacturing and human resources.</li> <li>- Thai service providers are outstanding of their good courtesy, manners, and smile on their faces while providing services.</li> <li>- Reasonable service price is the competitive advantage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The limited numbers of high-skillful masseurs in Thailand such as Thai massage which leads to the employee purchase.</li> <li>- Many Thai masseurs lack of English or foreign languages skill.</li> <li>- Despite the massive demands of Thai spa products and services, capital crisis is the investment barrier of spa entrepreneurs in extending business to overseas.</li> <li>- In addition, the problem of the information about spa business overseas is the investment references of the entrepreneurs, as well as the problems of international investment barrier, visa, and work permit.</li> <li>- The problem of prostitute image of Thai masseurs or illegal prostitution in spa.</li> <li>- Spa school has no capital to register with Department of Employment as recruitment company (5 million Baht in 2015). There is no fund to send the students to overseas.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.11** (Continued)

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Medical tourism in Thailand is constantly expanding, even during the economic stagnancy.</li> <li>- Thai herbal market can still grow and human resource is not lacking.</li> <li>- Spa consultant business and Thai massage school are expanding which can support foreign customers and promote Thai spa. It can also support the export of Thai spa products and services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The fast expansion of Thai spa both in domestic and overseas might create the barrier of service standard and quality control.</li> <li>- The competition, especially in service section, in overseas is constantly increasing.</li> <li>- It creates the fluctuation of revenue because it depends on the foreign tourists and the world's economic status.</li> <li>- Political instability in both Thai and foreign countries which affects spa products and services.</li> </ul>

**Source:** Department of Trade Negotiations (2011, p. 23).

After realizing strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat of Thai spa business, Spa business manual of Ministry of Public Health (2015, p. 41) has presented overall development approach of Thai spa business as explained in the following section.

**Table 2.12** Development Approach for Thai Spa Business

<b>Components</b>	<b>Factors</b>	<b>Development approach</b>
1. Customer service strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The determination of business approach and clear definition of target group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The executives must analyze and decide on the clear approach and clear management model, as well as the</li> </ul>

**Table 2.12** (Continued)

<b>Components</b>	<b>Factors</b>	<b>Development approach</b>
	- The determination of customer satisfaction evaluation model	determination of the target group. - Develop appropriate criteria and factors of consumer satisfaction evaluation to customer group.
2. Staff service strategy	- The involvement and communication with staff - Staff potential development	- The entrepreneurs should consider the promotion model of involvement and communication with staff in form of formal and informal businesses. - There should be clear determination on human resource development details of each level.
3. System service strategy	- The development of customer database for developing work procedure. - There's development of work procedure in order to constantly improve customer service model.	- The utilization of software for continual customer database management and customer's demands analysis. - Define administration development system by applying modern administration concept to promote constant work development.
4. Customer management system	- Determine service measure - Customer's claims storage system	- Define clear operation procedures and explain work standard in each activity for staff of every level. - Call for a meeting and bring

**Table 2.12** (Continued)

<b>Components</b>	<b>Factors</b>	<b>Development approach</b>
		information, recommendations, and customer's claims to find resolutions or inform solutions for staff thoroughly.
5. Staff operation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skill evaluation system</li> <li>- Human resource potential development planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Define required skills and potential levels for each type of job, as well as define evaluation and training models of each job.</li> <li>- Define advancement policy of each position, as well as clear period of time in developing staff potential of each level.</li> </ul>
6. Customer and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop work cycle system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support staff involvement in other jobs, especially the relevant jobs of their regular jobs in order to reinforce the standard and the efficiency of the overall work procedure.</li> </ul>

Apart from the spa business development approach mentioned above, technological development can also be adopted in spa service development such as the selection of innovative massage equipment hydro-massage bed or heated shiatsu massage. Moreover, the customer database management with spa software will also support customer relationship management as it will accurately analyze, manage and display customer's use of service (Ministry of Public Health, 2015, p. 44).

### **2.3.5 Situation and the Trend of Thai Spa Business in Foreign Countries**

Currently, spa business and Thai massage are well known. The standard is internationally accepted and has become one important business, which reinforces the

strength of Thai economic. It is capable of being Thai “exportable” business, which can support domestic and foreign users, overseas investment, as well as export of spa products and human resources for overseas service (Department of Trade Negotiation, 2011).

The report of the Department of Trade Negotiation (2011) showed that Thai spa market is internationally growing in terms of products and services. However, the Middle East market still has low restrictions on labor and product import. Hence, it is good opportunity for Thai entrepreneurs to penetrate into this market.

The Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates during 2011-2012 was analyzed by the Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP). The research found that the UAE was likely to import Thai products, especially spa products more. The DITP report in Dubai demonstrated the trend and the circumstance of cosmetics product market of UAE in 2012. It showed that the import value of Thai cosmetics and health products was about 1,122 million Baht. Thai products were unique and outstanding from any of other countries. In addition, herbal or natural products were favorable in the UAE.

Moreover, the UAE lacked of natural products and skilled laborers who provided massage for the domestic spa business. In order to solve the problems, the UAE imported a large amount of foreign natural spa products and masseurs or therapists, especially from Thailand.

The information from the Department of South Asia, Middle East and African Affairs. (2014) showed that the important barrier of products and services export to the United Arab Emirates was the unfamiliarity and the lack of information, as well as the difference of culture, society, tradition, and business of some of Thai private sectors. This leads to the lack of motivation in operating business in the United Arab Emirates. Despite its good quality, the image of Thai products is perceived in the same level with the products from China and India. Therefore, Thai products with higher quality and price may encounter the restrictions in competing in the market of this country.

Kasikorn Research Center (2006) predicted that the Thai labor market in the United Arab Emirates would have a good future growth. This is especially true for Thai laborers who have advantages in hotel, restaurant, and spa business compared to

the laborers from other countries in Asia or the Middle East. Nonetheless, what can be the problem for Thai laborers is the understanding of the differences of Thai and Arab culture and the religion. Therefore, with good understanding and education on this aspect, it is expected that that, compared to present, higher numbers of Thai laborers will be able to work in the United Arab Emirates.

In addition, the Department of South Asia, Middle East and African Affairs. (2014) shows that the service industry in the United Arab Emirates is fast growing. The results show the increase in demand of service laborers. Doubled with the labor balancing policy which attempted to reduce the numbers of South Asian laborers, it has become a good opportunity for Thai laborers, especially those in the service sector, to work in the United Arab Emirates.

Thailand was ranked No.1 best spa in the world every year. This is due to the service standard such as admirable courtesy Thai style greeting (Wai), and Thai wisdom such as the selection of Thai herbs, which should be considered by entrepreneurs. Furthermore, spa entrepreneurs will have to be attentive to pricing, atmosphere, and place which could constantly promote satisfaction and Thai spa's worldwide reputation (Ministry of Public Health, 2015, p. 15).

## **2.4 Religion, Culture, and Business Negotiation with Arab**

Blunders in International Business of Ricks (2006) explained that the "Cultural difference is the most important factor which can ignite troubles. The failure of managers to truly understand those differences might lead to the fault of dealing international business." Therefore, it is important for the entrepreneurs of international business both in government and private sectors to not only study marketing report of that particular country, but they also need to carefully study the religion, culture, belief, and lifestyle of target group.

As mentioned above the understanding of product development and services for Muslim people are the important barriers in exporting Thai products and services to the United Arab Emirates. Therefore, their beliefs, religion, culture, value, and lifestyle of Arabs needed to be deeply explored, particularly in spa business where satisfaction and communication need to be directed to the customers. Isara Santisat et.

al. (2013c, pp. 120-124) had conducted the research on the Economic Relationship between Thailand and Middle East Countries, which studied basic culture of Arab. The findings are presented in the following section.

#### **2.4.1 Basic Value of Arab**

- 1) It is essential to always satisfy people.
- 2) Honor, prestige, and reputation are very important. It is the responsibility of society, group, or family members to retain them.
- 3) Giving love to family is more important than personal preference.
- 4) Social status and family background, personality, and life achievement are important factors, which define the individual's status respectively.
- 5) Social norms and morals must be maintained. There should also be legislation if needed.

#### **2.4.2 Basic Attitude of Arab**

- 1) Believe in only one God. Everybody has to surrender to God's power and every one must embrace the religion.
- 2) Human cannot control every situations. Everything happens because of the God's sake.
- 3) The piety is the most admirable trait.
- 4) There's no segregation between religious authority and kingdom. Students of every school must be educated with religious studies under the government's support.
- 5) Belief, faith, and religious practices are sensitive, which cannot be assaulted or intruded. Interpreting religion in liberalism way or simulating western epicurean are believed to cause social disorder and decadence of moral standard and vulnerable family relationship.

#### **2.4.3 Self – Perception of Arab**

- 1) Arab people are generous, humane, ethical, polite, neat, and loyal. Arabs perceive these characteristics as their typical traits, which distinguish them from other groups.

2) Arabs are rich of culture as seen from the historical benefactions which Arabs contributed themselves to advance religion, philosophy, literature, medicine, architecture, arts, mathematics, science, and nature.

3) Arabs clearly believe in the cultural oneness though they are very much different in each country. They perceive all Arabs as the members of “The same Arab” (الأمة الإسلامية - al-umma al-arabiyya).

#### **2.4.4 Communication with Arab**

- 1) It is essential to always satisfy people.
- 2) Try to understand the limited English language skills of Arabs.
- 3) Use easy-to-understand English language.
- 4) Short and concise communication
- 5) Avoid the communication on political, religious, and female topics
- 6) Do not talk sarcastic, mockingly, ironically, and rudely though it might just be a fun joke.

#### **2.4.5 Manner to the Opposite Gender of Arab**

The manners in treating the opposite gender of Arabs are very strict. It is necessary to study these manners before entering the Arab society. Particularly in spa business, which needs to obviously separate males and females, it is essential to explore this aspect thoroughly in order to perform correctly in terms of business and religion.

Arab males and females always reserve their manners. Being together in secluded area without third person is extremely offensive. Although males and females must meet because they have to work in the same workplace, the intercommunication between them will be controlled by Arab social norm, which is strict and different in each country. For example, Saudi Arabia is very strict. “Religious police” will always patrol male and female couples if they are legal married couples or family members or not (Isara Santisat et. al. (2013c, p. 128).

The strictness in meeting between males and females are provided in many Islamic legislations. Hadith refers to speech or the acts of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) (S.A.W. read as Salla Allah Alaihi Wa Sallam which refers to “May Allah bless you with generosity and peace.)

Nabi Muhammad (s.a.w.) also emphasized on this aspect which clearly defined in Hadith that

"مجموعة النساء الخاصة، إبعدها عنهن"

The personal female group: Do not interfere

(Checridor Amad Samadee, 2009)

To avoid Fitna (the creation of troubles and disorder) in society from the mix of males and females, though they're relatives or family members, Nabi Muhammad (s.a.a.w.) also reiterates strict interaction control by saying that

"إذا تخالطوا مع النساء [ليس بزواج ولا محرم بنسب أو رضاع] القرباء [

وجزاءهم الموت]"

The non-Mahram relatives (a person with who the religion forbids to get married) who got into female group un-righteously means death.

(Checridor Amad Samadee, 2009)

It means that disaster might happen when unmarried couple stays together. We need to be careful in separating males and females, even among relatives or whoever. This includes when they're in public areas such as classroom, taxi, bus, and especially in private area. For example, Nabi Muhammad doesn't allow a man to sit with 5 ladies. If a lady is at home on her own, male relatives of her husband's family cannot sit with her (Checridor Amad Samadee, 2009).

As males and females cannot assemble together in the same area, the gaze between Muslim male and female is also offensive as Allah (S.A.W.) mentioned in the legislation that

وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ، وَقُلْ  
لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ

Oh Mohammad, you have to tell all male devotees that they need to lay their gazes down and cover their parts of the body. That act is so pure for them, Allah (S.W.T.) you know so well of what they've done. Oh, tell all female devotees that they need to lay their gazes down and cover their parts of the body.

(Abdul Karim Kerdpakdee, n.d., p. 57)

And Nabi Isa (AS read as Alaihis Slam which refers to “May Allah bless you with peace.) mentioned that

وَقَالَ عِيسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنِّي أَخُفُّكُمْ مِنَ النَّظَرَةِ فَإِنَّهَا تُزْرِعُ فِي الْقَلْبِ شَهْوَةً وَكَفَى بِهَا فِتْنَةً

You all should be afraid of staring at the lady that you shouldn't do as it can ignite the desire in your heart which is enough to create trouble.

(Abdul Karim Kerdpakdee, n.d., p. 58)

Moreover, Sadubnyubre staaed that

وَقَالَ سَعْدُ بْنُ جُبَيْرٍ إِنَّمَا كَانَتْ فِتْنَةُ دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنْ أَجْلِ النَّظَرَةِ وَقَالَ دَاوُدُ لِابْنِهِ سُلَيْمَانَ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ يَا بُنَيَّ  
إِمْسِ خَلْفَ الْأَسَدِ وَالْأَسْوَدِ وَلَا تَمْسِ خَلْفَ الْمَرْأَةِ

The tumult of Davook is obviously the result of the seeing only. Nabi Davook has warned his son Nabi Sulaiman (A.S.) that..Oh my son! Follow tiger and snake, but not a lady...

(Abdul Karim Kerdpakdee, n.d., p. 59)

Not only is it inappropriate, the gaze between males and females is also the restriction and the wrong act according to the religious legislation.

Rasulullah (A.S.) stated that

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَعَنَ اللَّهُ النَّاطِرَ وَالْمَنْظُورَ إِلَيْهِ لَا يَجُوزُ لِامْرَأَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ تُظْهِرَ عَلَى كُلِّ  
أَجْنَبِيٍّ - أَيِّ لَيْسَ بِزَوْجٍ وَلَا مُحْرَمٍ بِنَسَبٍ أَوْ رِضَاعٍ وَلَا يَجُوزُ النَّظَرُ إِلَيْهَا وَلَا مِنْهَا إِلَيْهِ وَلَا الْمَسُّ بِالْمَصَافِحَةِ  
أَوْ مَعَ مَنَاوِلَةٍ أَوْ نَحْوَهُمَا

Allah (S.W.T.) has cursed the person who gazes and is gazed at. He doesn't allow the female devotee to reveal her body in front of any stranger (who is not her husband or mahram – the unmarriageable kin- nor non-family related or of the same mother.) Being gazed by stranger is not approved. Physical contact is also forbidden.

(Abdul Karim Kerdpakdee, n.d., p. 62)

In addition, the religion also legislates female dress code that

"فَيَجِبُ عَلَى الْمَرْأَةِ إِذَا أَرَادَتْ الْخُرُوجَ أَنْ تَسْتُرَ جَمِيعَ بَدَنِهَا وَيَدَيْهَا عَنِ النَّاطِرِينَ"

“And it is essential for female, when she's going out, to cover all of her body, including both of her hands in order to avoid the gaze.”

(Abdul Karim Kerdpakdee, n.d., p. 64)

As mentioned above, it is important to study the interaction between male and female. The foreigners will need to be aware of the restriction in contacting with the opposite gender. They need to perform appropriately in front of other people because Arabs will sense the irregularity and will immediately have negative attitudes whenever they see someone intimate with the opposite gender. In some cases, that gesture might be assumed as low-social-standard behavior. It might be mistaken as the insult to female Arab's honor, which is equal to the dignity of her lineage and family.

However, in performing business or living a life in the present day, males can meet Arab females under the condition that there should be third person. If a non-Muslim female needs to contact an Arab male, she should bring her husband with her. If she's not married, she should not stay with him privately and she should reserve her manner (Center for development policy studies,

The basic Arab culture, value, and belief, provides just broad understanding only. However, this research will consist of in-depth study, especially on culture,

belief, value, and lifestyle, which are related to Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates.

## **2.5 Theory about International Market and Cross-Cultural Communications**

### **2.5.1 Marketing Communication Theory**

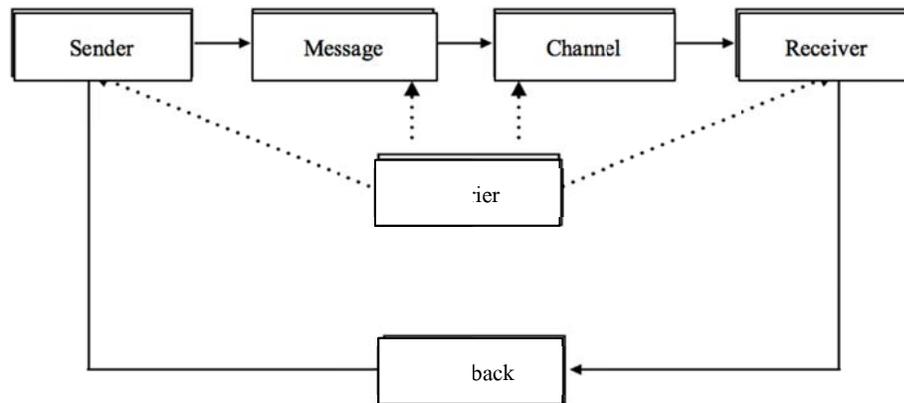
Marketing communications is regarded as the important strategy of organizations, which needs to direct organizational information to the customers or target group in order to convince consumer's behavior as communicated. Therefore, to be successful in business for both product or service sectors, the organization should study marketing communications strategy.

#### 1) The Definition of Marketing Communications

Kotler (2003) mentioned that advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, and direct marketing are marketing activities, which are used by the organization to communicate or promote the products and services to target customers. Moreover, Delozier (1976) stated that marketing communications is the presentation of one particular group in order to urge the desirable behaviors of the consumers. That group can communicate the information of the group to consumer's group in order to create awareness or the change of behaviors after receiving the information. In addition, Thitipat Eamnirun (2011) defined marketing communications to be the integrated communications with target customers in order to associate the meaning of concept, which can result in the desired change in consumer behavior.

Therefore, it can be concluded that marketing communications is the communications performed by one certain organization to target group in order to create awareness of that information or to convince or to change the behaviors of the target group to be in a the same direction as the organization.

Marketing communications is made possible through four factors - sender, message, channel, and receiver.



**Figure 2.3** The Model of Important Marketing Communications Factors

**Source:** Shimp (2000, p. 118, as cited in Nathakrid Wanthamea, 2012, p. 5).

The model above can explain the elements of communications in term of marketing communications. The sender is the company, which has product information publication and advertising via television to receivers. When the information is received, the receiver will send feedback, which can be positive or negative. The customer can either like or dislike or decide to buy or not to buy the products. However, there can be the barrier during communications procedure for example, the lack of knowledge on marketing communications, which lead to the selection of the inappropriate communications channel and results in the smaller amount of receivers than expected. Therefore, marketing communications requires planning in order to achieve the target (Nathakrid Wanthamea, 2012).

## 2) Integrated Marketing Communications – IMC

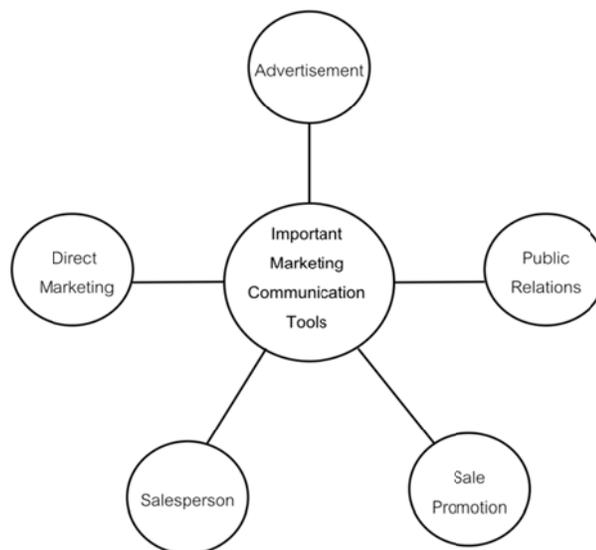
Integrated marketing communications (IMC) is the current popular progressive marketing strategy. It combines many forms of marketing communications tools such as advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, and public relation. In addition, integrated marketing communications is proved to be able to create big impact on communications to consumers ((Nathakrid Wanthamea, 2012).

McArthur and Griffin (1997) defined integrated marketing communications to be a procedure used by marketers to communicate the required product information to the consumers via various types of communications, which stimulated the interests

and created positive attitudes of the consumers. Duncan and Moriarty (1997) also stated that this integrated marketing communications combined concept with all forms of communications together. However, these forms needed to be relevant in order to create utmost communications efficiency. Pickton and Broderick (2001) emphasized on the benefit of integrated marketing communications that it is suitable to use marketing communications in the current world where communications technology is fast changing. Therefore, marketing communicators should always improve the marketing plan in many communications channels in order to promote competitiveness to the product brand and organization.

It can be concluded that integrated marketing communications is the planning of integrating various forms of communications of the same concept. Each form of communications will work concordantly and efficiently reinforce the push information to the receivers. Communications will be able to change behaviors, attitudes or the awareness of the consumers.

As mentioned above that integrated marketing communications is the collection of marketing tools, Kotler (2003, p. 603) divided marketing tools into 5 main tools explained in the following section.



**Figure 2.4** The Model of Marketing Communications Tools

Marketing communications 1) includes advertising, which is the broad communications. Therefore, the receivers are not clearly defined. 2) Public relations is the communications planning in order to promote image or protect good image of the organization or products Kotler (2003). 3) Sales promotion is the communications tool designed to promote short-term selling aiming for the immediate product consumption. 4) In using salesperson, they need to be well trained and have good image, as they're the representatives of the organization. As they need to directly contact with the customers, they should be well trained, as their intercommunications will affect the overall image of the organization. 5) Direct marketing is the use of single or multiple media in communicating directly from the organization to the target group in order to stimulate immediate respond from the consumers with fast customer's feedback evaluation such as direct call to the customer.

## **2.5.2 International Marketing Communication Theory**

### **2.5.2.1 The Definition of International Marketing**

Cateora and Graham (2008) defined international marketing to be business activities of designing the plan in many aspects such as price and sales promotion, in order to flow the right products to the right countries with each particular business strategy for profits. Moreover, Johansson (1997) defined the definition of international marketing. It is the integration and collaboration of appropriate marketing activities for the use in international market in order to produce identical products and brands. It can also simultaneously introduce products to many countries, as well as advertise products, which are appropriately planned and published by the marketers for each country. Nonetheless, the definition of international market of Johansson was mainly applicable to companies or big organizations, whose marketing were simultaneously performed in many countries.

Czinkota and Ronkainen (2004) defined international marketing as the planning and operation processes in order to create exchange and trade in the countries, which satisfy all concerned. The definition from Czinkota and Ronkainen was the general explanation of international marketing of small, medium, and large organizations.

Sudaporn Gultonlabud (2011) had concluded the main objective of international marketing as follows:

- 1) To release excessive domestic products and increase revenues for the business.
- 2) To reduce product cost.
- 3) To reduce business risk from one monopolized country.
- 4) To learn and exchange technological knowledge from overseas.
- 5) To explore consumer's behavior.

At present, large, medium, and small businesses can anticipate the international business market due to the support from convenient communications technology and inter-country transportation. However, it cannot be denied that “media” is one important reason, which advances the emergence of international marketing. In the past, television had become the modern media, which can swiftly publish information worldwide and enable people in another part of the world to learn international cultures. Until now that Internet has provided improvement in communications, learning, and business performance. Another main reason in pursuing international marketing is the incoming of foreign investors in their countries resulting in lower market shares. Therefore, the domestic business performers or new businessmen should try to find new overseas market in order to gain more profits (Cateora & Graham, 2008).

The works of domestic and international marketers are different. The international marketer will have to work in a more challenging and complicated environments. Therefore, international marketers must not stop finding knowledge or new strategies, which match the changing circumstances. Factors, which might affect the works of international marketing communicators, are the competition, law, regulations, the government control, climate, and consumer's behavior. (ibid, 2008).

#### 2.5.2.2 Strategic Concept of International Marketing

Cateora and Graham (2008) has categorized strategic concept of international marketing into 3 concepts as explained in the following section.

##### 1) Domestic Market Extension Concept

This concept is derived from the desire of a company in selling

excessive domestic products. International marketing has become secondary after domestic marketing. Therefore, the entrepreneurs will primarily focus on the domestic incomes before international incomes. So, most of the communications strategies will be the same as used in the country with slight adjustment for the international market.

#### 2) Multi-domestic Market Concept

This concept is mostly from large organizations with subsidiaries established in many countries, which are independent toward each other.

Therefore, the marketing of each country will also be different. Products might be under the same brand, but have different appearance and advertising, which will be adjusted appropriately to the requirement of the consumers in that country.

#### 3) Global Marketing

This research is based on the boundless attitude, which is the finding of the same or mutual aspects of markets that can be standardized. Most of this concept will be used in large organizations, which study consumers' behaviors thoroughly and improve products appropriately to each society. There might always be change according to the requirement of the consumers.

However, the standard of all subsidiaries around the world must be retained. For example, marketing communications of McDonald when the shop is decorated, maintaining its original menu while customizing the menu appropriately to that particular country.

#### 4) International marketing communications and the environment of marketing communications

International marketing communications refers to a format of communications, which consists of senders who communicate marketing to the receivers in another country. It is the communications, which pursues the goal of international marketing communications (Worawan Ongkrutaraksa, 2010, p. 70). International marketing communications can also said to be international communications, which needs planning that is suitable to the receiver countries. All aim for business achievement in both products and services export.

Therefore, in order to reach the goal of international marketing, it needs several important factors to plan international marketing communications.

There are 5 factors as the followings

- (1) Demographic characteristics
- (2) Economic factors
- (3) Political & Legal environment
- (4) Geographic characteristics
- (5) Cultural environment



**Figure 2.5** The Model of Important Factors in Planning International Marketing Communications

**Source:** Worawan Ongkrutaraksa (2010, p. 15).

(1) Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics will help marketers in deciding on the appropriateness of products or services export to a certain country. The main aspects to be used in analyzing demographic characteristics can be divided into four main aspects as explained in the following section.

**Table 2.13** The Factors Used in Analyzing the Demographic Characteristics

<b>The Factors Used in Analyzing the Demographic Data</b>	
1. Market Size	<p>It refers to the purchase of a certain products by the consumers. It is the factor used to analyze the appropriateness in performing business or investing in that market (Pusanisa Techatakerng, 2013). The world's population is likely to increase about 97 million people per year. The fast growing population is another factor, which attracts international marketing communicators in expanding business into other markets in the world. If the number of the country's population is high, the market size will be large. However, the population size cannot indicate a true market size and other factors need to also be explored (Kotler, 2007).</p>
2. Population Growth	<p>The country with high growth rate tends to also have high market expansion. However the other factors will need to be considered as the references for international marketing communicators in making the decision as he fast growth of populations will decrease national income, which might lower foreign investment eventually.</p>
3. Population Distribution	<p>Population distribution is a very important factor in planning international marketing communications. The distribution rate would need to be analyzed from 3 main factors as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Population density: Most of the marketers will choose the area with high density of population. Therefore, it is needed to study the average rate of density in the local area, region, or country. The density was studied by international marketers in order to evaluate marketing communications method and product delivery</li> </ul>

**Table 2.13** (Continued)

<b>The Factors Used in Analyzing the Demographic Data</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age: People of different age have different requirements. This lead to the different market opportunity. The important characteristic is the structure of age classification of developing countries, which had high birth rate and average short age. For developed countries, birth rate is low and populations' average age is high.</li> <li>- Household Size: It has effect toward product design and marketing communications for supporting direct sell. The small household size will make product size and packaging small, which stimulates frequent purchase over a great-volume purchase.</li> </ul>
4. Education	Education level will be able to help marketers in planning communications, advertising and product designs. For example, the products in the countries with low-educated populations should be designed by the use of illustrations than letters.

**Source:** Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, p. 16).

#### (2) Economic Factors

International marketing communicators should study economic factors although demographic characteristics have already been explored. For example, although it is found that the population of that country is fast growing, which is the interesting factor for investment, the income and purchasing power of the population must be correspond with the higher numbers of populations in order to support the investment. So, economic factors have become one of the very important factors, which could be analyzed from the two factors as explained in the following table.

**Table 2.14** Factors Used in Analyzing Economic Data

<b>Factors Used in Analyzing Economic Data</b>	
1. Income	<p>In analyzing the income of the population, these 3 main factors must be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distribution of Income: It is the numbers that indicate per capita income from Gross National Product (GDP). It could measure the inequality of the population's income in the country and the income is the important indication of consumers' behaviors.</li> <li>- Per capita income is the number that indicates purchasing power of the people in that country which shows economic development of the country. It will be simultaneously considered with Gross National Product (GDP) divided with the numbers of all populations in the country.</li> <li>- The primary Gross National Product (GNP) is the number, which indicates the initial value of products and services produced by production factors of that country in 1 year.</li> </ul>
2. Urbanization	<p>The country with high urbanization is likely to attract more foreign investment compared to the country with lower urbanization. However, customer analysis must be conducted thoroughly as developing countries might have consumers with high, average, and low income. It is important to find out the main target to be communicated to.</p>

**Source:** Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, p. 18).

### (3) Political & Legal Environment

Political and legal environment affect directly to international marketing planning. The political problems or instability or war will affect communications and international investment. The study of the country's laws

is also essential in running businesses. It will enable entrepreneurs to know the possibility in selling products, the pricing, and distribution channels. Political and legal environments, as well as the international legal context must be viewed from both sides of the export and import countries.

**Table 2.15** Factors Used to Analyze Political and Legal Environment

<b>Factors Used to Analyze Political and Legal Environment</b>	
1. Political and legal environments in Export countries	Each country will support international trade in order to facilitate the investment or international business operation. Marketing communicators should know the criteria of the trade in order to estimate the investment worthiness and investment supporting policy of that market such as free trade and tax deduction.
2. Political and legal environments in Import countries	Politics and government, political parties system, political risk for investment, legal restriction, and investment supporting policy must be studied.
3. International law	<p>Basic international law can be divided into 3 types as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Common Law: It is the non-written law, which is derived from England. Law interpretation is based on the precedents and referred to the traditional practices. If none of the legislation is referable, the court judgment is deemed final.</li> <li>- Civil Law or Code Law: It is the written law from the systematic collection of the legislations to form the codes of law. It is usually from the new law legislated by the legislative assembly. It composes of the existing law and the interpretation of the judgment. It is because, in some cases, the interpretation by the judge can establish new concept of law.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.15** (Continued)

<b>Factors Used to Analyze Political and Legal Environment</b>
<p>- Islamic Law: It is the law, which based mainly on the Quran. It is the combination of civil law and customary law. It is mostly applied in the countries which the majority of the populations embraced Islam, especially the Middle East countries. The marketers should explore these aspects thoroughly to avoid the conflicts to the religious principles.</p>

**Source:** Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, p. 19).

#### (4) Geographic Characteristics

Geographic characteristics refer to the characteristics of landscape, and natural resources. These factors are out of human's control and they affect directly to product distribution overseas, product transportation, and consumers' behaviors. However, product design must also be conformed to the landscape and climate Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, p. 20).

#### (5) Culture Environment

Referred to Taylor (1871), culture is the complex, which composes of knowledge, belief, art, ethic, law, tradition, or other inherited characteristics of the individual as the member of that society.

Culture is learnt by the individual through socialization. Culture has a lot of effects on human's living. Hall (1996) stated "No matter how hard we try, we'll never get free from the cultural frame we've grown in because it has rooted into our cognitive system." When humans live in the different cultural environment from theirs, they will always adhere to their cultures.

**Table 2.16** The Elements of Culture

<b>The Elements of Culture Can be Divided into 6 Types</b>	
1. Verbal Language	<p>Language is the important thing in communicating with consumers. It is important to find out their official language and the level of their English proficiency. This is to enable product design and promotion. Even, the language on the label should be understood by the majority of the population in the country.</p> <p>However, language can reflect the culture of that society. Once the language is understood the culture of that society will be accessed.</p>
2. Nonverbal Language	<p>Nonverbal language or body language is as essential as verbal language. Demeanor, facial expression, hand wave, nod, head shake, touching, and interpersonal spacing can be interpreted differently in each country. So, the marketers essentially need to study nonverbal language in order to communicate with customers.</p>
3. Needs	<p>It is the urge felt by customers to use service or buy products. It is mostly, analyzed through the need and purchasing behavior of the consumers based on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. However, it is important to be aware of applying this theory as it is mainly based on the context of western society. It may not be able to be accurately adopted in the context of other societies. Therefore, the other factors should also be explored.</p>
4. Values	<p>Each country had unique social value. For example, American society pay attention highly to individualism and Japanese society give precedence to the companions. Thus, studying</p>

**Table 2.16** (Continued)

<b>The Elements of Culture Can be Divided into 6 Types</b>	
	the value of that country will allow international marketing communicators to plan the advertising for products or services more appropriately.
5. Religion, Morals and Ethical Standards	Religions and the beliefs of the society will directly affect consumers' behaviors as stated by Robert Bartels (1982, as cited in Worrawan Ongkrutraksa, 2010) that the religions and the beliefs in that nation would affect social, behavioral, and moral perception. For example, the Middle East countries had abided by religion as the national law.
6. Customs and Consumption Patterns	Customs and consumption pattern should be studied by international marketers. It can be divided into sub-aspects such as their product preference, purchasing pattern and time, people with purchasing power, the age of customers, finally, the purchased size of products.

**Source:** Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, pp. 20-26).

### **2.5.3 Cross-Cultural Communication Theory**

#### 2.5.3.1 Definition and Concept of Cross-Cultural Communications

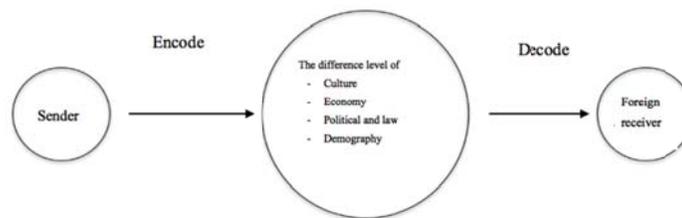
Cross-cultural communications in the context of marketing communications is essential. The study of culture will guide the organization in successfully performing international business. In some case, the cultural difference can be the oblivious business barrier. Therefore, every organization should study culture prior to international market communications planning.

This type of communications can happen between people in the same country, but with different culture such as people in Northern, Central, Southern, and South-eastern Thailand. People in each region have different cultures.

Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010) presented that international marketing communicators should understand cultural distance and map of culture in order to plan international marketing communications.

### 1) Cultural Distance

The efficiency of communications in culture is depended on the cultural distance or cultural difference of the senders pertaining to the cross-cultural communications model. The country with slight cultural, economic, political, legal, and demographic differences will be able to communicate with each other more efficiently due to the small cultural distance as seen from the model below (Worawan Ongkruttaraksa, 2010, p. 16)..



**Figure 2.6** Cross-Cultural Communications Model

**Source:** Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, p. 28).

### 2) Map of Culture

As we cannot obviously see the boundary of culture or universality, Hall (1959) had then presented map of culture in order to create the understanding of the differences, which could be applied for international marketing communications. Hall (1959) said that 10 integrated activities could create culture. The factors are listed as follows:

- (1) Interaction
- (2) Association
- (3) Subsistence
- (4) Bisexuality
- (5) Territoriality
- (6) Temporality

- (7) Learning
- (8) Play
- (9) Defense
- (10) Resources utilization

The advantage of map of culture is the adaptability in marketing communications to analyze foreign consumers' behaviors. The elements of the map are very important for marketing planning which allowed marketing communicators to study and find information, as well as accurately and effectively analyze the market.

#### 2.5.3.2 Communications in Globalization and Cross-Cultural Communications

“Globalization” is the world in the third wave, which is the world of information revolution. It can be either called the world of information technology or IT world. Communications technology and technology are leaping. The strength of communications technology had enhanced human's living, either in education, work, and especially the faster travelling and communications. On the other way, globalization can negatively affect a society such as negative effect on culture and attitude of a certain group.

For the effect of globalization on communications, Alvin Toffler (1980) had analyzed the relationship of human communications and phenomenon called globalization. His book, *The Third Wave*, had been translated into Thai language. Toffler believed that human society had progressively developed from one era to another era by dividing into three waves.

The first wave: It is the primary agricultural society. Humans stayed in the community, village, and tribe without much migration. The communications is in the spoken word. It is the interpersonal communications or group communications in order to create the relationship between relatives, community, and village.

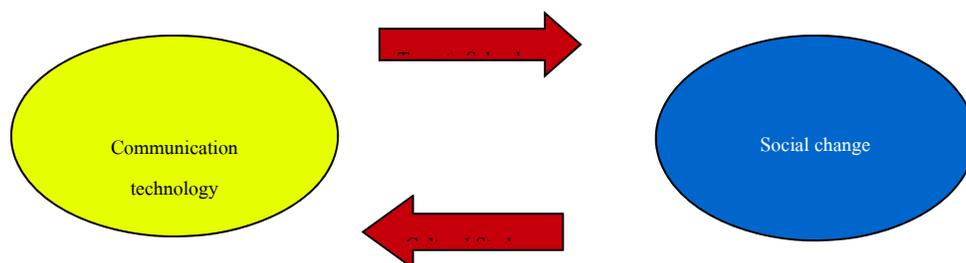
The second wave: It started after industrial revolution in 17<sup>th</sup> century with the influences from scientific thinking system and rationale, which led to the fast development of communications procedure, production, media consumption, as well as access to the public.

The third wave: It is the age of information technology, which started

on the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. With computer technology human knowledge source, information, and technologies have been transformed into digital format. It creates virtual reality when communicator cannot distinguish the virtual and real human, value, definition, and surroundings. Toffler had emphasized that communications would replace human transportation and connect the areas together all the time. It is deemed to be a part of communications procedure in globalization such as videoconference is the virtual meeting, which allows visual connection between the participants to exchange their opinions.

The concept of the third wave of Toffler is conformed to the concept of “Toronto School” which specifically studied on innovative communications. In the aspect of communications arts, it has been applied to the principle of sender, message, channel, and receiver or S.M.C.R., which are the elements of communications. The Toronto School pays attention to technology in many aspects such as technology for enjoyment, physical and cultural aspects.

The Toronto School indicated the importance of information technology when technology is changed. Technology will always affect the procedure of communications and human information. The example can be seen when digital technology facilitates fast transportation or information exchange. However, the effect is information management problem. However, compared to the previous age, communications problems always come from the concept of how to maximize information exposure of the people. Nonetheless, in this information era, “it is more about the way to manage mass and fast-flowing information.” (Kanchana Kaewthep, 2010).



**Figure 2.7** The Relationship of Communications Technology and Society

**Source:** Kanchana Kaewthep (2010).

The diagram above showed the standpoint of Toronto School toward the change of communications technology, which affected social and cultural changes. However, the Cultural Study Center saw differently. It presented an opposing view that technology wasn't always the determinant of social change. It is because some society chose or not to receive the media (Kanchana Kaewthep, 2010).

With the concept above, the Toronto School can also be called Technology Determinism as it views the communications technology to be the power that impact the cultural change, new social movement, and social structure change. The power of communications technology can be explained concisely in the following section.

- 1) The social change: Harold Innis School had presented that the change of communications technology could lead to the change of overall social civilization.

- 2) The change in individual level: It is the concept of Marshall McLuhan who stated that the change of individual was the consequence of the change of communications technology.

- 3) The change in social institute level: The example can be seen in form of less family interaction due to consumption behavior of new technology which led to the change in family institute (Kanchana Kaewthep, 2010).

According to the concept of Toffler and the Toronto School, it can be said that globalization with modern communications technology has definitely affected the change in communications consequently affecting social and cultural change in a certain society. They could be positive effects such as fast cultural learning and more understanding of the different cultures. However, the advancement of communications technology can internationalize the culture of a certain society fading its traditional culture. Communications technology can also be used as the tool to create social and cultural conflicts.

Therefore, The Clash of Civilizations by Huntington (1993), the American politician and author, which explained about western and other cultures which clashed after the Cold War. However, Islam is watched the most because of the clash between western civilization and Islam, which always resulted in war having widespread impact.

itions (1996).



**Figure 2.8** The Relationship of the Clash between Civilizations

**Source:** Huntington (1993).

The concept of Huntington (1993) indicated that the beneficial use of communications technology would enhance the understanding of culture and civilizations. However, whenever it is used as the tool for religious benefits, the devotees will become an army. In the past when technology was stagnant, the users had already been convinced to the conflict cause. The religious conflict in the present world is a thousand-times exacerbated due to the involvement of technology.

The concept of Toffler, the Toronto School, and Huntington can be concluded that the development of communications in globalization will affect cultural communications positively or negatively. In a positive drive, cultural learning of each country will be easier. However, the development of communications technology can create conflict or the fading of some cultures.

## 2.6 Satisfaction and Expectancy Theories

### 2.6.1 Definition of Satisfaction

Satisfaction is the human feeling perceived via the acts of the others. When satisfaction is perceived, it will be expressed in form of behaviors. Many Thai and

foreign academics have tried to define the definition of satisfaction in various aspects. The study of satisfaction will depend on the objectives such as motivated attitude, expectation or rewards.

Generally, the satisfaction can be studied in two dimensions job satisfaction and service satisfaction. This research will focus on satisfaction of service users via questionnaire and job satisfaction via in-depth interview.

The definitions of “Satisfaction” from preceding research works collected in this research can be summarized in the following section.

The Royal Institute Dictionary 1999 defined satisfaction as “love or preference” toward one certain object.

Oliver (1997, p. 13) said that satisfaction would occur the moment customer’s need was fulfilled. It is the tool, which justifies the ability of products and services in satisfying customers.

Fornell (1992, p. 11) said that satisfaction was the post-purchase evaluation of products or services.

Cadotte, Woodruff, and Jenkins (1987) stated that satisfaction is the form of the feeling developed by experience evaluation of the experience toward that product or service.

Westbrook (1987, p. 260, as cited in Hunt, 1997) that satisfaction is global evaluation on the use of products or consumption.

Direck Rerksarai (1984, as cited in Wannee Ussawanon, 1995, p. 70) said that satisfaction is the positive attitude of the individual toward one certain object, which will alter according to the satisfaction in the treatment toward it.

Loui Jumpated (1995, p. 8) said that satisfaction is the fulfilled needs. The behavior will be reflected in form of happiness, which is revealed through the eyes, speeches, and expression.

Charinee Dechjinda (1992, p. 14) said that satisfaction is the feeling or the attitude of the individual toward a thing or relevant factors. Satisfaction will happen when the need of the individual is responded or achieved at a certain level. That feeling will be contingent if that need or goal isn’t responded.

Kamolsri Techajumreonsuk (1993, p. 16) had cited the concept of McComick that satisfaction is human’s motivation based on the basic need, which is closely

relevant to the achievement and motivation and the attempt in avoiding the unwanted thing.

In conclusion, satisfaction is the positive feeling toward the receiving or the acts. After having good feeling towards that thing, satisfaction will be expressed via gesture, speech, or the yearning of the same response. However, satisfaction isn't permanent. It could disappear if the need isn't fulfilled or the goal isn't responded.

Currently, the word "satisfaction" is used in marketing science, especially when it is created into a new word like "Customer Satisfaction". It refers to "satisfying customer" which is the important fundamental value of business.

With the swift change of communications technology, customer's needs are also rapidly changed which are resulted from the fast information transmission. Therefore, marketing has tried to understand the characteristics of satisfaction. These factors affect satisfaction, tools, and techniques applied for increasing customer satisfaction. This is to acquire the beneficial information for the utmost products and services development.

### **2.6.2 Satisfaction Theory**

There are many satisfaction theories. This research will talk about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which is relevant to the dimension of service satisfaction. The second one is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which is the dimension of job satisfaction.

#### 1) Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954) is theory about human motivation, which is favored and applied in many fields. This theory was developed by Abraham H. Maslow in 1943. It explains five steps of human needs. It starts from the bottom level up to the top of the pyramid. When the human need is fulfilled in one certain level, it would continually move to the higher levels.



**Figure 2.9** Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

**Source:** Maslow (1954).

The figure above could explain the needs according to Maslow's theory explained in the following section.

Level 1: Physiological need

The need in level 1 will be the fundamental needs for the living such as food, water, medicine, warmth, residence, sleep, and eroticism. Physiological needs will affect human behavior when they're not fulfilled.

Level 2: The need of safety

If the need in level 1 has been fulfilled, that individual will pay attention to the need in level 2. This is the need of safety and stability both in the present and future. They would be afraid of losing their work, assets, food, or home.

Level 3: The need of love and belonging

When the need in level 2 has been fulfilled, a person will need acceptance or commitment from other people such as love, and acceptance from the family, friends, or beloved person.

Level 4: The need of esteem

When they're accepted, they will need to be praised by other people. This need is the expression of satisfaction toward power, the pride in their status or honor, and self-confidence, as well as the achievement in knowledge, capability, independence, and freedom.

Level 5: The need of self – actualization

The last level of human need is the achievement of their life goals.

In conclusion, it is necessary for entrepreneurs to study Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to understand the level of the need in order to plan or develop the products and services to be correspond with the target's needs as much as possible. However, the human need will be different and the level of need will depend on the satisfaction when their need in that level has been fulfilled. For example, the elite would have fewer needs in level 1, 2, and 3 as they've been fulfilled. They will want the need in level 4 or 5 to be achieved. The entrepreneurs will have to design the products and services in good or excellent levels for their satisfactions or prides. They will feel the praise as products or services users.

## 2) Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Two-factor theory of Herzberg, Mausuer, & Synderman, (1959).is used to analyze job satisfaction in order to avoid the dissatisfaction, which might affect the performance of the executives and customer satisfaction. Herzberg had conducted the study from 200 accountants and engineers of one company. The findings showed that hygiene was compulsory. It is not the motivator, which keeps the will in work. If they don't receive this supportive factor as required, it will lead to dissatisfaction. There were 11 supportive factors identified as follows:

- (1) Factor 1 Salary
- (2) Factor 2 The opportunity for future progression
- (3) Factor 3 The relationship with subordinates
- (4) Factor 4 Career status
- (5) Factor 5 The relationship with the commander
- (6) Factor 6 The relationship with colleagues
- (7) Factor 7 Administration of the commander
- (8) Factor 8 Policy and administration
- (9) Factor 9 Work condition
- (10) Factor 10 Private life
- (11) Factor 11 Work stability

There are 5 motivating factors or supportive factors. Most of them will relate to the activities as explained in the following section.

(1) Factor 1: Work achievement refers to the success and the pride when the work or tasks are completed. This factor is the most important.

(2) Factor 2: Esteem refers to the admiration from other people.

(3) Factor 3: Work characteristic refers to the challenging and interesting works. These works need creativity and new invention, which satisfies and challenges employees.

(4) Factor 4: Responsibility refers to the assignment from the supervisor or authority to the employees without too much strictness.

(5) Factor 5: Work progression refers to the promotion or salary raise, as well as the training for opportunity in increasing staff's knowledge and career progress.

The research of Herzberg et al. (1959) showed that supportive factors create good feelings toward organization. Hygiene factor will attract more people to work or more customers to use service of that organization.

Therefore, both supportive and hygiene factors need to be attended to by the entrepreneurs in order to create job satisfaction among the employees. This will result in good performance, especially in service jobs when each employee represents that organization. Without satisfaction or happiness in job, the employees will show off in form of bad service, which can damage the organizational image. Even if the performance of each person were different, the executives would have to try to control factors for job satisfaction and effective work performance.

### **2.6.3 Definition of Expectation**

Expectation is related to the satisfaction as mentioned above. explained that satisfaction would occur when the evaluation shows positive reward. This means that a person has made the decision ahead of the expected returns (service). When there's expectation: there's satisfaction. There are so many definitions of expectation, which are summarized in the section below.

Vroom (1964, as cited in Anchalee Anwirunwanich, 1996, p. 53) explained that it is the expectation in one person who has different needs. Thus, they try or do anything to fulfill the needs or expectations. When they are, satisfaction will occur and expectation will be simultaneously higher.

Pitchayakorn Kassakul. (2002) said that expectation is the need, feeling or critical thought of the individual who anticipates of what should and should not happen. Either it is good or bad, it depends on the individual's experience. According to the concept, it could be concluded that expectation is the thought.

Rattana Sukanin (2004) explained that expectation is the attitude about the expected need or the desire from that service.

Chisanukorn Pornpanuwit (1997, p. 6) said that expectation is the feeling, opinion, perception, interpretation or prediction toward not-yet-happened circumstances of other people who expect the favorable behaviors of the persons in their lives.

From all definitions mentioned above, it can be concluded that expectation is the prediction of the individual in receiving what they need. Perception, feeling, experience can be used as the determinants of expectation and the possibility is used in predicting the result. If the expectation is true, satisfaction of that person will occur.

However, in performing products and services marketing and meeting with customer's expectations, it is important to pay attention to customer expectation, which can be studied from the customers, in order to improve and develop products or services. This was particularly for the new investors in products or services sectors.

#### **2.6.4 Expectancy theory**

Expectancy theory in this research would focus on the concept of Parasuraman, Zeithmal, and Berry (1990) which is related to service expectation. The Two-factor theory of Vroom (1964) is also related to job expectation.

##### 1) Service Expectation

Parasuraman et al.(1990) said that service expectation is the expression of the need of service users toward service providers or organization. Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry had identified five main factors which affect the expectation of the users.

##### (1) Word of Mouth Communications

Word of mouth or the recommendation for other people was the most important factor, which influenced the expectation. As service cannot be tried out, the majority of customers will firstly interrogate or review the information from the people they knew.

## (2) Personal Needs and Preferences

It is the need from the personal taste based on society, education, family, religion, and culture.

## (3) Past Experiences

Past experience will be the determinant of the expectation. Once experienced good service, the same or higher expectation will be laid on the same service from different service providers.

## (4) External Communications

Service information might come from the advertising of the entrepreneur for the customers to collect data in making the decision to use the service. Moreover, advertising is able to create good image for the organization or entrepreneur.

## (5) Price

Price is another factor, which affects expectation. High price of product or service: High expectation. The entrepreneur should have appropriate pricing according to its standard.

Moreover, Patcharee Mahalap (1995, p. 14) also presented 3 determinants of expectation.

(1) Expectation can depend on the different characteristic of the individual and environment. The expectation and expression are then different due to different needs of the individual.

(2) Expectation can be based on the past experiences. Good past experience: high expectation.

(3) Expectation can depend on the possibility evaluation because it is the thought and the prediction of a person toward one certain object, which can be concrete or abstract. The evaluation result toward the same type of thing may not be the same due to the different background, experience, interest, and value of each person.

Apart from the factors which affect expectation, Parasuraman et al. (1985, as cited in Somwong Pongsataporn, 2004, pp. 50-53) also said that expectation of each customer is different. It consists of two levels of expectation and the accepted distance, which can be categorized into three components as follows:

The desired service or customer expectation is what the customer needs or believes to be serviced or provided.

(1) Adequate Service is the low accepted level of service. The distance between desired service and adequate service is called Zone of Tolerance.

(2) Zone of Tolerance is the distance between the desired service and the adequate service. Moreover, the difference in service such as the service of the masseurs can cause different expectations from the same service due to the instability of the service providers or different types of service in each country or culture.

It can be concluded that if the service quality is better than expectation, the customers will think that the service is very good. It is then developed to the products and services loyalty and results in long-term profits to the business. If the customers receive equally to their expectations, they will be satisfied at that service.

However, if the service is below adequate service, customers will be dissatisfied. If it does not meet with the requirement at all, there will be dissatisfaction and negative word of mouth, which creates bad business image.

## 2) Job Expectation

Expectancy Theory of Victor Vroom explains the expectation of the operators. It talks about the motivation, which enhanced the works of the employees. The three factors are related as presented in the following equation.

$$\text{Motivation} = \text{Expectancy} \times \text{Instrumentality} \times \text{Valence}$$

The important elements of expectation are (1964 as cited in Anchalee Anwarunhawanich, 1996, p. 53)

(1) Valence refers to the product value or the satisfaction of the individual toward the output.

(2) Instrumentality refers to the perception of the individual on the possibility of the performance that will lead to the expected result.

(3) Expectancy refers to the perception of the individual toward their competency or opportunity and possibility in pursuing the goal. Generally, a person with high expectation will always have high motivation. However, if they don't trust themselves, they will lack of motivation or attempt for that work.

Vroom's expectancy theory can explain that the employees with

motivation can work effectively when they believe in themselves that their attempts will be reflected for their own sake (valence). They will choose the most possible way in pursuing the target (instrumentality). If that work can lead them to the desired path, their motivation will be higher. Nonetheless, the most important thing is the belief in their competencies (expectancy) and they will have motivation to work and entails in efficient output.

After learning the definition and satisfaction and expectancy theories, in order to reify and validate satisfaction and expectation, the level must be measured.

Satisfaction and expectation level can be conducted in by 3 methods as the followings (Phanida Chaipunya, 1998)

(1) Questionnaire: It is widely used and can collect data by asking for cooperation from target group to share their opinions about satisfaction into the form.

(2) Interview: This method will need technique and proficiency in motivating the targets to reply honestly.

(3) Observation: It requires observation skill to learn the behavior of the target group before, during, and after being serviced. This measurement needs to be seriously performed and structural to ensure the efficient measurement and reliability.

## **2.7 Related Articles and Researches**

### **2.7.1 Spa business in The United Arab Emirates**

The survey of Research and Market (2012) showed that Dubai is the big city in the UAE, known as “Spa Town”. Customers are from around the world. Spa business in the United Arab Emirates is growing both in products and services sectors, beauty, and health. In 2009, there are 60 spas in Dubai growing to 100 spas in 2011. Moreover, in 2015, it is expected that the beauty and health products and services will earn 97,000 million Baht in the UAE.



Other

**Figure 2.10** Monthly Expenses on Health Care and Beauty in the United Arab Emirates

**Source:** Colliers International (2014, p. 3).

It can be seen that 21% in the UAE. Spent money for health care and beauty, which costs around 367-734 Dirham or around 3,600 – 7,300 Baht monthly and 735 – 1,100 Dirham or 7,300 – 11,000 Baht monthly or 6%.

Factors, which affect the expansion of spa business in the UAE, are presented as follows (Research & Markets, 2012):

1) The work rate of Muslim ladies in the United Arab Emirates is rising, which increases the need of their health and beauty care.

2) The consequence from Arab Spring when many countries in the Middle East have revolted against the administration. It is resulted in political problem and the tourists are not supported. Therefore, the numbers of tourists in the United Arab Emirates and spa users are raised.

3) With the stress from rush lifestyle for work, more population in the United Arab Emirates turn toward spa relaxation treatment.

4) High political stability, investment policy, and friendly economic development policy and investment in domestic and overseas attract more the UAE and foreign entrepreneurs.

In addition, the study of Gulf Business Consulting (2012) showed that Dubai's health strategic plan in 2025 and the increase of the UAE population by 14% during 2008-2012 have become the main factors, which raised the need of health care

products and beauty service. Also, the high incomes reinforces the purchasing power of the UAE population for health and beauty as seen in the graph below.



**Figure 2.11** Per-capita Expenses for Health Care of The United Arab Emirates 2009 – 2014 (USD)

**Source:** Gulf Business Consulting (2012, p. 11).

It can be seen that the expensed for health care and wellness in the UAE have been constantly increasing since 2009-2014 and it is likely to continue into the future.

Although the UAE is a closed country, which receives modern technology and science having high materialism development, it is the late adopter of healthcare and beauty technology due to the Sharia's law. The modernizing of health product or medicines are against the law (Gulf Business Consulting, 2012, p. 12).

Global Spa Summit (2008, p. 2) presented that natural or holistic healthcare or 3'Ts (Touch talk and time) is the popular health and wellness care in the UAE and other countries in the Middle East. This will be the opportunity for Thai herbal and natural products to communicate their strength of naturalness to the customers in the UAE.

Colliers International (2014, pp. 3, 7) said that the spa products and services in the UAE would grow steadily. The estimate income from spa industry in 2015 was 11 billion Baht. The users come for the following reasons:

- 1) "Mental relaxation": it is the physical relaxation massage and

special care, as well as creating atmosphere and activities for mental relaxation.

2) “Earthing”: It is the barefoot-movement activity, which allows the users to feel the earth or grassland directly.

3) “Ancient Techniques”: For example, traditional massage for user’s new experience.

4) “Health Coaching”: The service for healthcare education, which is a long-term healthcare.

It also provides advices to avoid un-preferred lifestyle.

It is clearly seen that the spa service in the UAE is more than just about health and physical care. There are many reasons in using the service such as body and mind relaxation, as well as Thai massage, meditation, and breathing technique (Colliers International, 2014).

### **2.7.2 Marketing Communications in the Middle East**

The Middle East market is the world’s important market, which attracts the investors from all over the world. For marketing research in the Middle East, there were many organizations that conducted the studies of marketing communications, but only in the limited scope. Marketing communications in the Middle East is essential because it is the main factor for the entrepreneurs to communicate, advertise, or publicize their products or services in this region.

The study of Fifth Ring (2012) described the important characteristics of the business in the Middle East, which needed to focus on “people centric”. Therefore, business performance is mainly based on trust, familiarity, and relationship building. These three factors strongly affect the business in the Middle East. So, it can be said that relation building or connections are very important for business in the Middle East.

Also, Fifth Ring (2012) had presented marketing channels recommendations as follows:

1) Word of mouth – creating trust in business is very important principle of word of mouth, and product or service recommendation in the Middle East. Thus, the entrepreneurs should ensure quality and transparent operation in order to build trust which results in word of mouth. It is marketing channel, which creates

the best output.

2) Networking – creating network is very important for marketing communications in the Middle East, especially new entrepreneurs in the products or services markets in the Middle East. However, networking aims for creating awareness and referral. The majority of successful business performers come from networking and frequent referrals.

3) Content generation – It cannot be denied that content generation for marketing presentation is very substantial due to the fast data transmission to the consumers. It is needed for marketing communicators to always generate new product and service information. Most of the marketing communications in the Middle East are advertising and public relations in English language, which is understandable among the majority. Nonetheless, the Arab language should be communicated in some of the Middle East countries such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Oman. The barrier in generating Arab content is the lack of Arab-proficient communicator because the majority of them were foreigners. Also, they might not be able to find excellent and creative Arab translators for marketing communications. The research found that marketing communications should be content-localization. Hindu, Tagalog, Mandarin, and Russian languages are also experimented in marketing communications in some organizations in order to better communicate to consumers.

4) Online media – global marketing communications is likely to go through social media. This is the same in the Middle Eastern countries where online marketing communications is expanding. Over 30 million people in the Middle East use social media and 15 million people have signed up for Facebook accounts. Online marketing communications are (Fifth Ring, 2012) 1) Email marketing 2) Social media marketing 3) Google adverts 4) SMS marketing 5) Smartphone Application creation. The UAE is the Middle East country with the most effective online marketing communications.

5) Print Media – Despite high communications technology advancement, the printed media like newspaper and magazine are still very important for marketing communications in the Middle East. The study of Fifth Ring (2011) found that a majority of the people or 43.3% of the population in the Middle East checked the news via printed media. Thus, marketing communicators in Middle East still have to

keep up with the printed media.

6) Exhibition & Trade Fairs – This type of marketing communications is very important as it allows the entrepreneurs to directly contact with the customers. It can also create relationship and reliability for customers. The study of Fifth Ring (2012) suggested that the entrepreneurs should plan on attending more trade fairs for the ultimate efficiency such as preparing customer database, e-mail invitation to the regular customers, thank you e-mail to the customers after the fair. As mentioned above that relationship and awareness generation is substantial for marketing communications in the Middle East. Therefore, the entrepreneurs should pay attention to the customers for the utmost benefits from participating in trade fairs.

It can be concluded that marketing communications in the Middle East focused on creating relations and awareness. Therefore, whichever channel through which marketing is communicated, honesty and transparency are needed. It is necessary in performing business in order to create trust, which is the heart of the business in the Middle East.

### **2.7.3 Online Communications in the Middle East**

In the past decades, social media usage has been obviously increasing, especially in Arab countries where most of the people are Muslim. Some countries are very strict in terms of daily living. The access of social media has somewhat affected the traditional customs, especially the lifestyle of the teenagers and female Arabs.

Online communications or the usage of social media in the Middle East has become a part of Arab life. Arab Social Media Report (2015) reported that social media was like food, water, and the residence of Arabs. In addition, social media was like “magic wand” which was like a world on the fingertip for Arabs.

Arabs social media users believed that social media was like “life enhancer”, which revived liveliness and excitement for them. Their existence had become real (Same story).

Arab Social Media Report (2015) had studied the behavior of social media use among Arabs. Both qualitative and quantitative research work have been conducted drawn from 7,000 respondents coming from 18 countries in the Arab world. The relevant data for this research can be summarized as follows:

### 2.7.3.1 Social Media used in the Middle East Countries

Social media, which mostly used by Arabs included Facebook, WhatsApp, Youtube, and Instagram. Twitter and Facebook were used most averaging 87% in 10 Arab countries- the UAE, Qatar, Oman, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Egypt, and Morocco. The second rank was WhatsApp with 84% use rate (Arab Social Media Report, 2015, p. 21).

**Table 2.17** The Use of Social Media of Arabs

<b>Social Media</b>	<b>Use rate of social media (%)</b>
Facebook	87%
WhatsApp	84%
Youtube	39%
Instagram	34%
Twitter	32%

**Table 2.18** The Use of Social Media in the United Arab Emirates

<b>Social Media</b>	<b>Use rate of social media (%)</b>
Facebook	90%
WhatsApp	82%
Youtube	50%
Instagram	58%
Twitter	51%

Facebook was mostly used by 90% of the populations in the UAE, and WhatsApp at 82%, Instagram at 58%, Twitter at 51% and Youtube 50% respectively.

The survey of Arab Social Media Report (2015, p. 22) found that Arabs mainly used social media for chatting. The tool used in accessing social media was mobile phone and they mostly used social media in the evening.

#### 2.7.3.2 The impact of social media in the Middle East towards the Arab society

The main pillars of the use of social media in Arab countries are communications, knowledge, and entertainment. These three things are like the usage patterns of social media in other countries in the world. The explanation of these 3 components were as below

##### 1) Communications

Social Media reduces the gap of interpersonal communications in the world. It eases communications. People are closer than ever. The world in social media is boundless. People can communicate and learn across cultures easier.

##### 2) Knowledge

Social Media enabled accessible education that allows users to immediately learn what they're curious of. Moreover, users can receive real-time news via social media.

##### 3) Entertainment

Users can use social media for daily entertainment such as enjoying dramas, movies, songs, or sport. It is also the economy communications tool such as the communications via Viber or Skype.

The survey of Arab Social Media Report (2015) summarized the use of social media in Middle East countries, which influenced Arab society in the following section.

1) It creates more opportunities of work for female Arabs as some Arab societies in some countries limited the outside work for females. The existence of social media enables more female Arabs to work at home.

2) Social Media creates platform for Arab teenagers to easily share their creative opinions and thoughts to the outsiders.

3) Another view of social media usage in Arab countries is social media addiction, which lessens the interaction between relatives. Social media can facilitate the communications. However, Arab people have decreased the use of

face-to-face meeting with each other obviously. In some cases, social media can lead to divorce.

4) Some Arab teenagers tend to separate themselves from the society and family. They will stay in the virtual world to talk with their never-met-before friends and act beyond their age.

5) The excessive use of social media by Arabs is likely to lessen the religious practice of Muslim (Salat) and avoid the participation with family members, which directly affected religious culture and family.

6) Female Arabs aren't likely to practice appropriately to the religious principles such as revealing the face or beauty on social media. Female Arabs are compelled to look good all the time in social media world.

7) The governments in the Arab countries are worried about the use of social media of Arab teenagers, which will increasingly affect their mental illness or emotions. In addition, with the use of social media, critical thinking and academic performance of Arab teenagers are likely to get worse.

8) However, the use of social media is believed to be political tool for sharing the opinions of Arabs as seen from Arab Spring and the movement of ISIS, which has clearly changed the politics in the Arab world.

### 2.7.3.3 The impact of social media toward business in the Middle East countries

The social media usage has a lot of impacts on business in the Middle East countries. The survey of Arab Social Media Report (2015) found the influences of social media in driving business summarized as follows:

#### 1) Business Growth

(1) All countries in the Middle East are aware of social media power, which directly affects business growth.

(2) Social Media accelerates the work process.

(3) Establishment of online business such as shop on Facebook

(4) Driving business and sell volume (fast and easy communications with customers, easy brand promotion and fast payment for products or services).

2) Improving company image/Brand ambassadors

(1) Advertising modern image of the company via social media

(2) The company could directly interact with customers and bond strong relationship with customers.

(3) Received immediate feedback from customers for products or services development.

(4) Fast customer service and more interaction between staff and customers.

(5) Appropriate use of social media could promote company's reputation.

3) Social media can be used as a marketing tool, which drives business.

(1) Economy advertising via social media

(2) The advertising which matches the target group

(3) Access to target group in wide area

(4) Send message or information to target group quickly

(5) It is needed to develop marketing tool to ensure reliability for online shopping via social media.

4) Job opportunities/Talent Hunt

(1) There're opportunities to offer vacant position for the applicants via LinkedIn

(2) The qualifications of the applicants will better meet the requirements.

(3) The applicants can post their biographies for prompt consideration from the company.

(4) The emergence of new job position, especially what's related to the usage of social media

(5) Basic knowledge in using social media has become the required skill for new employees.

5) Becoming more consumer-centric

The use of social media allows the companies in the Middle

East to understand customer's requirements more and develop new innovations.

Thus, better meeting with customer's needs via the following channels:

- (1) Feedback from consumers via social media
- (2) The study of consumer's behaviors via social media
- (3) The analysis from the thoughts of consumers via social

media

#### 6) Training employees

Some companies in the Middle East use social media for staff training such as the training from the overseas subsidiaries via social media etc.

#### 7) Improving internal office relations

Some countries in the Middle East accept that the use of social media can develop the relationship with colleagues and support knowledge exchange among the colleagues.

#### 8) Improving service operations

The social media creates new model, which eases services. Customers can do product shopping via social media. It is the service that doesn't need face-to-face meeting. They can only meet on the virtual purchasing channels.

#### 9) Driving entrepreneurship

(1) Establish new business such as online business or online shopping application.

(2) Business establishment is fast and easy without construction cost and real shop.

(3) Small business can grow fast because online marketing is like the advertising of big company.

#### 10) Innovations and new technologies

More creativity in running business such as Uber and Apple pay

#### 11) Globalization

Social media creates new and wider market such as online trading which acquires customers or service users from all around the world.

#### 12) The use of high marketing and advertising expenditure

The money flow in the business that uses social media in the Middle East countries can positively affect the economy. However, online business in this region will still have to be more transparent.

It can be concluded that the misuse or inappropriate use of social media communications, knowledge, and entertainment can also harm culture, religion, and society.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“International Marketing Communications: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates” used both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research aims to 1) study Thailand’s international marketing communications; 2) study beliefs, culture, and lifestyle of Muslims in the United Arab Emirates; 3) study satisfaction and expectation of spa service users in the United Arab Emirates toward Thai spa products and services; 4) study news exposure and social media usage behaviors of spa service users in the United Arab Emirates; 5) analyze problems, restrictions and operation procedures in Thai spa products and services export in the United Arab Emirates; and 6) analyze factors which could develop Thailand’s international marketing communications of Thai spa products and services export to the United Arab Emirates.

The research procedure would be discussed in the following section.

#### 3.1 Research Procedure

The study consists of 3 parts as follows:

**Table 3.1** Structure of the Study

<b>Part</b>	<b>Research Procedure</b>
<b>Part 1</b> <b>(Research study in Thailand)</b> July 2015 – August 2015	- Reviewed information from primary documents, literature, concepts, theories, and related research - In-depth interview with Thai experts, academicians, and entrepreneurs in product export sector - In-depth interview with Thai experts, academicians, and entrepreneurs in spa service business

**Table 3.1** (Continued)

<b>Part</b>	<b>Research Procedure</b>
<b>Part 2</b> <b>(Conducted research in The United Arab Emirates)</b> September 2015 – October 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Studied level of satisfaction and expectation of 107 spa service users in the United Arab Emirates</li> <li>- In-depth interview with marketers of Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates.</li> <li>- In-depth interview with Consulate of Labor from Royal Thai Embassy in the United Arab Emirates</li> <li>- In-depth interview with 5 spa executives in the United Arab Emirates who used Thai spa products and masseurs.</li> <li>- In-depth interview with Thai masseurs from 5 spas in the United Arab Emirates</li> </ul>
<b>Part 3</b> <b>(Conducted research in Thailand)</b> November 2015 – March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyze and synthesize the data from part one and two in order to develop the marketing communications strategy, which could increase the potential of Thai spa products and services export in the United Arab Emirates.</li> </ul>

### **3.2 Sampling Frame**

The sampling frame could be categorized in two groups as follows:

#### **3.2.1 Sampling Frame**

**Table 3.2** Sample Groups in Thailand

<b>Sample Groups in Thailand</b>	<b>Numbers of Informant</b>	<b>Research Methodology</b>	<b>Sampling Criteria</b>
1. Academicians from National Innovation Agency (NIA.)  (1) Manager of innovative project	1 person	In-depth interview (Qualitative research)	- The respondent must be the manager of innovation project from National Innovation Agency (NIA.), which is related directly to the Middle East market project: new market of Thai natural products.
2. Academicians from Overseas Employment Administration Division  (1) Labor specialist, Head of staff training before working overseas	1 person	In-depth interview (Qualitative research)	- The respondent must be the officer from Overseas Employment Administration Division, which is related directly to support the operations and Thai masseurs export in the United Arab Emirates.
3. Thai entrepreneurs from 3 companies in spa products export sector.	3 people	In-depth interview (Qualitative research)	- Respondent used to export spa products to The United Arab Emirates for over 2 years.  - Respondents are reliable companies with legal commercial registration for

**Table 3.2** (Continued)

<b>Sample Groups in Thailand</b>	<b>Numbers of Informant</b>	<b>Research Methodology</b>	<b>Sampling Criteria</b>
4. The executives of 3 Thai massage schools	3 people	In-depth interview (Qualitative research)	<p>spa products export.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spa products export must be delivered by legal transport.</li> <li>- The respondents used to train masseurs or Thai therapists to work in spa in the United Arab Emirates for over 2 years.</li> <li>- Respondents are reliable institutes, which legally provide service and issue certificate for masseur students. The Professional Development Association must authorize the certificate. It must have the affixed stamp from Ministry of Foreign Affairs if the work via is required for overseas work.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.2 Sampling Frame in the United Arab Emirates

**Table 3.3** Sampling Frame in the United Arab Emirates

<b>Sample Groups in the United Arab Emirates</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Sampling Criteria</b>
1. The experts from Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates which are (1) Marketers of Department of International Trade Promotion	1 Person	In-depth interview (Qualitative research)	- The respondent must be the operator from Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, which is related directly to the support of Thai products import to the United Arab Emirates.
2. The experts from the Royal Thai Embassy in the United Arab Emirates which is (1) Consulate of Labor from Royal Thai Embassy in the United Arab Emirates	1 Person	In-depth interview (Qualitative research)	- The respondent must be the operator from the Royal Thai Embassy in the United Arab Emirates, which is related directly to the import or the supervision of Thai labors in the United Arab Emirates.
3. Spa executives in the United Arab	5 Persons	In-depth interview	- Spa must provide service for more than 2 years.

**Table 3.3** (Continued)

<b>Sample Groups in the United Arab Emirates</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Sampling Criteria</b>
Emirates		(Qualitative research)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spa must provide Thai massage service and/ or serviced products or Thai products for sale.</li> <li>- Spa business must provide legal service according to the law of the United Arab Emirates.</li> <li>- Spa business must be located in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates only.</li> </ul>
4. Masseurs from Thailand	12 persons	In-depth interview (Qualitative research)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legal Thai masseurs in the United Arab Emirates</li> <li>- Thai spa masseurs who have been working in the United Arab Emirates for more than 1 year.</li> <li>- Active spa business must be located in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates only.</li> </ul>
5. Customer/ service users in the United Arab Emirates	107 persons	In-depth interview (Quantitative research)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondents must be Arab people who used to be serviced by Thai spa in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates only.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.3 Tools Used in the Research

Tools used in the research included the questionnaire design based on the theory about satisfaction and expectation for analyzing scope and content. The tools were created to find reliability value of questionnaire by applying Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The confidence value of questionnaire for each construct had a value of over 0.700, which is the accepted criterion. The validity of the questionnaire was derived from the review of the literature and process for item development.

1) According to the data collected from 107 respondents, it was analyzed to find reliability value of the questionnaire in the constructs measured by applying Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient with accepted criteria over 0.700.

The analysis results were in the table of questionnaire's reliability value by construct are presented in the following table:

**Table 3.4** Questionnaire Reliability Report

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha value
1. Satisfaction in Thai spa products	.858
2. Satisfaction in Thai spa service	.763
3. Expectation toward the factors which influence the selection of Thai spa products and services	.827

2) The respondents who were interviewed were selected using probability-sampling method. They were selected randomly. Data collection had been conducted overseas under the limited time and resources, which was referred from previous research works that conducted 100 questionnaires collection under the same condition such as the research on "The Comparison of Japanese Language Teaching Culture as the Second Language between Thai Universities and Japanese Universities" (Somporn Komarathat, 2005). Only 107 questionnaires were actually collected.

3) The questionnaire was divided into three sections -demographic questions of spa service, users behavioral questions on media exposure of spa service users satisfaction, and factors, which affected the expectation of spa service users in the United Arab Emirates.

### 3.3 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods could be divided into 3 methods.

#### 3.3.1 Data Collection from the Related Documents and Researches

General data collection about the factors, which affected international communication in the United Arab Emirates, would be collected from basic data from the related documents and research works under the concept of international marketing communications. It could be divided into 5 topics as presented in the following figure.

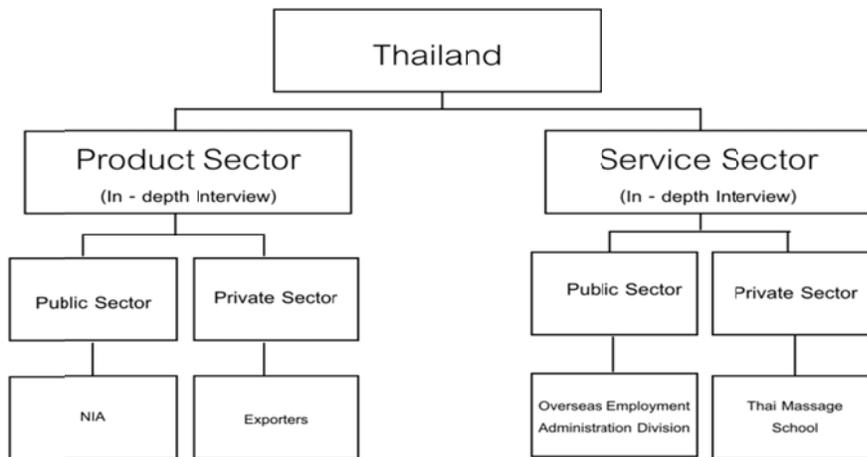


**Figure 3.1** The Model of Important Factors for Planning International Marketing

**Source:** Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, p.15).

- 1) Demographic characteristics in the United Arab Emirates
- 2) Economic factors in the United Arab Emirates
- 3) Political and legal environment in the United Arab Emirates
- 4) Geographic characteristics in the United Arab Emirates
- 5) Culture environment in the United Arab Emirates

### 3.3.2 Qualitative Data Collection



**Figure 3.2** The Model of Data Collection in Thailand

Data collection part 1: The researcher collected the data in Thailand by studying relevant documents and research works. In addition, basic data collection would use the following procedures:

In-depth interview was conducted with academicians and experts, as well as Thai entrepreneurs of 3 companies of spa product export to the United Arab Emirates, 3 Thai massage schools, and therapists in the United Arab Emirates. The interviews provided basic information, problem, and barrier in exporting spa products and services to the United Arab Emirate. For the export sector, the researcher studied the information of spa product exported to the United Arab Emirates from National Innovation Agency (NIA) and Department of Export Promotion. For service sector,

basic information was explored from Thai massage school and Overseas Employment Administration Division.

The in-depth interview with the respondents in part 1 of data collection required certified letter from School of Communication Arts and Management Innovation, National Institute of Development Administration in order to get permission from the participants of that organization. After being approved by the institute, the researcher made an interview appointment. The interview took about 1 hour. The interview was recorded by note taking, voice and visual recording if agreed by the respondents.

**Table 3.5** In-depth Interview Guideline Data Collection part 1

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Interview Guideline</b>
1.The academician from National Innovation Agency (NIA)	Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents. Part 2 Background and current circumstances of Thai products export to the United Arab Emirates and the project of “The Middle East market project: new market of Thai natural products.” Part 3 Religion and culture, which affect export/ promotion of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates. Part 4 The ingredients of spa products and packaging design Part 5 The future trend of Thai spa products export to the United Arab Emirates Part 6 Marketing communication in promoting Thai spa products in the United Arab Emirates

**Table 3.5** (Continued)

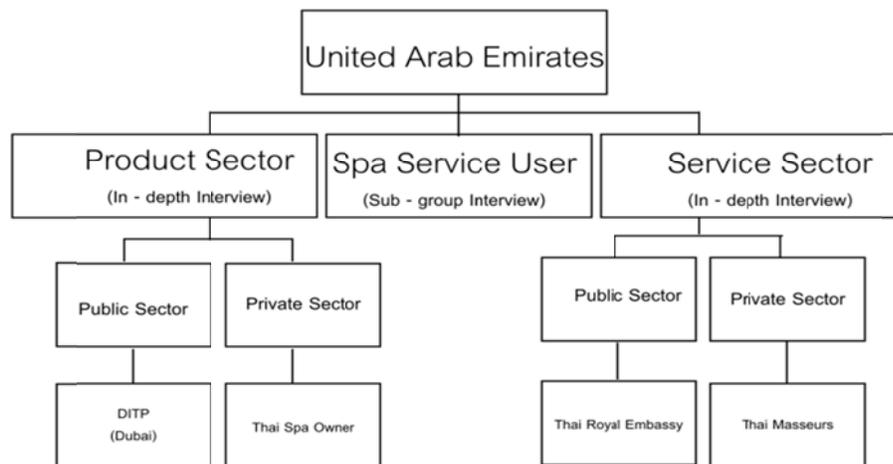
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Interview Guideline</b>
	<p>Part 7 Threats and problems of Thai spa products promotion and export to the United Arab Emirates.</p> <p>Part 8 Promotion and solutions to Thai spa products export</p> <p>Part 9 Recommendations</p>
<p>2. The academician from Overseas Employment Administration Division</p>	<p>Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents.</p> <p>Part 2 Current work travelling situation of Thai therapists/masseurs to the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 3 Religion and culture which affect work travelling of Thai therapists/masseurs to the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 4 Future work travelling trend to the United Arab Emirates of Thai therapists/masseurs</p> <p>Part 5 Marketing communications in promoting Thai therapists/masseurs in the United Arab Emirates.</p> <p>Part 6 Threats and problems of work travelling to the United Arab Emirate of Thai therapists/masseurs</p> <p>Part 7 Promotion approach and solutions of Thai therapists/ masseurs to the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 8 Recommendations</p>

**Table 3.5** (Continued)

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Interview Guideline</b>
3. Thai entrepreneurs from product export sector to The United Arab Emirates	<p>Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents.</p> <p>Part 2 Background and current circumstances of Thai products promotion and export to the United Arab Emirates.</p> <p>Part 3 Religion and culture, which affect promotion/export of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates.</p> <p>Part 4 Future export trend of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 5 Marketing communications in promoting Thai spa products in the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 6 Threats and problems of Thai spa products export to the United Arab Emirate</p> <p>Part 7 Promotion approach and solutions to Thai spa products export/promotion to the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 8 Recommendations</p>
4. The executives of massage school in Thailand	<p>Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents.</p> <p>Part 2 Background and current circumstances of Thai massage learning of Thai therapists/ masseurs who wanted to work overseas</p> <p>Part 3 Thai massage training for overseas work</p>

**Table 3.5** (Continued)

Respondent	Interview Guideline
	Part 4 Religion and culture, which affect promotion/ export of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates.
	Part 5 Future export trend of Thai therapists/ masseurs to Middle East
	Part 6 Marketing communications in promoting Thai massage training
	Part 7 Threats and problems of training Thai therapists/masseurs who wanted to work overseas.
	Part 8 Promotion approach and solutions of Thai therapists/masseurs who wanted to work overseas.
	Part 9 Recommendations



**Figure 3.3** The Model of Data Collection in the United Arab Emirates

Data Collection Part 2: The data was collected in the United Arab Emirates by in-depth interview with the marketers from Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates and the Consulate of Labor from Royal Thai Embassy in the United Arab Emirates, as well as executives of 5 spa businesses in the United Arab Emirates who used spa products and masseurs from Thailand about opinions, threats, and marketing development approach for exporting Thai products and services to the United Arab Emirates. The interview guidelines are presented in the following table.

**Table 3.6** In-depth Interview Guideline

Data collection part 2

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>In-depth Interview Guideline</b>
1. Marketers of Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP), Dubai, The United Arab Emirates	<p>Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents.</p> <p>Part 2 Background and current circumstances of importing/promoting Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 3 Religion and culture, which affect import/ promotion of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates.</p> <p>Part 4 Future import trend of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 5 Marketing communications in promoting Thai spa products in the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Part 6 Threats and problems of importing/ promoting Thai spa products with the United Arab Emirates</p>

**Table 3.6** (Continued)

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>In-depth Interview Guideline</b>
	Part 7 Promotion approach and solutions of importing/ promoting Thai spa products which increase satisfaction of spa customers in the United Arab Emirates Part 8 Recommendations
2. Minister Counsellor of Labor from Royal Thai Embassy in The United Arab Emirates	Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents. Part 2 Current circumstances of importing Thai therapists/masseurs to The United Arab Emirates Part 3 Religion and culture, which affects the import of Thai spa therapists and masseurs in The United Arab Emirates. Part 4 Future import trend of Thai therapists/ masseurs to The United Arab Emirates Part 5 Marketing communications in promoting Thai therapists/ masseurs in The United Arab Emirates Part 6 Threats and problems of importing Thai therapists/ masseurs to the United Arab Emirates Part 7 Promotion approach and solutions of Thai therapists/ masseurs to the United Arab Emirates Part 8 Recommendations

**Table 3.6** (Continued)

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>In-depth Interview Guideline</b>
3. Executives of spa business in The United Arab Emirates	Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents. Part 2 Background and overall image of establishing Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates Part 3 Import procedures of spa products/ therapists/ masseurs from Thailand Part 4 Compare the differences of operations in Thailand and the United Arab Emirates Part 5 Religion and culture, which affect spa business Part 6 Marketing communications/ promotion for customers in the United Arab Emirates to use service Part 7 Threats and problems in performing Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates Part 8 Solution approaches in performing Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates Part 9 Recommendations
4. Masseurs from Thailand	Part 1 Important basic information of the respondents. Part 2 Background and overall image in choosing the United Arab Emirates for work Part 3 Duty

**Table 3.6** (Continued)

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>In-depth Interview Guideline</b>
	Part 4 Compare the differences of operations in Thailand and the United Arab Emirates
	Part 5 Language, religion, and culture, which affect the operation
	Part 6 Threats and problems in work
	Part 7 Solution approach in work
	Part 8 Recommendations

### 3.3.3 Quantitative Data Collection

In quantitative study, the data was collected by accidental sampling in order to get the required numbers of samples without setting restrictions criteria. There were 107 spa service users in Dubai who filled in self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire asked the respondents to fill general demographic questions, media exposure, satisfaction level, and expectation of service users. The questionnaire was designed in English language and translated into Arab language, which was certified by Sheikhul Islam Office.

Satisfaction level measurement was conducted by developing satisfaction measurement items for service users to evaluate. High score referred to high satisfaction and low score referred to low satisfaction. However, the scores from each service user would be evaluated to get the average score, which indicated the overall satisfaction level of the users. After that, the data would be analyzed to compare gender, age, education level, and nationality of the spa users toward the differences of satisfaction and expectation levels toward spa products and service from Thailand.

In collecting data with questionnaire, the researcher requested for permission from the executives of spa business to distribute questionnaires at the chosen spa. The questionnaire distribution was divided into 2 periods 10:00 – 17:00 hrs. and 18:00 – the closing time of that spa. This would allow the data to be collected from housewives or unemployed customers and customers who came after working hours.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

3.4.1 General information of spa service users was analyzed by using frequency and percentage.

3.4.2 Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze expectation and satisfaction of spa service users toward Thai spa products and services.

3.4.3 Satisfaction levels of Thai spa products and services and expectation levels toward the factors, which affect the selection of Thai spa product could be divided into 5 levels as presented in the following section.

Level 1 referred to the lowest satisfaction and expectation levels or needed improvement

Level 2 referred to the low satisfaction and expectation levels or below standard

Level 3 referred to the average satisfaction and expectation levels or moderate

Level 4 referred to the high satisfaction and expectation levels or good

Level 5 referred to the highest satisfaction and expectation levels or very good

Class interval of satisfaction or expectation scores could be calculated from

Satisfaction level/ the highest expectation - Satisfaction level/ the lowest expectation

$$= \frac{5 - 1}{5} = 0.8$$

5

The number of satisfaction/ expectation level

The interpretation criteria was determined defining class interval of satisfaction or expectation scores = 0.8.

The criteria for comparing average score in order to compare with the real data were set as follows:

1.00 – 1.80 referred to the lowest satisfaction and expectation levels or needed improvement

1.81 – 2.60 referred to the low satisfaction and expectation levels or below standard

2.61 – 3.40 referred to the average satisfaction and expectation levels or moderate

3.41 – 4.20 referred to the high satisfaction and expectation levels or good

4.21 - 5.00 referred to the highest satisfaction and expectation levels or very good

3.4.4 T – Test was used to compare satisfaction and expectation of service users toward Thai spa products and services.

Hypothesis 1 Different gender of spa service users had different levels of satisfaction toward Thai spa products

Hypothesis 2 Different gender of spa service users had different levels of satisfaction toward Thai spa service

Hypothesis 3 Different gender of spa service users had different levels of expectation toward the factors which affected the different selection of Thai spa products and services.

Hypothesis 4 Different gender of spa service users had different satisfaction levels toward Halal of Thai spa products

Hypothesis 5 Different gender of spa service users had different satisfaction levels toward Halal of Thai spa services

Hypothesis 6 Different gender of spa service users had different expectation levels toward Halal of Thai spa products

Hypothesis 7 Different gender of spa service users had different expectation levels toward Halal of Thai spa services

Hypothesis 8 Different age of spa service users had different levels of satisfaction toward Thai spa products

Hypothesis 9 Different age of spa service users had different levels of

satisfaction toward Thai spa services

Hypothesis 10 Different age of spa service users had different levels of satisfaction toward the factors, which affect the different selection of Thai spa products and services.

3.4.5 ANOVA (F-test) was applied to analyze the variance of satisfaction and expectation of spa service users.

Hypothesis 11 Different education level of spa service users had different level of satisfaction toward Thai spa products.

Hypothesis 12 Different education level of spa service users had different level of satisfaction toward Thai spa services.

Hypothesis 13 Different education level of spa service users had different level of expectation toward the factors which affected the different selection of Thai spa products and services.

Hypothesis 14 Different nationality of spa service users had different level of satisfaction toward Thai spa products.

Hypothesis 15 Different nationality of spa service users had different level of satisfaction toward Thai spa services.

Hypothesis 16 Different nationality of spa service users had different level of expectation toward the factors, which affect the different selection of Thai spa products and services.

3.4.6 Documentary research findings, the results of in-depth interview with the experts of spa products export and Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates, and quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed and discussed based on three main aspects as follows:

- 1) Marketing communications of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates and current communication innovation
- 2) Religion and culture impact on marketing communications of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates
- 3) Development strategy of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates

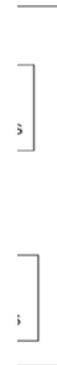
## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH RESULTS

The findings on research of “International Marketing Communications: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates” could be divided by data collection methods into three types. Firstly, it is the document study and the findings would be presented descriptively by the factors, which affect international marketing communications of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates. Secondly, it is the results from qualitative research from in-depth interview with the academicians and experts in both Thai spa products and services in the United Arab Emirates. Thirdly, it is the findings of the quantitative data from the response of Thai service users in the United Arab Emirates.

#### 4.1 Factors which Affected International Marketing Communication of Thai Spa Business in the United Arab Emirates

In designing international marketing communications, international marketing communicators five important factors, which affect international marketing communications, need to be studied as shown in figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1** The Model of the Important Factors for International Marketing Plan

**Source:** Worawan Ongkruttaraksa (2010, p. 15).

### 4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of the United Arab Emirates

#### 4.1.1.1 Numbers of Populations in the United Arab Emirates

According to the report of World Bank (2014), the population in the UAE was constantly increasing. The recent survey in 2014 showed that there were 9.45 million people in the UEA, which was massively increased compared to 1960 when the population of the UAE was only 100,000. The increasing rate of population in the UAE was 10400% in the past 50 years. The average population growth rate during 1960-2014 was about 2.44 million people.

Million

**Figure 4.2** Numbers of Populations in the United Arab Emirates During 2006 - 2014  
**Source:** World Bank (2014).

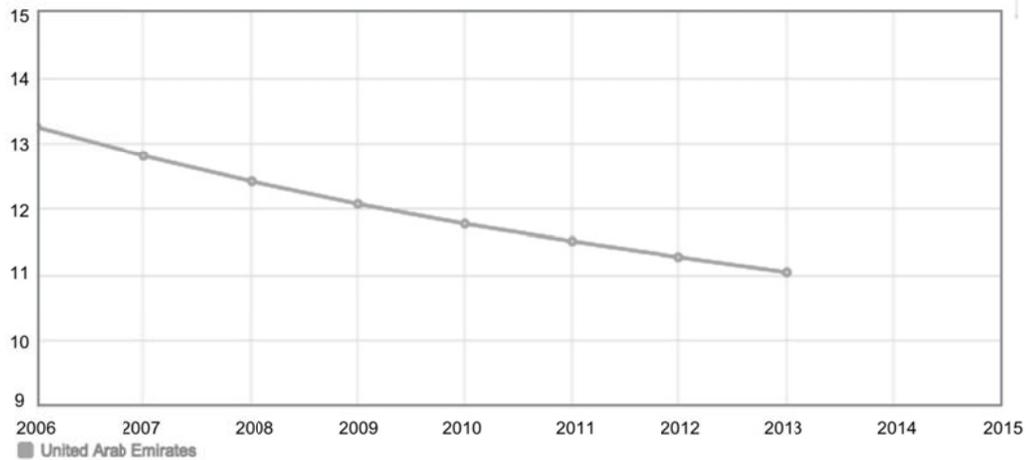
The graph indicates the constant increasing rate of population in the UAE during 2006-2014. There were about 4.88 million people in 2006. The number was doubled in 2014 when the population was about 9.45 million people.

The numbers of population was 0.07% of the world's population. It meant that one in every 1,526 people would reside in the United Arab Emirates (ibid).

The main reason of the increasing population in the UAE was the migration of foreigners to work in the UAE. The majority or 88% of population in the UAE are expatriates. Most of them were from India, Pakistan, Iran, Philippines, Bangladesh, and Arab countries. There are only 12% of Emirati in the country.

#### 4.1.1.2 Birth Rate of Population in the United Arab Emirates

The report of Indexmundi.com showed that the crude birth rate of population in the UAE was constantly decreasing, especially in 2006 when the decrease was extreme as shown in figure 4.3.



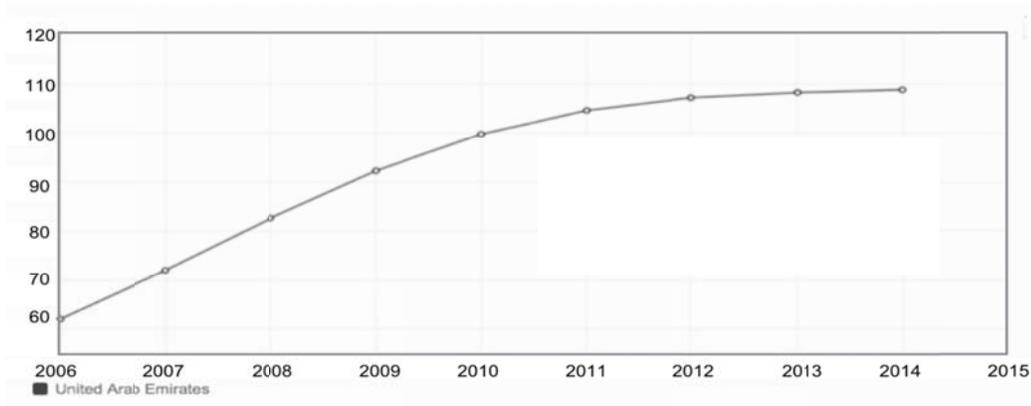
**Figure 4.3** Crude Birth Rate of Population in The United Arab Emirates During 2006-2013

**Source:** World Bank (2014).

The graph showed the crude birth rate of the population in UAE or the numbers of new borns in a particular area or group within 1 year per 1,000 people. The formula was “Number of births x 1000 / estimated population at mid-year.

#### 4.1.1.3 Density Rate of Populations in the United Arab Emirates

World Bank (2014) reported that the density of population in the United Arab Emirates had been constantly increasing since 2006-2014 as shown in figure 4.4. The recent survey reported that the density rate of the population in 2014 was 108.69.



**Figure 4.4** Density Rate of Population in the United Arab Emirates During 2006-2014

**Source:** World Bank (2014).

The density rate of population could be calculated from numbers of populations at mid-year divided by the area of the country measured by sq.km. The numbers of population referred to the legal residents or the UAE population only. This didn't include refugees who didn't permanently reside in the UAE including political refugees. The area of the country referred to all areas of the country, but didn't include the submarine areas of that country and special economic zones.

#### 4.1.1.4 Age Range of the Populations in the United Arab Emirates

Index Mundi (2014). showed that the majority of the populations aged during 25-54 years old which was 61.5% of all populations as presented in table 4.1.

**Table 4.1** Age Range of the Population in the United Arab Emirates

Age Range	No. of Population (%)	No. of Male Population (person)	No. of Female Population (person)
0-14 years old	20.7%	597,476	570,275
15-24 years old	13.7%	457,647	311,673
25-54 years old	61.5%	2,639,018	820,915
55-64 years old	3.1%	132,718	43,624
Over 65 years old	1%	35,071	20,388

**Source:** Index Mundi. (2014).

#### 4.1.1.5 Family Size of the Population in the United Arab Emirates

The survey of Michael Bauer Research (2014) showed that the average numbers of family members in the UAE was 6.2 people. This was calculated from all population of each household divided with the numbers of all households.

#### 4.1.1.6 Literacy Rate of the Populations in the United Arab Emirates

The survey of UNESCO (2015) showed that the literacy rate of the populations in the United Arab Emirates was 93.8% 93.1% for male and 95.8% for female.

### 4.1.2 Economic Factors in the United Arab Emirates

#### 4.1.2.1 Indicators for Considering Population Income

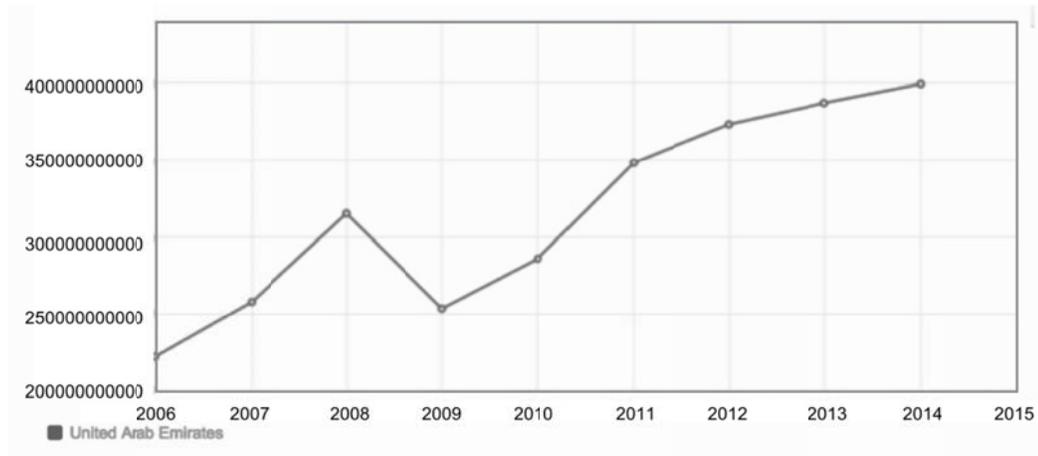
The indicators could be considered from revenue distribution of the population from GDP, GDP per capita, and GNP.

The study of World Bank (2014) showed the numbers of factors for considering population income, which could be summarized as shown in table 4.2.

**Table 4.2** Numbers of Factors in Considering Population Income

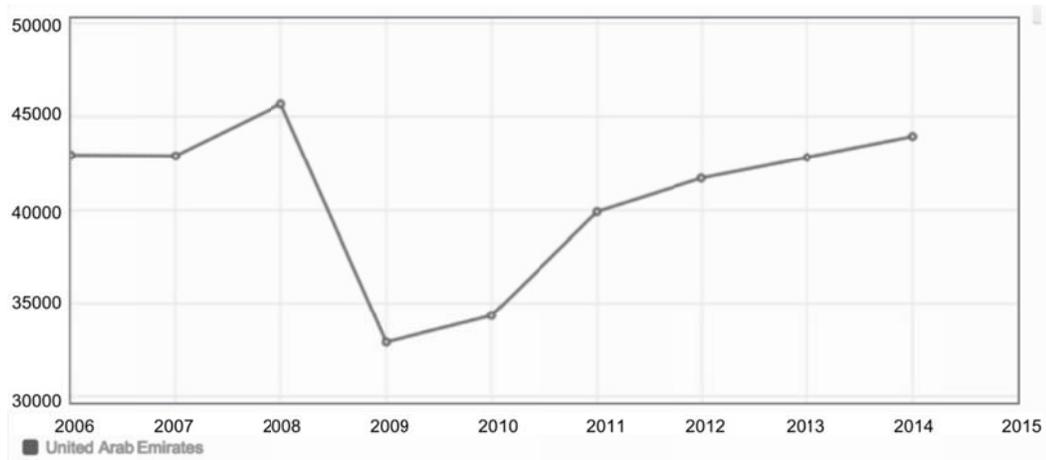
<b>Gross Domestic Product (GDP)</b>	<b>399.5 Billion US Dollars (2014)</b>
Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDP per capita)	43,962 US Dollars (2014)
Gross National Product (GNP)	44,600 US Dollars (2014)

**Source:** World Bank (2014).



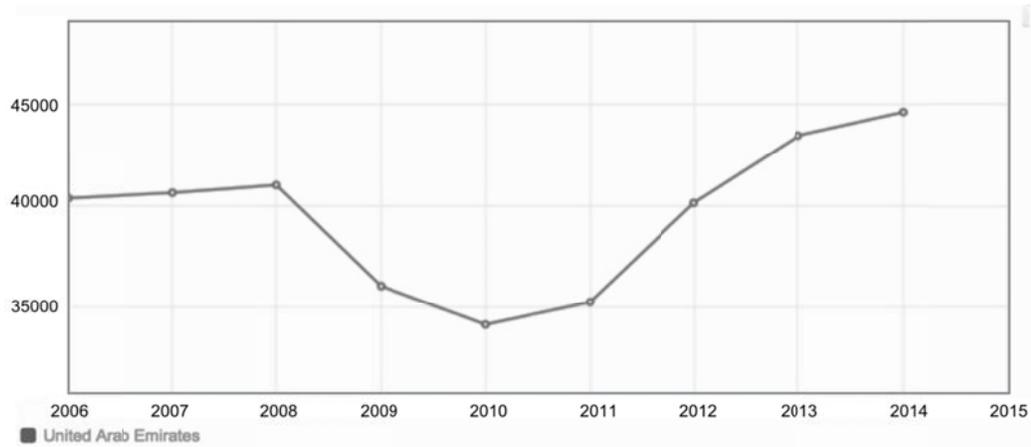
**Figure 4.5** Graph of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) In the United Arab Emirates During 2006 – 2014

**Source:** World Bank (2014).



**Figure 4.6** Graph of GDP Per Capita in the United Arab Emirates During 2006 – 2014

**Source:** World Bank (2014).



**Figure 4.7** Graph of Gross National Product (GNP) in the United Arab Emirates during 2006 – 2014

**Source:** World Bank (2014).

Figure 4.5 – 4.7 indicated that the population income was likely to increase as seen from the numbers of factors presented as follows:

**Table 4.3** Indicators of Population Income during 2006 - 2014

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Indicators</b>									
GDP (billion USD)	222.1	257.0	315.5	253.5	286.0	348.5	373.4	387.2	399.5
GDP per capita (USD)	42,950	42,913	45,720	32,905	34,341	39,901	41,712	42,831	43,962
GNP (USD)	40,360	40,630	41,010	36,040	34,140	35,250	40,130	43,440	44,600

**Source:** World Bank (2014).

### **4.1.3 The Urbanization of the United Arab Emirates**

The urbanization in the UAE was constant in the capital city like Abu Dhabi and Dubai where the construction and real estate developments are provided to facilitate the foreign investment or residence. Currently, the income of the UAE is mainly from petroleum and natural gas, however, as those are unrenewable and unrecyclable energy. The UAE government had paid attention to the development policy for economic-based expansion in order to increase national income. It could also be the future national non-petroleum-dependent income security.

The UAE has New Economic City (NEC) project called Masdar City at Abu Dhabi, which is worth 15,000 million US Dollars. The income from crude oil was used for the development. This place will become the experiment place for new innovation of renewable energy sector such as solar power and seawater distillation.

Moreover, in 2020, Dubai is going to host the Dubai Expo 2020. Dubai government has over 12 urbanization projects Dubai Water Canal Project, Museum of the Future, Jewel of the Creek, Al Habtoor City, Deira Islands, MBR City – District One, Aladdin City, Dubai theme parks, Dubai Frame, Al Mamzar Beachfront, Bluewaters Island and Dubai Creek Harbour. In addition an airport and the largest shopping mall are being built to support the incoming millions of tourists to Dubai in 2020 (Arabian Business, 2015).

In the past development, the UAE could swiftly increase the income from the non-petroleum sector such as tourism, industry, construction, finance, and banking. Furthermore, there are supports for trade zone and free industry in many states, which enabled the fast expansion in port, inventory, oil refinery, and petrochemical industry.

### **4.1.4 Political and Legal Environment in the United Arab Emirates**

#### **4.1.4.1 Administration in the United Arab Emirates**

The United Arab Emirates is the federation which composes of 7 states Abu Dhabi, Dubai (Port and business hub), Sharjah, Ajman, Ra's al-Khaimah, Fujairah, and Umm al-Qaiwain. Abu Dhabi is capital city and Dubai is the big city, which is the business and tourism hubs, and product distribution center to other regions.

The UAE is ruled by the President who is selected from Supreme National Council every 5 years. De facto, the Emir of Abu Dhabi will be the President of the UAE, as well as the Chairman of the Supreme Council and Supreme Petroleum Council. In addition, Vice President and Prime Minister will automatically be the Emir of Dubai. The current President of the UAE is H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the Prime Minister is H.H. Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The UAE is the absolute monarchy country

The stability of the UAE's politics is somewhat high because the current President and the Emir of Abu Dhabi, H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, is strongly supported from the six other Royal Emirs who support economic development by developing other businesses apart from only petroleum export. It could be said that each Emir has the same vision

#### 4.1.4.2 Free zone in the United Arab Emirates

There are many ways to establish business in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) e.g. business establishment in free zone. It is the area where the boundary is determined for the entrepreneurs in private sector to perform the business for profits and more privileges are provided comparing to general economic area.

At present, there are 37 free zones in the UAE in total and over 20 zones are in Dubai. Free zone companies in Dubai could be divided into 2 types. The criteria and benefits are presented as follows:

- 1) Free Zone Company and the benefits include the following:
  - (1) The entrepreneurs can be business owners without local sponsors or partners for business investment.
  - (2) Free zone will facilitate the document works, translation, document certification on the document and infrastructure, as well as closely providing consults in terms of appropriate company structure with business plan, including the management of the company's bank account. This company can be confident that the data will be safe.
  - (3) Pay 0% revenue tax or free of tax charge. The import tax and the import for export tax will be exempted.
  - (4) The contract renewal fee in free zone will be cheaper than the initial fee.

(5) Various business performances are possible and business transaction is internationalized.

(6) The entrepreneurs can own real estate.

(7) Legal employment and visa for employees

## 2) Offshore Company

Offshore company is the subsidiary, located in Dubai, of the parent company overseas. It will be the large company in other countries, which needs to extend the business to the UAE. The conditions will be slightly different from other companies.

(1) No minimum investment cost. However, it is recommended that 10,000 Dirham should be secured.

(2) No office is needed

(3) In registration, at least one director is needed.

(4) There's annual financial report, audited from the free zone, in order to prevent money laundering.

(5) There's annual meeting report the same as other companies.

(6) It is necessary to get approval from government sectors prior to the purchasing or selling.

(7) Brokers can be contacted to facilitate the operation in many processes and legal consults. The package fee for business establishment with broker service, registration costs, and documentation was 50,000 Dirham in the Dubai Free zone, 25,000 Dirham in Sharjah, and 15,000 Dirham in Ras al-Khaimah.

(8) If the business was established without broker, the basic costs will be 1) 5,000 Dirham for business establishment fee (one-time payment), 2) 2,000 Dirham for contract fee (one-time payment), 3) 15,000 Dirham for business certificate (annual fee) 4) 17,000 Dirham for 1 table in office area (annual fee), 5) 5,000 Dirham for visa fee per one person (3-years visa)

In total, the first payment is 44,000 AED (Around 387,000 Baht). It can be contacted directly with the free zone of their interest.

Business format is another important factor in choosing free zone such as business, import-export, consulting company, or online service provision. This

does not require existing office for work, so Dubai Multi Commodities Center, Sharjah Airport Free Zone, RAK Free Zone and Fujaira FZ etc. could be the choice. Free zone can be chosen from the type of business such as Khalifa Industrial Zone for industry business, Dubai Silicon Oasis for computer business, Dubai Media City for media business, Dubai Academic City for education business, Dubai Healthcare City for public health business, Dubai Outsource Zone for outsourcing business, Dubai Auto Zone for automotive business, Dubai Healthcare City for public health business, and Dubai Logistics City for transportation business. Therefore, free zone should be chosen to correspondent with the type of business.

#### 4.1.4.3 International Law in the United Arab Emirates

Legal system in the UAE has been developed from the Civil Law and Islamic law or called Sharia Law. The court system of the UAE can be divided into 2 systems civil law system and Sharia law.

However, the judgment in civil and criminal cases, Sharia law will be adopted in the judgment. Islamic law aimed to protect human in 5 aspects religion, life, intelligence, lineage, and properties, including the preservation of personal and public benefits, as well as to organize every levels of society in the righteous way. Abiding by the Islamic law will lead to the peaceful life and society. Islamic law or Sharia law is the law derived mainly from the basic religious teaching and jurisprudence. Sharia law has a legal structure, which includes the personal and public lifestyles. Moreover, the law will cover daily aspects, either it is administration, economy, business operation, banking, transaction or contract, family relationship, hygiene, and social problems.

With the influence, Sharia law can be reflected through the daily lifestyle of each Muslim since they were born until their death. The law is promoted from family level to regional level and then in national level.

Islamic schools which are prestigious in the current Muslim world are (The Islamic Foundation)

1) Al-Hanafiyyah School of Law (699-769) is mostly in Turkey, Pakistan, India, Afkanistan, Jordan, China, and post-soviet states.

2) Al-Maligiyyah School of Law (714-800) can be found in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Kuwait, and Bahrain.

3) Asshafiyah School of Law (767-857) can be found in Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

4) Al-hanabillah (780-857) is mostly in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Syria.

Islamic law can be divided into categories. Each school of law will have the similar aspects which mostly cover 7 categories religious activities, finance, trading and investment, marriage and family law, criminal law, general support on ethics and morals, administration and politics and others (Islamic foundation, 2015).

Moreover, Thai labor manual: the living and work in Middle East countries, Africa, and others from Overseas Employment Administration Division under the Ministry of Labor has summarized the crimes and the penalties of Sharia law for Thai labors who are going to work in the Middle East. The issues have been summarized in the following table.

**Table 4.4** Crimes and Penalties According to Sharia Law

Serious Offense	Penalties of Sharia Law
1. Drug trafficking	Death penalty or imprisonment
2. Murder	Death penalty (or imprisonment if the heirs of the deceased exculpate death penalty)
3. The offense toward national security	Death penalty or imprisonment
4. Pillage	Death penalty (if the property owners died)
5. Steal	Cut hands or imprisonment
6. Fugitive	Imprisonment and whip
7. Offense on gender	Death penalty or imprisonment (depends on each case)
8. Prostitution	Imprisonment and whip (or death penalty if it is the serious offense within the scope of item 7)

**Table 4.4** (Continued)

Serious Offense	Penalties of Sharia Law
9. Gamble	Imprisonment and whip
10. Produce, sell and consume alcohol	Imprisonment and whip Repeated action might lead to death penalty

**Source:** The Islamic Foundation (2015. p. 6).

#### 4.1.4.4 Laws Regarding Spa Products in the United Arab Emirates

Dubai Municipality from Public Health and Safety Department (2012) had determined the regulations for importing cosmetics products, as well as spa products and perfume. It worked as the standard for the importers and cosmetics products distributors in the UAE in order to prevent the rejection from the inspection at Dubai port and to avoid the revocation of import and products distribution in the UAE.

The government sectors which are responsible for ensuring cosmetics import standard consist of Head of the Consumer Safety Products Section, Head of the Evaluation and Registration Team, Senior Consumer Safety Products Officer and Consumer Safety Products Officer.

Dubai Municipality (2012) defines cosmetics products as cosmetics, personal care products, and perfume. These products would be applied on a part of the body such as skin, hair, nail, lips, or other external organs. It also included products for mouth and teeth. Products of this type would clean, fragrant, and maintain good health condition.

In addition, Dubai Municipality (2012) defined the definition of company, cosmetics products, personal care products, and perfume. It is the company, which holds the certificate from the UAE government sector that enables the import of product and/or all cosmetics products.

According to Dubai's announcement, information and documents must be prepared for products import standard as follows: (Cosmetics, Personal Care, and Perfumes Label Assessment Application Procedures, Dubai Municipality, 2012)

- 1) Authenticated free sale certificate from the country of origin stating that the product is sold freely in the country of origin
- 2) Product composition and ingredients concentrations report issued by the manufacturer
- 3) Safety assessment for the Nano products
- 4) Product chemical and physical analysis report
- 5) Clinical studies of the product efficacy and proven effectiveness
- 6) Certificate of the animal or non-animal source of some ingredients such as stearic acid, magnesium stearate, sodium stearate, gelatin
- 7) Good manufacturing practice - GMP
- 8) Clinical studies of some non-medical claims indicated on the product label
- 9) Lab test report
- 10) Organic certificate

In getting entry certificate to the UAE, the importer will need to declare the details of ingredients, materials, chemical substances issued by laboratory of Central Laboratory Department, municipality sectors or called government's municipality as follows:

Head of Food & Environment Laboratory Section

Dubai Central Laboratory Department, Dubai Municipality

P.O. Box 67, Dubai, UAE, Tel: (971) 4-301-1619 Fax: (971) 4-335-8448

E – mail: [labs@dm.gov.ae](mailto:labs@dm.gov.ae)

Website: [www.dm.gov.ae](http://www.dm.gov.ae)

There are five relevant import details and procedures and cosmetics products distribution are presented as follows: (Same story)

- 1) The company representative must register the company using the e-form through Dubai Municipality website <http://www.dm.gov.ae> and then he/she must choose “register” from the user login field.

- 2) The company representative must fill in the form that is available in the consumer product safety section service site to apply and pay the fees

3) The company representative must submit an artwork\* of the cosmetics, personal care, and perfumes product through the e-form while making sure that the product label carries information identical to that on the application form of the cosmetics, personal care, and perfumes and the representative must submit copy of all required documents

4) After the completion of all of the requirements a label assessment certificate of the cosmetics, personal care, and perfumes product is already made for applying company indicating the following:

(1) In case there is no missing information or no need for modification “no remarks” must be written in the remarks field.

(2) In case there is missing information and there is a need for modification, all required amendment must be indicated in the remarks field, and the product must not be traded until the amendment is done and the product is reassessed.

(3) If the product is found have health claim or with medical purposes not including cosmetics, personal care, or perfumes or needs to be classified it will be referred to the Ministry of Health.

5) The company representative can check the application status through the e-form application. Once it is finished the company representative can get a scanned copy of the label assessment certificate or can visit the section counter to receive the label assessment certificate.

For product label design, when the product has been cleared for import, the importer will have to declare its name, ingredients, as well as application instruction in Arabic language. According to the regulation, it is obliged that name and address of the importer to be shown.

- 1) Name of cosmetics/country of origin
- 2) Net weight/size/product volume and materials/ important ingredients
- 3) Instruction/ warning/ storage methods
- 4) Manufacturing date, month, and year/ expiration date of the cosmetics after the first use (Period After Opening: PAO)
- 5) Identify Batch No. and Bar Code

6) There must not be medical claim.

7) Inappropriate illustration which is against culture, customs, traditions, and society must not be used.

However, the importer needs to know that the import tax for cosmetics products is 5% of CIF price (CIF: Cost, Insurance and Freight) is the duty and tax calculated from the product's full import price which includes product price, insurance fee, and transportation) and there would be no customs privileges.

#### 4.1.4.5 Laws about Labor Import to the United Arab Emirates

1) There are 5 types of employees by education level presented in the following table.

**Table 4.5** Type of Employees in the United Arab Emirates by Education Level

<b>Education level</b>	<b>Career</b>
Bachelor's degree at the minimum	The operators with professional specialty or an expert of specific field such as lawyer, engineer, architect, directors, and advisors.
High vocational certificate at the minimum	The operators use knowledge, competency, and specific specialties (high-skilled employees) such as nurse, electrician, mechanism, photographer, technician.
High school at the minimum	The operators use the specialties (skillful employees) such as superintendent and supervisor.
No education background needed	The operators don't need education background but need work experiences (half-skillful employees) such as electrician, welder, hairdresser, tailor, and technician assistance.
No education needed	The operators don't need work experience (unskilled employees) such as cleaners, butchers.

2) The process of work travelling in the United Arab Emirates In employing foreign workers, the employers will have to process the relevant procedures both before and after the travelling of foreign employees. The procedures are described as follows:

(1) Work permit application: The employers have to apply it with Minister of Labor of the UAE in order to acquire the work permit for employees. The application fee is 240 Dirham/ person (200 Dirham for fee and 40 Dirham for printing the application form).

(2) Approval procedure: When the employers receive that form, issue it to the approval-related department of Ministry of Labor in order to request work permit for the employees. Once the application is approved, the Ministry will issue work permit for the employees. The fee will be charged to the group of company which its qualifications meet the requirements of Ministry of Labor as the followings

(2.1) Group A is the company with 30% of local employees and at least 4 varieties of employee's nationalities. It is the company, which doesn't have a record of breaking labor regulations, pays 1,000 Dirham/ person for the fee, and 3,000 Dirham/person to the bank for security.

(2.2) Group B is the company with local employment, which almost fulfills the requirements or is in the accepted criteria. The fee is 2,000 Dirham/person and the security to the bank is 3,000 Dirham.

(2.3) Group C is the company with very few local employees and bad record. The fee is 3,000 Dirham/ person and the security to the bank is 3,000 Dirham. This fee is for the employees aged between 18-60 years old. The fee for employees aged over 60 years old is 5,000 Dirham/ person.

(3) The application process for employment visa for the employees: When the employers receive work permit of the employers who's got approved from the Ministry of Labor of the UAE, the employers will fill in the information in that permit with signature to apply for employment visa to the Division of Nationality and Residence of the UAE for the employees. The references documents are a copy of the company's license of employers, copy of employee's passport, 2 photos of employees, and 160 Dirham/ person for the visa fee.

(4) The approval process of job offer: The Division of Nationality and Residence of the UAE will issue the employment visa to the employees. The employer will issue the job offer paper to the Royal Embassy or Thai General Consulate in the UAE for notarization (for Thai Royal Embassy, the fee for notarization is 60 Dirham) before sending job offer paper with employment visa for the employees for submission to the Ministry of Labor of Thailand. This is to allow the employees to travel for work by themselves according to the Recruitment and Job Seekers Protection Act B.E. 2528, revision on B.E. 2537.

(5) In asking permission to send the job seekers to work overseas as recruited via Thai recruiting companies, the procedure must follow the Recruitment and Job Seekers Protection Act B.E. 2528, revision on B.E. 2537, section 36 by sending recruitment contract and reference documents before conducting recruitment process and sending the employees to work in the UAE.

(6) In applying for residence visa for the employees after travelling to the UAE, the employer will have to apply residence visa for the employees within 60 days after they travelled to the UAE or 5 Dirham will be charged daily for the penalty fine. The procedures are presented as follows:

(7) Prepare insurance card for employees. The premium for Abu Dhabi Plan health insurance is at least 600 Dirham/ person/ year.

(7.1) Take the employees for health check at the public health sector of UAE. The fee is 250 Dirham/ person.

(7.2) Issue the health screening certificate to the Division of Nationality and Residence of UAE to get residence visa for the employees. The fee is 360 Dirham/ person.

(7.3) Issue residence visa to the Ministry of Labor of UAW to get the labor card for the employees. The fee is 40 Dirham/ person.

3) Health screening for employees in the United Arab Emirates UAE obligates all foreigners who want to apply the UAE residence permit for work, study, or residing to pass health screening for these diseases.

(1) Health screening for immune deficiency or HIV for the first-time arrival to the UAE and residence permit application. If HIV check shows positive, that person will be exiled following the immigration regulations of the UAE.

(1.1) Tuberculosis check is a must for the first-time arrival to the UAE and for residence permits application in the UAE. If the tuberculosis check shows positive, that person will be exiled.

(1.2) Leprosy check is a must for the first-time arrival to the UAE and for residence permits application in the UAE or renewal. If the leprosy check shows positive, that person will be exiled.

(2) The diagnosis of hepatitis B and C virus for the first-time arrival and residence permits renewal in the UAE which is exclusive only for these careers below

- (2.1) Babysitter
- (2.2) Housemaid
- (2.3) Driver
- (2.4) Kindergarten and nursery caretakers
- (2.5) Hairdresser/ beautician/ fitness staff
- (2.6) Restaurant staff/ chef/ butcher

However, the UAE has determined that hepatitis B and C virus must be closely monitored. If it shows positive, that person will be sent back to the country.

Syphilis needs to be checked for the first time arrival and for residence permit in the UAE. If the check shows positive, the disease can be treated in order apply for residence permit.

#### 4) Employment Contract

Once the employees arrive in the UAE, the employer and employee will have to sign 3 copies of the contract, which is notarized by the UAE Ministry of Labor. Each copy will be kept by employee, employer, and the Ministry of Labor. That contract will mention position, salary, type of job, and duration of contract (limited or unlimited term contract). The contract will be in both Arabic and English languages.

#### 5) Welfare/Basic benefits

Labor law of UAE regulates employer to arrange these benefits for employee are determined as follows:

- (1) Residence including at least 2 meals per day (or extra

payment for meal)

(2) Transportation for employees to/from the residence and workplace

(3) Arrange insurance card for employees (including spouse and 3 children aged below 18 years old in case the contract allows the employees to bring the family)

(4) Allowed 30 days of paid annual leave.

Apart from the labor import law and the deserved welfare for employee, Overseas Employment Administration Division (2012, pp. 33-35) had proposed 10 regulations for Thai workers as follows:

The operators must thoroughly read the term of contract and check the term of contract - 1 or 2 years, or unlimited contract, as well as the payment term - daily or monthly payments, and the working hours. If the working hours are over 8 hours, overtime wage must be paid.

1) The operator must carry labor card issued by UAE Ministry of Labor. The other documents, which should be carried, are copy of identity card or a copy of Thai passport.

2) If there's a fight, the supervisor needs to be reported. Severe fighting should be avoided to prevent any injuries or penalties.

3) The local regulations need to be respected such as no consume or drink or smoke in the public area during Ramadan.

4) Any work problems such as unfair work condition from the employer, can be reported via hotline 800665 without charge or to Labor Division of the Royal Thai Embassy in Abu Dhabi at (+972) 2-5576844.

5) No laws can be violated in order to avoid captivity, fine, and refrain from illegal acts as follows:

(1) Road crossing where it is prohibited

(2) Do not return the found stuff to the right owners or police

(3) Possessing obscene photos or clips are absolutely prohibited. It is equal to the possession of drugs.

6) Do not drink, fight, engage in prostitution, and gamble

because it is extremely against the law. It could lead to captivity, contract termination, and sending back to the country of origin.

7) Do not avoid the employment contract as the notification will be directed to the airport. If the employer agrees to terminate the contract, the employee will not be able to work in the UAE for 1 year.

8) Do not mistaken that the employee will not pay for the insurance card issued by the employer. The card can be used to claim for any expenses for occupational illness only. The employee will have to pay for any other illness. The minimum service charge will be 20-50 Dirhams depending on the hospital.

9) Do not forget family in Thailand as the encouragement for the expats for working in the future.

#### **4.1.5 Geographic Characteristics in the United Arab Emirates**

UAE has 83,600 square kilometers and is located between Asia, Europe, and Africa. It is the country in Middle East close to South-East Asia which consisted of 7 states Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, and Umm al-Qaiwain.

The north of the country is next to the Persian Gulf or Arab Gulf. The west borders Oman and Persian Gulf near the Strait of Hormuz and Oman Gulf. The south and the west border Oman and Saudi Arabia. This is the special characteristic of being the port country, which distributes products from many countries, especially Dubai which is the products distribution center in Middle East and to other regions. Dubai has 2 ports the same as capital city, Abu Dhabi. The biggest port is in Dubai. However, as most of the area in Dubai is desert land, the cultivation is difficult. So, the UAE depends on imported food, especially fruits from Thailand.

The important resources of the UAE are petroleum and natural gas. The reserve rate for oil is 97.8 billion barrels and 6.089 billion cubic meter (Thai Royal Embassy and Consulate in Dubai, 2015). It is ranked the 7<sup>th</sup> country in the world with highest oil reserve. It is estimated that the UAE has enough oil for production for the next 93 years without finding new reserves (Arabian Industry, 2014).

There are 2 seasons in the UAE -summer and winter. Summer is during May-September and the temperature is 32-48 degree Celsius (and could be over 50 degree Celsius in some years). Winter will be during October – April and the temperature is 15-30 degree Celsius. It hardly rains in the UAE. There might be less than 3 times of rain in a year. Season change period is during June-August during this period desert storms can appear (Department of South Asia, Middle East and African Affairs, 2014)

#### **4.1.6 Cultural Factors in the United Arab Emirates**

Culture is another important factor in planning marketing communications. Marketing communicator should consider verbal language in order to understand basic culture of consumer, non-verbal language for communicating with consumers without words, social structure for studying consumer's needs, value for studying the priority of that society, religion, belief, and traditional practice for understanding the requirement and the self-practice in that society. The mentioned factors above can be used for marketing communications.

#### **4.1.7 Islam and Society**

Religion is very important for Arab people. Everybody in Arab society embraces the religion. It is deemed to be very abnormal if non-religious believers live together in the society. Therefore, if that person doesn't embrace any religion, it should be kept as a secret because it might lead to misunderstanding and rejection from Arab people. Religious practice of Arab people is also very important. They honor and respect people who perform religious practice although they don't embrace Islam.

In term of the living in society, Arab people will live their lives based on the Quran. The contents in Quran is the guideline of human practice in every aspects such as creating fair society, politics and administration, basic economic principles, code of laws, education, as well as business performing guideline. Thus, for Muslim society, Quran is both religion and code of law at the same time.

Sacred command or the sentences frequently said by Arab people before starting any activities is "In the name of Allah (S.A.W) the most beneficent the most merciful" ( بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم - Bismillah Ar-Rahman Ar-Raheem). Arab people will

say it before travelling, meeting, having meals, starting dangerous missions, conference, chatting, and reading Quran etc. Sometime, this sentence is seen written on business letterhead, general letter head, the first line of reports or receipts etc.

Another important aspect in Arab society is banking system, which is different from other international system in the world. The procedure of Islamic banking follows religious principles strictly. The religion prohibits loaning or any financial activities concerning interests as it is considered the unfair pursuit of profits. With this reason, Islam bank will support investment which all investors equally accept the risks. The profits are fairly distributed, and all sectors will take responsible for the loss.

While being with Arab people, it needs to be careful not to criticize Islam or Arab culture because they pay respect and honor the believers of all religions. However, non-Islam believers should not pretend to be Islamic people or participate in Islamic activities, access to the mosque without permission. It is the place only for people who clean their body correctly according to the religious principles.

#### **4.1.8 Structure of Arab Society**

The structure of Arab society can be divided into 3 classes. The top class is members of Royal family (for absolute monarchy country), noble family, and elites (depending on the background of the status of each family). Next, it is the middle class, which consists of government officer, soldier, teacher, merchant, and landlord. The lowest class is the poor, farmer, and agriculturist. However, Bedouin is the independent group, which isn't classified into any classes. They're honored for maintaining Arab traditional customs.



**Figure 4.8** Structure of Arab Society

Arab upper-class people are very aware of health care either it is food, skincare, health, as well as grooming. Attire is the obvious symbol of wealth or social status. The luxurious attire can also represent self-esteem of Arab people. They will start question when seeing foreigners wear shabby outfits like jeans, T-shirt, and sandals despite their wealth (Isara Santisat et. al.,2013c.,p. 124).

#### **4.1.9 Regulations and Social Manner of Arab People**

The study of Centre of Development Policy, Isara Santisat et. al. (2013c) and Overseas Employment Administration Division (2009) said that Arab people are very generous in welcoming friends or strangers. They will arrange full welcome both for food and refreshment for their guests. They will be very displeased to be blamed for bad welcome arrangement.

Moreover, for Arab people, time is flexible. Punctuality is not that important. There's no need to set the specific time for the start or end of the party or appointment. Nonetheless, modern Arab people at the present have started adjusted themselves in time management to be consistent with technological development and current business world.

Apart from welcoming guests and time management, there are also many important basic manners in Arab society (Centre of Development Policy, (Isara Santisat et. al.,2013c, p. 126; Overseas Employment Administration Division, 2009, p. 9).

- 1) Should sit in proper posture. Sit in hunchback posture, put the legs on the armrest or ignore or show the disrespect toward the colloquist.
- 2) One-hand gesture while talking is considered inappropriate act.
- 3) When talking with Arab people, do not put hands in the pocket or lean against the wall.
- 4) Pointing foot to other people is the insult.
- 5) Arab people will touch each other's hands for greeting and farewell, except among the males and females who are strictly believe in religion that they will not definitely touch the hands of the opposite gender.
- 6) Should drink at least 1 cup of coffee or tea because it is considered the manner of the host who wants to give honors to the guests. Shake the cup to signal that you don't need the second cup of coffee or tea.
- 7) Smoker must ask or share to the others.
- 8) Men should stand up to honor ladies when they walk into the room and should stand up when the elders or important guests are coming or leaving the event.
- 9) Men should walk behind ladies when walking pass the entry and should give chairs to the ladies if vacant seat is not available.
- 10) The host will have to accompany the guests to the exit door or should accompany them to the transportation of the guests.
- 11) Should use two hands to receive gifts or souvenirs from Arab people and should not open it straight away in front of the giver.
- 12) If anybody give them the compliments over some small things, Arab people will offer gifts to that person. Therefore, it should be careful to compliment something.
- 13) Drinking alcohol or getting drunk in the public is seriously offensive and high penalty fine will be charged. However, selling alcohol is allowed in Dubai but restricted only in entertainment venues, bar or hotel restaurant only
- 14) Ladies should not smoke or drink alcohol, even non-Muslim people.
- 15) Arab food will be mix-served in a plate. It meant they share food. They won't use left hand to eat food because it is considered dirty.

16) For eating food in restaurant, it' is Arab tradition in asking to pay for that meal, especially when there's not many people attending in that party or it is a party within the business group.

17) If there's conflict or fight in the family, any person surrounded should avoid perceiving.

18) Permission must be granted before taking photo, especially when intentionally or intentionally taking the photos of Muslim ladies.

19) Arab people don't prefer contacting directly with pets, especially dogs.

20) Some behaviors of western people such as swearing, rude expression, and public display of affection. The consequences of these behaviors are captivity and hard punishment. The important point of attire of male and female tourists is to cover the arms, legs, or waist, which is appropriate, especially during Ramadan.

21) During Ramadan, avoid eating, drinking, or smoking in public from the sunrise to sunset time. Penalty fee will be charged in some countries for offensive acts.

22) Giving tip 10% of the meal cost is the pleasant act in showing appreciation for delicious food or nice service.

23) It is normal for Arab men to hold their hands

24) In conversation, it is appropriate to ask about health and family and the numbers of their children (but not the numbers of their wives), education levels of their children. Attention to their families will be the pass in building reliability and good relationship

25) Should not visit Arab people at home during 2.30 – 4.30 pm. because it is their rest time.

26) Should not bring any Israel or Jew-related photos or items to Arab countries. Do not talk or do anything, which supports Israel or Jews.

27) Do not take military sites or strongholds to avoid being accused of spy and serious punishment.

28) Do not cross-dress, as it is misconduct to the tradition, which can lead to legal charges.

29) Men and ladies should dress modestly. Men should not wear shorts in public and wear accessories, especially gold accessories.

30) Do not assemble or establish club to collect money because it can be illegal.

Not only the regulations and social manners mentioned above, there are also other social manners, which might be slightly different in some countries that should be studied before travelling to Middle East.

#### **4.1.10 Business Negotiation with Arab People**

Arab people do not trust and rely on the people with insincere character or the people who have no interests in them or their countries. Also, they don't like being rushed. People who work with Arab people will have to be patient. If Arab people don't like someone, they won't listen to that person. It can be said that Arab people evaluate people's behaviors as much as their performances.

Moreover, Arab people would rather give implied criticism to honest censure such as giving silence or just said that they would get back later but actually not. Arab people sometimes share different ideas. The businessmen will not be directly denied. Arab's business partners need to behave well and constantly and being sincere. They shouldn't do anything that destroys the trusts of Arab people.

As mentioned above, business negotiation with Arab people will need a lot of patience. It is possible to feel tired when doing business because of the time-consuming procedures and slow progress. However, do not pressure or force, or limit the time for Arab people to make a decision. They will suddenly perceive it in the negative way that it is the insult. It should be careful, especially the executives who are in contact with Arab people. The only thing they can do while waiting is developing personal relationship by talking about general aspect or frequently meeting with each other. For Arab people, time is not as much important as building relationship with each other. Arab people will not pay attention to the people who pressure them to make a decision (Isara Santisat et. al.,2013c, pp. 133-134).

Conclusion from the study of the documents or the research on the factors affecting marketing communication plan in the findings of the study of demographic factors in The United Arab Emirates showed that even the birth rate had decreased

since 2006-2014 the immigration of the foreigners to the United Arab Emirates had constantly increased the numbers and density of the populations in the United Arab Emirates. In addition, the study of demographic characteristics showed that the majority of populations in the United Arab Emirates were in working age during 25-54 years old or 61.5% of all populations. The average family members were 6.2. The last aspect in the study of demographic characteristics was the literacy rate of the populations. It is found that the average literacy rate of the populations in the United Arab Emirate was 93.8%.

According to the study of economic factor, it is found that the income of populations in The United Arab Emirates had been constantly rising. It was noticeable from Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDP per capita), and Gross National Products (GNP) which had been constantly increasing since 2006-2014 despite the stagnancy during 2009-2010. Moreover, the study of economic factors in urbanization found that the main income of The United Arab Emirates was mainly from petroleum and natural gas. As that natural energy is non-renewable, the government of the United Arab Emirates has placed economic development plan by urbanizing capital city Abu Dhabi, and important city Dubai. As Dubai is chosen as a host in Dubai Expo 2020, Dubai has 12 projects to develop the city in order to support the tourists who are visiting Dubai in 2020.

The study on political and legal environment in the United Arab Emirates found that the politic stability was somewhat high because the leaders of the United Arab Emirates had the same visions for country development and were prestige among the people. Compared to other countries in Middle East, the United Arab Emirates has high political stability, which attracts tourists and businessmen for the investment in the country, especially free zone policy. It is the designated area of the government, which provides more privileges for private entrepreneurs than general economic areas. It is another factor, which attracts many foreign tourists. For legal environment in The United Arab Emirates, it is found that the United Arab Emirate applies Sharia law or Islamic law for administration. Sharia law consists of financial, commercial, and investment contents. Thus, the entrepreneurs who would like to invest or do business in the United Arab Emirates should also study the business-related legal principles.

The study of geographical characteristics showed that the United Arab Emirates was the stronghold of products distribution in Middle East and to Africa and Europe. Dubai has 2 biggest ports in the United Arab Emirates for distributing products. Apart from being the commercial hub, most of the areas in the United Arab Emirates were desert. It consists of 2 seasons summer and winter. The lowest temperature in winter is 15 degree Celsius and the highest temperature in summer might be up to 50 degree Celsius. Therefore, the entrepreneurs should design packaging appropriately to the geographical characteristics and climates.

The study of culture in the United Arab Emirates found that Arab people apply culture and Islamic principles for daily living. They respect all-religions believers but have bad attitude toward the non-religion believers. Moreover, in the conversation with Arab people, the criticism in religion and politics of that country should be avoided. If the entrepreneurs aren't familiar with Islam or Arab culture, they should study belief and culture for understanding and the smoothness in doing business.

#### **4.2 The Findings from In-depth Interview for the Information Concerning Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates**

From documentary study of basic information for in-depth interview pilot, the data collection for in-depth interview in this research can be divided into 2 parts Thai spa products in The United Arab Emirates and Thai spa service in the United Arab Emirates. The interview can be divided into 2 areas the in-depth interview in Thailand and in-depth interview in the United Arab Emirates.

In-depth interview about Thai spa products in the United Arab Emirates was conducted with 4 sample groups. The sample groups from government sectors were 1) the academicians from National Innovation Agency (NIA) 2) Marketing officers of Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) of Dubai, the United Arab Emirates. The sample groups from private sectors were 3) Thai entrepreneurs in export business of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates and 4) the executives of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates.

In-depth interview about Thai spa services in the United Arab Emirates was conducted with 5 sample groups. The sample groups from government sector were 1) the academicians from Overseas Employment Administration Division 2) Consulate

of Labor from Royal Thai Embassy in the United Arab Emirates. The ample groups from private sector were 3) the executives of Thai massage school in Thailand 4) the executive of Thai spa in the United Arab Emirates and 5) masseurs from Thailand.

#### **4.2.1 Information of Thai Spa Products in The United Arab Emirates**

The 7 important findings of Thai spa products in the United Arab Emirate could be concluded from the in-depth interview with 1) the academicians from National Innovation Agency (NIA) 2) Marketing officers of Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) of Dubai, the United Arab Emirates 3) Thai entrepreneurs in export business of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates and 4) the executives of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates as follows:

4.2.1.1 Cause and background of Thai spa products export to the United Arab Emirates.

4.2.1.2 The main customers of Thai spa products in the United Arab Emirates

4.2.1.3 Religion and culture, which affect the export of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates.

4.2.1.4 Export trend of Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates

4.2.1.5 Marketing communication in promoting Thai spa products in the United Arab Emirates.

4.2.1.6 Threats and problems in exporting Thai spa products to the United Arab Emirates

4.2.1.7 Solutions and recommendations concerning Thai spa products export to the United Arab Emirates

**Table 4.6** General Information of the Sample Groups for In-depth Interview on Thai Spa Products in the United Arab Emirates

<b>Government Sectors</b>		
Position	Organization	Work period
1.The manager of “Middle East market: new market of Thai natural products”	National Innovation Agency (NIA)	5 years
2.Marketing officers	Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) of Dubai, the United Arab Emirates	28 years
<b>Private Sector</b>		
<b>Thai Entrepreneurs in Export Business of Thai Spa Products to The United Arab Emirates</b>		
Position	Organization	Work period
1. Marketing Head of Panpuri spa products	Panpuri. Co., Ltd. (Panpuri spa products)	10 years
2. Director of Chetawan health center	Chetawan Health Center	8 years
3. Marketing director	Aesthetic Plus. Co., Ltd.	10 years
<b>Executives of Spa Business in The United Arab Emirates</b>		
Position	Organization	Work period
1. Spa manager	Thailand Beauty Center*	8 years
2. Spa business owner	Sabaidee Massage Center	10 years
3. Spa business owner	Thailand Healthy Massage Center and Healthy Massage Palace	16 years
4. Spa manager	Sawasdee Spa*	3 years
5. Spa manager	Top Five Spa*	5 years

#### 4.2.1.1 Cause and background of Thai spa products export to the United Arab Emirates.

Thai spa products import in the United Arab Emirates was started back 20 years ago by Thai entrepreneurs. Especially in 2011 when Thai government supported Thai spa products export to Middle East countries which increased reputations and appreciations in Thai spa products.

According to the in-depth interview with both government and private sectors, the cause and background of Thai spa products export to The United Arab Emirates could be summarized as the followings

- 1) The need of Thai government to find new market for products export
  - 2) Worldwide reputation and reliability of herbal products
  - 3) Dubai was the hub for product distribution to other countries in Middle East.
  - 4) The increasing rate of tourists in the United Arab Emirates
  - 5) The increasing numbers of Thai masseurs who work in the United Arab Emirates
  - 6) The increasing trend of health awareness
- 1) The Need of Thai Government to Find New Market for Products export

During 2011-2012, the research of Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) found that Dubai tended to import Thai products, especially spa products, more. The report of DITP in Dubai indicated the trend and cosmetics and market circumstance of the United Arab Emirates. In 2012, the United Arab Emirates imported cosmetics and health products from Thailand worth 1,122 million Baht because products from Thailand were unique and different from products from other countries. In addition, herbal or natural products were popular in the United Arab Emirates.

With envisioning the advantages of products export, Thai government had set “Middle East market: new market of Thai natural products” project in order to create market opportunities and pilot for market extension to Middle East under the cooperation of 2 organizations National Innovation Agency and

Department of Export Promotion.

From the interview with the manager of “Middle East market: new market of Thai natural products” project from NIA, it indicated the government support in exporting Thai natural products, especially Thai spa products as the followings

The overall image of the project was started 4 years ago under the support of former Prime Minister Dame Kalaya Sophonpanich and Ministry of Commerce. It is assigned to be under the responsibility of Department of Export Promotion. Ms. Srirasm Rattapana has conducted this project with the cooperation of both agencies.

Both agencies envisioned the potentials in marketing Thai products in new countries, especially in Middle East. The policy in increasing export competitiveness of Thai products had been set. There were 3 markets in the choice at that time China, Middle East, and South America. Eventually, both agencies were in agreement that Thai products would do best in Middle East. Therefore, it is decided that “Middle East market: new market of Thai natural products” project was kicked off from the cooperation of both agencies

## 2) Worldwide Reputation and Reliability of Herbal Products

Thailand was already outstanding of its herbs and natural products from the in-house application. Moreover, Thai herbal products were well known and reliable internationally, Thai entrepreneurs could be confident in exporting Thai spa products to the world markets. Middle East, especially the United Arab Emirates showed high trend of demand on natural products: Thai entrepreneurs were interested to export the products to this region.

The director of “Chetawan Health Center”, the exporter of spa products to Middle East countries for over 20 years said that

Thai spa products are more outstanding than any other countries because of their naturalness, reputation, and efficiency which were worldwide acknowledged. Moreover, herbs are lacked in Middle East it is the opportunity

of Thai spa products exporters to do the market in this region

The Marketing Head of Panpuri spa products also emphasized the reputations and remarkableness of Thai natural products that

The competition is quite high as seen from the marketing of various brands in the United Arab Emirates market. However, Thai spa products are still popular among customers that can be seen from the increasing export volume to that market, as well as the higher numbers of Day Spa businesses opened with the application of products from Thailand. This shows that the quality of Thai spa products are favored and trusted by customers

3) Dubai is the Hub for Product Distribution to Other Countries in Middle East

As Dubai is the stronghold of products distribution to other countries in Middle East, Europe, and Africa, more Thai entrepreneurs want to do marketing for selling products in Dubai and the United Arab Emirates and to distribute products to other regions in the world.

The Marketing Head of “Panpuri” which started spa products export to The United Arab Emirates since 2005 talked about the cause of export that

Around 2005, the company started export to the United Arab Emirates. In the first phase, it focused mainly on the professional-sized spa business. As known that Dubai is the hub of Middle East and the tourism trend is constantly growing, there are many new hotels and spa emerged. This has become market opportunity for Panpuri products. In Dubai, Panpuri has distributors who are proficient in reaching to hotel and spa customers who want professional-sized products. Dubai is like the hub of product stock for the Middle East countries

4) The Increasing Rate of Tourists in the United Arab Emirates

With the unrest from Arab Spring in many Middle East countries, tourists and people in Middle East were looking for high politic stability in

place of the countries with political unrest.

When the tourist rate increased the numbers of hotels, shopping malls, and other recreational places, as well as spa businesses were consequently increased.

The survey of Research and Market (2012) in 2009 showed that there was only 60 spas in Dubai and increased to 100 spas in 2011. In addition, it is expected that beauty and health products and services would earn 97,000 million Baht only in the United Arab Emirates in 2015.

The interview with the officer from “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai”, who had been working as the marketing staff of DITP in Dubai for over 27 years, indicated the expansion of spa business in the United Arab Emirates as below

Thai spa products import to the United Arab Emirates was started when the numbers of tourists and hotels were increasing which caused the emergence of higher numbers of spa business where Thai masseurs or therapists giving services to customers. These Thai employees will inform spa owners which products are suitable with Thai massage and that’s the start of the demand on Thai spa products

5) The Increasing Numbers of Thai Masseurs Who Worked in the United Arab Emirates

The increasing numbers of Thai masseurs who worked in the United Arab Emirates caused the extensive application of Thai spa products.

The interview with marketing officer from “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai” showed that the increasing numbers of masseurs could result in the increasing import volumes of Thai spa products.

Thai spa products import was firstly started when the masseurs or therapists or spa owners hand-carried the products to the country by themselves. Later, when the demand had been continually rising, the import companies in the UAE started to import the products

In addition, the interview with the director of “Chetawan Health Center” indicated that the products of the center started when Thai masseurs worked in spa in The United Arab Emirates.

It is firstly started when Chetawan was the massage school and the students who travelled to work in Middle East took Chetawan’s spa products with them. When more students travelled for work, more Chetawan’s products had become well known and used in the spa at where students were working

#### 6) The Increasing Trend of Health Awareness

The health awareness of the world populations were likely to increase, therefore, it is the reason why natural spa products were popular.

Marketing director of “Aesthetic Plus.Co., Ltd.” talked about this aspect that

Thai spa is service business concerning tourism. It is the business with potential to grow in the UAE. It is relevant to current customer’s behaviors when people are more aware of health and beauty care. Also, with the uniqueness and the popularity of Thai spa and Thai massage among foreigners, the extension of business and customer base are more diversified. Then, Thai spa products are likely to grow well and demanded more in the UAE market

**Table 4.7** The Conclusion of Cause and Background of Thai Spa Products Export to The United Arab Emirates

<b>Cause and Background</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Thai government wanted to find new market for exporting products	- The manager of “Middle East market: new market of Thai natural products.” project	- Envisioning the potential of purchasing power, Thai government had looked for new market in exporting Thai products and chose Middle East countries
2. Herbal products were known worldwide and reliable.	- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”  - Marketing Head of “Panpuri” spa products	- Middle East countries lacked of herbal products. So, the reputation of Thai herbs were used to do marketing.  - The increase numbers of new Thai spa subsidiaries indicated their confidences in quality and trust in Thai pa products.
3. Dubai was the hub for product distribution to other countries in Middle East.	- Marketing Head of “Panpuri” spa products	- Hotel and spa businesses were rising which enabled Thai entrepreneurs to do marketing for spa products. Moreover, products distributor in Dubai could send pa.

**Table 4.7** (Continued)

<b>Cause and Background</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
		products to other countries in Middle East
4. The increasing rate of tourists in The United Arab Emirates	- Marketing officer from DITP in Dubai	- Tourists in The United Arab Emirates had been increasing each year, hotel and spa businesses were consequently extended.
5. The increasing numbers of Thai masseurs who worked in The United Arab Emirates	- Marketing officer from DITP in Dubai	- In the first phase, Thai spa masseurs hand-carried Thai spa products to The United Arab Emirates. When the numbers of masseurs were higher: more products were imported.
	- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”	- More students of the center hand-carried more products used in the study for overseas work

**Table 4.7** (Continued)

<b>Cause and Background</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
6. The increasing trend of health awareness	- Marketing director of “Aesthetic Plus. Co., Ltd.”	- Health awareness had become the trend of the world’s populations. With the uniqueness of Thai massage and appreciations among foreigners, the business was extended and customer base was diversified. Therefore, the growth trend and the demand on Thai spa products in The United Arab Emirates market were positive.

#### 4.2.1.2 The Main customers of Thai spa products in The United Arab Emirates

There were 2 types of business Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Customers (B2C). The B2B customers was the corporate agents who distributed products and Thai spa business entrepreneurs. B2C customers were general customers who bought the spa products, imported by entrepreneurs, from the trade show or spa.

According to the in-depth interview with both government and private sectors, it could be concluded that the main customers of Thai spa products in The United Arab Emirates were

##### 4.2.1.2.1 Business to Business (B2B)

##### 4.2.1.2.2 Business to Customers (B2C)

###### 1) Business to Business (B2B)

The interview with marketing officers from “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai” indicated the corporate customers who imported products for sell as the followings

Thai spa products import was firstly started when the masseurs or therapists or spa owners hand-carried the products to the country by themselves. Later, when the demand had been continually rising, the import companies in the UAE started to import the products for distributing in The United Arab Emirates or to other countries

The interview with Marketing Head of “Panpuri” spa products indicated business customers as the followings

The main customers of spa products are business customers, either it is hotel spa such as affiliated hotels of Jumeirah or Anantara

Similarly, Marketing Director of “Aesthetic Plus Co., Ltd.” gave the interview on this aspect that:

Aesthetic Plus Co., Ltd. is clear on being the manufacturer of cosmetics and skin care treatment for the entrepreneurs who are interested in aesthetic business. That is to say our business types and main target is business marketing (B2B) covering various groups of customers and different business sizes

## 2) Business-to-Customers (B2C)

The interview with marketing staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion, Dubai” pointed that apart from being B2B, importing Thai spa products was also B2C.

Moreover, there are Thai spa products that the owner of the brand takes care of marketing. The target group is people who earn high income. Generally, the

products are sold in the UAE and at the airport which helps to promote Thai spa products widely

The main customers are the spas who buy the products to use in the shop. Besides, the customers buy products or Thai spa products to use at home such as balm, which is very popular

**Table 4.8** Summary of Main Customers of Thai Spa Products in the UAE

<b>Target Customers</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Business-to-Business (B2B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marketing Staff of DITP, Dubai</li> <li>- Head of Marketing “Panpuri” Spa products</li> <li>- Director of Marketing at “Aesthetic Plus Co., Ltd.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importing company in the UAE imports Thai spa products to distribute to retail shops or spas.</li> <li>- Hotels would buy the products from the sellers directly.</li> <li>- Aesthetic Plus Co., Ltd. is the company aiming to produce spa products for the entrepreneurs. The operations is B2B, produce for Thai spa product entrepreneurs in the Middle East.</li> </ul>

**Table 4.8** (Continued)

<b>Target Customers</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
2. Business-to-Customers (B2C)	- Marketing staff at DITP, Dubai	- Thai entrepreneurs marketed and sold spa products to the consumers directly such as running the shop at the airport or setting the booth at the fair and exhibitions.

#### 4.2.1.3 Religious and Cultural Dimension Affecting Thai Spa Products Export to the UAE

Since the UAE is the country located in the Middle East and most population are Islamic people, religious and cultural dimension, then, are the key factors affecting Thai spa product to the UAE. This is because Islam is implemented to law and social norms. Therefore, the entrepreneurs should study on how religious and cultural dimension influence the export and products promotion.

From the in-depth interview with government and private sector, religious and cultural dimension affecting Thai spa products export to the UAE can be concluded as follows.

##### 4.2.1.3.1 Having Halal sign

4.2.1.3.2 Product ingredients and packaging design according to Islamic principle

##### 1) Halal sign

From the in-depth interview with the experts from government and private sector regarding Halal sign requisition for spa products, there were two points of view on this matter: to have and not to have Halal sign on the products.

The interview with Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion, Dubai” showed that most of spa products made from nature. To have Halal sign might confuse the consumers. Having Halal sign not only

assured the religious principle but also hesitated the customers.

Labeling Halal sign on product is the interesting topic as there are two groups of people debate in this issue. The first group believes that the product is in accordance with the religion while another group doubts that the products may contain ingredients from animal, so it should have Halal sign. Thus, products from nature without ingredient from animal does not need Halal sign if there is, the customer may be confused whether it has ingredient from animal. Halal sign should be used only with food contains ingredients from animal

Nevertheless, the interview with Project Manager of “Middle East Market: The New Market for Thai Natural Products” from NLA indicated that 100% natural products do not require Halal sign. However, it could increase value of spa products.

For Halal sign, it does not need for 100% natural herbal products. However, it is beneficial for price negotiation with customers. Without Halal sign, the products are sold at the lower price whereas with Halal sign, we can compromise the price. Moreover, Halal sign builds the confidence to the customers

From the interview with Head of Product Marketing of “Panpuri” spa products, it showed that though having Halal sign was not subject to laws, it was the requirement from some customers who needed spa products with Halal sign in the spa.

Currently, Halal certify for spa products is not the regulation of shipping to the UAE. However, some customers have an idea to open the spa that only uses the product with Halal certify

From the interview with the Director of “Chetawan Health Center”, it showed that if the products were natural, Halal sign did not required. However, having Halal sign can resolve the problem on barrier to products from

Malaysia and Indonesia.

Chetawan hasn't applied for Halal sign for our products as they are natural products that have been permitted based on Islamic principle. However, it is possible in the future as the products from Malaysia, which is the Muslim countries, do so. In addition, Indonesia and Malaysia are trying to block Thai products to be exported to the countries in this region. Thus, if we have Halal sign, this problem may relieve and it assures that our products are consistent with religious principle. If we would like to apply for Halal sign, however, we would apply with Malaysia because it is more acceptable and reliable than Halal sign certified in Thailand

The interview with the Marketing Director of "Aesthetic Plus Co., Ltd.", he had the same opinion with the Director of "Chetawan Health Center" that having Halal sign did not necessary. However, it would convince and increase the confidence to Muslim consumers.

In the UAE, most consumers don't pay attention to the cosmetics' ingredients or Halal sign as they understand that products sold in Muslim countries should qualified Halal standard. In contrast, consumers in Malaysia and Indonesia are stricter. Moreover, Thai spa products are the service business, thus, the strictness falls on spa business. For example, the separate room for male and female customers should be available, the service user and service provider are the same gender. This is because the UAE people are strict on male and female distance. With this reason, it is agreed that Thai spa products don't need Halal sign. However, it will be useful for motivating and increasing confidence to Muslim consumers

Besides, entrepreneurs of Thai spa business propose that Thai spa products exporting to the UAE do not require Halal sign because they are natural product without ingredients prohibited by the religion.

The interview with the Manager of "Thailand Beauty Center"

reviewed that in case of natural products, Halal sign did not required.

Spa products should be certified the standard from the government agencies here, but it is not necessary to have Halal sign since most of them do not contain ingredients from animals

The interview with the entrepreneur of “Sabaidee Massage Center”, he expressed the opinion that if they were the natural product, Halal sign was unnecessary.

Halal sign is unnecessary to be labeled on products’ package as the products are from nature without ingredients from animal

From the interview with the owner of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace”, there was the agreement on the natural spa products.

Our products have been certified the standard so, Halal sign is unnecessary because the products are natural. The customers are satisfied with them

Further, the interview with the owner of “Top Five Spa” indicated that most customers realized that Thai spa used herbal and natural spa product. Therefore, it doesn’t need Halal sign.

Most of products used here don’t have Halal sign as the customers know that they are natural products. If the products are qualified the international standard, Halal sign is unnecessary

2) Product ingredients and packaging design according to Islamic principle

In regard to product ingredients and packing design, it is key

matter that the spa entrepreneurs in the UAE need to study as it is different from the other regions in terms of ingredients and packaging pattern since it depends on religious and cultural principle.

Anyhow, from the interview with Project Manager of “Middle East Market: The New Market for Thai Natural Products” from NLA, it stressed on the significance of the study on ingredients and packaging pattern as follows.

What we need to develop the product to export to the Middle East, with consideration particularly in the matter of religion, language, and law restriction that Thai people haven't done before. Most of people in The Middle East are Muslims so we are trying to make our products to become more popular and follow the religious principles. Sometimes, the ingredients are inconsistent with the religious way or the packaging doesn't meet the religious prohibition requirement. This is the main matter that the exporter needs to study...In terms of color, product and packaging color should be appropriate such as black or gold. Some colors are not allowed, as it is the restriction. Thus, color is the matter to study thoroughly

The interview with Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion, Dubai” showed the importance of the study on the ingredients and packaging as follows.

For the religious and cultural dimension to import products to the UAE, the main issue is the pattern of packaging. The package should avoid female photo or some photos that are not allowed according to religion such as picture of animal. Another issue is the oil massage or lotion ingredients. The products should have the label stating that there is no oil or animal fat and better extracted from plants. This is the marketing strategy emphasizing that the product is natural....For the packaging pattern, it should be clean, simple, modern with medium-size letters, and not contain too much Thainess such as the photo of Kinnara or Kanok pattern as it may affect the decision of customer since they don't understand it. Product name should not exceed three

syllables to be easy for remember. Thai entrepreneurs can study the packaging of Korean cosmetics which is clean and modern

Furthermore, private sector gives importance to the ingredients and packaging. The Director of “Chetawan Health Center” gave the interview that:

Religion and culture is the core factor of exporting products to the Middle East. Caution is important when the ingredients include alcohol. Thus, the person who would export the product should study the product ingredients. Products with oil ingredient will mainly base on coconut oil. This is because animal oil is prohibited in the Middle East.

Anyway, to design product it is necessary to consider religious principle. We will not use human photo, especially female photo. Nature photo will be used such as flowers and leaves in the soft color tone that is suitable color to use in spa

Besides, the interview with Head of Product Marketing of “Panpuri” spa products showed that the hotels order products from “Panpuri” (Panpuri), which we design the package based on the need of customer to reflect Arab culture. Language used on the packaging is English, which is widely accepted.

Packaging mainly bases on OEM (Original equipment manufacturer). Color and appearance are not the cultural restriction it is only the need of customers who require the color and pattern to be suitable with organizational concept. For example, the corporate color of the hotel is blue ocean color and Arab building style. Thus, the customer will request the package reflecting hotel corporate identity. Language used on the package is English which is acceptable among Arab markets such as the UAE, Qatar & Kuwait

**Table 4.9** Summary of Religious and Cultural Dimension Affecting the Export of Thai Spa Product to the UAE

<b>Religious and Cultural Dimension</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Having Halal sign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion, Dubai</li> <li>- Project Manager of “Middle East Market: The New Market for Thai Natural Products”</li> <li>- Head of Product Marketing of “Panpuri”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Halal sign was necessary for meat products, but not spa products, if there was no ingredient from animal. Having Halal sign on the products built the confidence though there was no animal mixture.</li> <li>- In case of 100% herbal spa products, it did not necessary to have Halal sign, though sometimes it might help to negotiate the price.</li> <li>- Currently, Halal certify was not the regulation of exporting products to the UAE. Only some</li> </ul>

**Table 4.9** (Continued)

<b>Religious and Cultural Dimension</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
		of customers queried about the products with Halal certify.
	- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”	- Spa products were produced from nature so it did not need Halal sign. However, having Halal sign helped on the barrier to products from Malaysia and Indonesia.
	- Marketing Director of “Aesthetic Plus Co., Ltd.”	- Having Halal sign was unnecessary but it would be beneficial for increasing motivation and confidence to Muslim consumers.
	- The Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center”	- Products producing from natural raw material did not need Halal sign.
	- Spa entrepreneur of “Sabaidee Massage Center”	
	- Spa entrepreneur of “Thailand Healthy	

**Table 4.9** (Continued)

<b>Religious and Cultural Dimension</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
2. Products ingredients and packaging	<p>Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spa entrepreneur of “Top Five Spa”</li> <li>- Project Manager of “Middle East Market: The New Market for Thai Natural Products”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Muslim principle affecting the use of ingredients and packaging directly. Ingredients had to follow religious principle and the package should be popular among group. For example, choosing the color of products and package as appropriated such as black or gold.</li> <li>- Muslim principle affecting the use of ingredients and packaging directly. Ingredients had to follow religious principle and the package should be</li> </ul>

**Table 4.9** (Continued)

<b>Religious and Cultural Dimension</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion, Dubai</li> </ul>	<p>popular among group. For example, choosing the color of products and package as appropriated such as black or gold.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Religious and cultural dimension of importing product of the UAE was focusing on the packaging pattern, to avoid female or animal pictures. Another matter was the ingredient in massage oil or lotion that should determine no animal oil or fat contained. They should be the products extracted from plant oil. Besides, the package should be design to be modern, clean, and</li> </ul>

**Table 4.9** (Continued)

<b>Religious and Cultural Dimension</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
	- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”	simple without too much Thainess. - Religion and culture were the main factors of exporting that should be adjusted to suit religious principle. Alcohol mix was the main concern in the Middle East.
	- Head of Product Marketing of “Panpuri”	- Color and appearance factor had no cultural restriction, but the requirement from customers to have color and pattern to suit organizational

#### 4.2.1.4 Trend of Thai Spa Products Export to the UAE

Regarding the trend of Thai spa products export to the UAE, from the interview with government and private sector, there was the agreement that although the world economy is going down, exportation of Thai spa products has light impact as Dubai is the tourist destination with numbers of hotel and department stores that facilitate spa business operation at the constant condition, as well as the products distribution hub to other regions.

From the interview with government and private sector, the trend of Thai spa products export to UAE can be concluded as follows.

1) Trend of importing Thai spa products import to the UAE is in normal level

2) Trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE is likely to increase

1) Trend of importing Thai spa products import to the UAE is in normal level

The opinion of government sector on the trend of importing Thai spa product to the UAE indicated that the export of Thai spa products was constant. The interview with Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion, Dubai”

In the future, the trend of Thai spa products import is constant. Since the economic and world market is not quite good, the import of Thai products decreases. However, since Dubai is the tourist destination and the tourism promotion in Dubai is very widespread, including the increasing hotel construction projects. Hotel and spa is a good match as spa attracts tourists. Thus, if the economic situation is recovered, more tourists would visit Dubai and spa business will become better, both service and products sector

The opinion on the trend of Thai spa products import from the interview with Head of Product Marketing of “Panpuri” was consistent. Though world economy was going down, spa business in the UAE would still be going on. Though the decrease of Russian tourists had the effect, there were numbers of Chinese tourists coming. Thus, there was no massive impact on spa product export.

World economy may influence on the contraction of spa products exportation to the UAE as the main target of spa in the UAE are European tourists such as Russian. When tourist numbers decreases, it may affect the need of spa products. However, the impact is not significant as there are Chinese tourists coming. Besides, the UAE is the hub of product distribution to the countries in the Middle East, so the overall situation is in the normal level

- 2) Trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE was likely to increase

Besides, the interview with private sector, Director of “Chetawan Health Center”, he agreed that the trend of spa business in UAE had a good trend. If there was a plan to expand the market, it would be expanded widely.

The trend of Thai spa products exportation to the UAE is still good. Dubai has new constructed hotels and department stores. Thus, spa is the shop located in hotels and department stores. If there is the expansion of spa products in the UAE, it would increase export value definitely

**Table 4.10** Summary of Trend of Thai Spa Products Import to the UAE

<b>Trend of Thai Spa Products Import</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview</b>
1. Trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE is constant in the normal level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marketing Staff of Department of International Trade Promotion, Dubai</li> <li>- Head of Product Marketing of “Panpuri”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the future, the trend of Thai spa products import was constant. The economic and world market was not quite good so the import of products from Thailand to Dubai decreases.</li> <li>- Though there is the deflation of world economic, spa business in the UAE would be continued. The decrease of Russian tourist would only have</li> </ul>

**Table 4.10** (Continued)

<b>Trend of Thai Spa Products Import</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview</b>
2. Trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE is likely to increase	- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”	slight effect since there were Chinese tourists coming instead. Thus, it not quite affected spa products export.  - Since there were more hotels and department stores in Dubai, if there was the plan to expand the market for Thai spa product in the future, the exportation would be expanded as well.

#### 4.2.1.5 Marketing Communications in Public Relations for Thai Spa Products in the UAE

Marketing communications in public relations for Thai spa products in the UAE requires the public relations from both government and private sector. Government sector should take part in introducing Thai spa products to be recognized widely and search for the market for products export for Thai entrepreneurs.

From the in-depth interview with government and private sector, marketing communications in public relations for Thai spa products in the UAE can be concluded as follows.

- 1) Marketing communication of government sector
  - 1) Booting in trade fair and exhibition
  - 2) Advertising on radio and TV
- 2) Marketing communication of private sector
  - 1) Integrated Marketing Communications- IMC
  - 2) Marketing communications of government sector

From the interview with Project Manager of “The Middle East Market. The New Market of Thai Natural Products” from NLA, I pointed the participation of the government sector as follows.

Marketing communications for Thai products is the direct role of commercial attaché to connect the international relations and being the marketing communicator to present Thai products. For example, presenting Thai products at the booth in the trade fair and exhibitions or in the Arab countries, and the advertising on the radio. This will promote Thai products to be known widely. Thus, Commercial attaché should have new policies to sell Thai products

Apart from the operation of Commercial Attaché, SEPO in Dubai has the policy to promote Thai spa products as well. Thus, the interview with Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai” stated that:

In regard to the support of SEPO on promoting Thai cosmetics and spa in the UAE, apart from the booth in trade fair and exhibition such as Gulf Beauty and Global Village, SEPO has the campaign via Al Jazeera. It advertises all Thainess such as Thai costume, Thai food, and Thai spa. This is the six-month campaign to promote Thai products and to introduce Thailand

### 3) Marketing communications of private sector

To public relations Thai spa products, private sector implemented Integrated Marketing Communications or IMC on both existing and new public relations media and the approach to customer groups.

The interview with Director of “Chetawan Health Center” pointed that there was the guideline of marketing communication as follows.

Public relations of Chetawan in the Middle East applies word-of-mouth of Thai people who recommend spa or customers to buy the products. Moreover,

there is the online public relations on website and Facebook. Online promotion helps to reduce the cost as we don't need to pay the agent to advertise because we can do it on social media

Besides, the interview with Head of Spa Product Marketing of "Panpuri" showed that marketing communications policy of the company focused on Integrated Marketing Communications or IMC as well.

Marketing communications of the company are on 1) trade fair and exhibition focusing on the exhibition targeting the market such as Beauty World Middle East, 2) magazine, 3) online media

**Table 4.11** Summary on Marketing Communications in Public Relations on Thai Spa Products in UAE

<b>Marketing Communications</b>	<b>Informant</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Marketing communications of government sector	- Project Manager of "The Middle East Market. The New Market of Thai Natural Products"	- Having marketing communications via radio and trade fair and exhibition.
	- Marketing Staff of "Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai"	- Having marketing communications via TV and trade fair and exhibition
2. Marketing communications of private sector	- Director of "Chetawan Health Center"	- Having marketing communications via word-of-mouth and online media

**Table 4.11** (Continued)

<b>Marketing Communications</b>	<b>Informant</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
	- Head of Spa Product Marketing of “Panpuri”	- Having marketing communications via trade fair and exhibition targeting the market such as Beauty World Middle East, printing

#### 4.2.1.6 Obstacles and Problems of Thai Spa Products Export to the UAE

Regarding obstacle and problems of Thai spa products export to the UAE, government and private sector propose the obstacles to spa product export by classifying into three main aspects - obstacles from Thai government sector, obstacles from the UAE government sector, and obstacles from private sector.

From the in-depth interview with the government and private sector, the obstacles, the obstacles and problems of Thai spa products export to the UAE can be concluded as follows.

- 1) Obstacles from Thai government sector
  - (1) Discontinuity of Thai spa products promotion project because of the change of government.
  - (2) Thailand does not have the customs clearance for each region.
  - (3) Halal sign certify of Thailand is unreliable.
- 2) Obstacles from the UAE government sector
  - (1) Regulation of Thai spa product import is complex.
  - (2) The delay of import registration.
- 3) Obstacles from private sector
  - (1) The undercutting or price by Thai entrepreneurs

(2) Under standard quality of products from cost reduction of Thai entrepreneur

1) Obstacles from Thai Government Sector

Besides, the conclusion from the interview with Project Manager of “The Middle East Market. The New Market of Thai Natural Products” from NLA indicated other obstacles to Thai spa products export to the UAE, apart from the complex export criteria.

The obstacles of Thailand to export products to the Middle East are 1) the frequent change of Thai government results in the disruption of projects or the delay of operation, 2) the business contact with the Middle East businessmen takes time and discourages Thai businessmen, 3) the customs clearance that there is no Thailand region so the officer don't have the expertise in export inspection of Thai entrepreneurs, and 4) Halal sign issue of Thailand is unreliable

2) Obstacles from the UAE Government Sector

There is the consistence of the opinion of government and private sector on the obstacles and problems on Thai spa products export to the UAE there is the complication of law and product registration, as the interview with the Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai”.

The obstacles of Thailand to export Thai products and spa products to the Middle East may be the complex regulation. However, if the regulation is followed, there is no problem for Thai entrepreneurs. Certify and label is also important issue that the entrepreneur should pay attention to, which can be studied from the Manual of Dubai Municipality)

For the private sector, there is the consistent opinion with government sector, as the interview with Head of Spa Product Marketing of “Panpuri”.

At present,, the government of the UAE requests the importer of spa product to apply for the registration to sell in the country, which Certificate of Free Sales from FDA, Ingredient List, Certificate of Analysis are required. This helps to prolong the time and expense to the products. Besides, the UAE requires Certificate of Free Sale for some products such as aroma oil, candles, and diffuser, which normally don't require the Certificate of Free Sale and other countries don't request the importers to register. Thus, it causes the delay of registration as it needs to declare to the officers

### 3) Obstacles from Private Sector

In regard to private sector, the Director of “Chetawan Health Center”, sees the obstacles from the private sector, the undercut, which finally causes the bad reputation to Thai spa products as follows.

The obstacles and problems of export that is the most serious is the competition among Thai entrepreneurs exporting spa products as there is the undercut that affects the image of product in overall. This is because when there is undercut, the manufacturers reduce cost of production and the material used is under standard. When the products are inefficient, it affects the image of Thai spa products. Moreover, the production process is one of the problems because sometimes we get non-quality material from the supplier and we need to resolve the problem by producing material because we need to maintain the quality of products to be reliable in the market

**Table 4.12** Summary of Obstacles and Problems of Thai Spa Products Export to the UAE

<b>Obstacles and Problems</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Obstacles from Thai government sector	- Project Manager of “The Middle East Market. The New Market of Thai Natural Products”	- Obstacles from Thai government agencies are: 1) Discontinuity of Thai spa products promotion project because of the change of government, 2) Thailand did not have the customs clearance zone for each region, and 3. Halal certify of Thailand was unreliable.
2. Obstacles from the UAE government sector	- Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai” - Head of Spa Product Marketing of “Panpuri”	- Import regulation of the UAE for spa products from Thailand was complex. - The delay of registration process for import of the UAE
3. Obstacles from private sector	- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”	- Obstacles from private sector was the undercut among Thai entrepreneurs and the low-quality of product resulted from cost reduction of Thai entrepreneurs.

#### 4.2.1.7 Solution and suggestions on Thai spa product export to the UAE

There are solutions and suggestions from both government and private sector bases on the cooperation of the two.

The information from in-depth interview with the government and private agencies can concludes the solutions and suggestions on Thai spa products export to the UAE as follows.

- 1) Solution and suggestions for Thai government agencies
  - (1) Create testability system for Halal sign issue
  - (2) Customs clearance zoning for each region
- 2) Solution and suggestions for the UAE government agencies
  - (1) The study and preparation of the entrepreneur to avoid the delay of process.
- 3) Solution and suggestions for private agencies
  - (1) The entrepreneur should design good packaging to be appropriate with religious principle.
  - (2) Government agency controls the product standard and production process.
  - (3) The entrepreneurs who are interested in the spa products export should begin the business by having the visit the UAE and contact with DITP for marketing survey.

##### 1) Solutions and Suggestions for Thai Government Agencies

The suggestions from government agency are on the development of Halal standard system to increase confidence to customers, as the following interview with Project Manager of “The Middle East Market. The New Market of Thai Natural Products.”

The creation of testability system for Halal sign issue is recommended. This is because issuing Halal sign is under the responsibility of Sheikhu Islam Office. However, we should have the system to verify Halal sign issue to increase the confidence to customers, as well as the inspection of production process whether it manufactured with Halal production process or not. It should be the

annual inspection, though the products have been certified with Halal. If this can be practiced regularly, we will be able to compete with Malaysia to export products to the Middle East as Malaysia is reliable for being Muslim country. Thus, Thailand shall be reliable with testability system for Halal issue, which is the decentralization from the Sheikhu Islam Office. Besides, the region zoning of customs clearance so there is the expert officers of each region to take care of customs to avoid the delay of the operation of Thai government agency and it won't waste the time of entrepreneurs

## 2) Solutions and Suggestions for the UAE Government Agencies

In regard to law complication and the complex of product registration, it is the matter that the UAE government agency controls. Thus, the solution for Thai government and private agencies should be the study and the preparation of documents to avoid the delay of process.

The interview of Head of Spa Product Marketing of “Panpuri” stated:

With the problems of product registration, the entrepreneur should prepare the documents for importing products to reduce the time of process and allow the product to be placed in the market quicker

## 3) Solutions and Suggestions for Private Agencies

Regarding the problem of undercut among entrepreneurs that reduces the quality of products and affects the product image, Director of “Chetawan Health Center” proposed the following solution.

Government sector shall assign the unit to control the standard. It may be the group of entrepreneurs who control each other and cooperate with government sector to prohibit the lower standard product to the world market. Also, knowledge for development should be promoted

Besides, government agency such as “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai” concluded the main points of suggestions on packaging development to increase customer satisfaction as follows.

The suggestions for Thai entrepreneurs who are interested in Thai spa product export to the UAE are 1) to design beautiful and appropriate package, 2 ) to study regulations of import to the UAE, and 3) to have business visit in the UAE with DITP which is the opportunity to meet customer directly and to observe customers’ behavior

Besides, the interview with Marketing Manager of “Aesthetic Plus Co., Ltd.” suggested the entrepreneurs as follows.

The UAE is likely to import more Thai products, particularly spa products, but it needs to improve the packaging to suit the need of market, as well as the pattern, scent, and color to fit the market. However, it should stress on Thai identity as the business strength and be distinguish from other countries’ products

**Table 4.13** Summary of Solutions and Suggestions of Thai Spa Products Export to the UAE

<b>Solutions and Suggestions</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Solutions for problems and suggestions for Thai government agencies	- Project Manager of “The Middle East Market. The New Market of Thai Natural Products”	- Create testability system for Halal issue and customs clearance zoning for each religion.
2. Solutions for problems and suggestions for the UAE government agencies	- Head of Spa Product Marketing of “Panpuri”	- Thai entrepreneur should study and prepare documents to avoid the delay of process.

**Table 4.13** (Continued)

<b>Solutions and Suggestions</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
3. Solutions for problems and suggestions for private agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”</li> <li>- Marketing Staff of “Department of International Trade Promotion in Dubai”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government agency controlled the standard of product and production process.</li> <li>- The entrepreneur should design beautiful package to be appropriate for religious principle and can have a business visited the UAE with the DITP for marketing survey.</li> </ul>

The conclusion of part two results from the in-depth interview with the expert in Thai spa products export to UAE showed that the main reason of exportation of Thai spa products was that Thai spa products were very well-known and reliable in the standard. With this reason, Thai spa products are in require in the world market, particularly in the UAE, which Thai entrepreneurs have exported the products for 20 years, especially in 2011 when Thai government had the policy to promote Thai spa products export to the countries in the Middle East. Thus, Thai spa products became well-known and more popular. Moreover, the reason that caused the high import of Thai spa products in the UAE was that Dubai was the product distribution hub to other countries in the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Thus, the import rate of product to the UAE had increased. Further, the increasing numbers of tourists was one of the reasons for the purchase of spa products or Thai spa service, which had more and more popularity. Besides, the main factor affecting Thai spa products import to UAE was the increase of Thai massage masseuse in the UAE so there was the widespread use of Thai spa products.

From the study on the main customers of Thai spa products in the UAE, the customer could be classified into two main groups: Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Customer (B2C). B2B was that the agent company in the UAE or spa business contacted with spa product importers in Thailand directly. B2C was that the Thai spa product export company in Thailand distributed spa products to customer directly such as set up booth at the fair where the product could be sold to the customers directly or the brand owner planned the marketing himself and distributed the products in Dubai International Airport.

Results from the study on religious and cultural dimension affecting Thai spa products export to the UAE, there were two concepts of having Halal sign. The first concept proposed that the herbal products without alcohol ingredient or ingredient from animal did not require Halal sign as it was unnecessary and would confuse the customers. Another concept suggested that Thai spa products should have Halal sign to ensure the consumers that the products did not contain the prohibited ingredients and it helped to increase the product value. Moreover, though Halal certification was not enforced by law for cosmetics products, Thai entrepreneurs who exported spa products to the UAE found that some customers needed only products with Halal sign to use in spa business. The study on ingredient and packaging design influencing by religious and cultural dimension found that the ingredient used should not contain alcohol or those made from animals as it against religious principle. Besides, the entrepreneurs should consider the climate that affected the products. For example, in summer, the balm, which its texture was the wax melted because of hot weather. Thus, oil should be used instead of wax to avoid the melt. Moreover, package should not contain the pictures of animal or human since it was against religious principle. Also, the package should not over-represent Thainess as it led to the misunderstanding to the consumers. Packaging should convey the internationalization. Besides, the language used should be English and Arab as it best communicated to the customers efficiently. Thai entrepreneurs who export spa products to the spa in hotel had to recognize the packaging that fulfilled the need of customers or the characteristic of organization.

The results of the study on the trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE indicated that there are two different opinions of two groups. The first group

suggested that the import was in the constant normal level as the world economic was slow down and numbers of Chinese tourist decreased. However, it would not affect spa product import as Russian tourists were coming instead. Thus, the import of Thai spa product was constant. The second group suggested that the import level was likely to increase as the UAE had plan to construct new hotels in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, as well as the plan to develop tourist attractions such as department stores, where spa would be serviced. When this type of place increased, the demand of Thai spa products increased. Anyhow, world economic and economic situation in the UAE were the direct key factors of Thai spa products import to the UAE.

The results of the study on marketing community in public relations for Thai spa products in the UAE found that there were public relations for Thai spa products from government and private sector. For government sector, DITP in Dubai promoted Thai spa products by setting up booth in beauty fairs such as Gulf Beauty, Beauty World Middle East, and Global Village. At the fair and exhibition, there was the introduction of Thai spa product entrepreneurs to the customer. Besides, advertising was publicized via Al Jazeera. For private sector, there was the integrated communication marketing (ICM): communication by joining trade fair, via printing media, online media, and word-of-mouth.

Results of the study on obstacles and problems of Thai spa products export to the UAE stated that there were obstacles from Thai government sector, the UAE government sector, and Thai private sector. The obstacles from Thai government sector was that the discontinuity of Thai spa product promotion project because of the frequent change of government, and the delay of document process of government agency. This was because Thailand did not have zoning for customs clearance for each region. Halal certify of Thailand was not reliable for the countries in the Middle East. For the obstacles from the UAE government sector, there were many regulations from the government sector on Thai spa products import, and the delay of the registration application process. The obstacle from private sector was the price-cutting among Thai entrepreneurs so the production cost reduced which affected in product standard.

Results of the study on solutions and suggestions on Thai spa products export to the UAE showed that there were solutions and suggestions for Thai and the UAE

government agencies, and Thai private agencies. Thai government sector should create testability system for Halal sign issue and the zoning for customs clearance for each region. The suggestions to the UAE government sector were very difficult, so, there were suggestions to Thai entrepreneurs to study and prepare the documents as required by the UAE agencies to avoid the delay of process. Solution and suggestions for Thai private sector were that government sector should set the agency to control the standard of production process and the quality of products in order to control the price cut and production cost reduction that affected product quality. Besides, the entrepreneur should pay attention to the packaging design to be appropriate to the religious and cultural principle. Lastly, for private sector, the new entrepreneurs who were interested in spa products export should take a business visit in the UAE through the support of DITP for marketing survey.

#### **4.2.2 Information on Thai spa service in the UAE**

Results of the study on This spa service in the UAE with the in-depth interview with 1) scholars from Office of Overseas Employment Administration, 2) Minister Counselor at Royal Thai Embassy in the UAE, 3) Executive at Thai Massage Institute in Thailand, 4) Executive of spa business in the UAE, and 5) masseuse from Thailand, can be concluded in following seven aspects.

4.2.2.1 Causes and background of Thai workers travelling to be therapist and masseuse in the UAE

4.2.2.2 Differences of spa business operation in Thailand and the UAE

4.2.2.3 Religious and cultural dimension affecting the performance of Thai therapist and masseuse in the UAE

4.2.2.4 Trend of work travelling of Thai therapist and masseuse in the UAE

4.2.2.5 Marketing communications in public relations for Thai spa products in the UAE

4.2.2.6 Obstacles and problems of Thai spa service in the UAE

4.2.2.7 Solutions and suggestions for service sector on Thai spa business in the UAE

**Table 4.14** General Information of Sample Group for In-depth Interview on Thai Spa Service in the UAE

<b>Government Sector</b>		
<b>Position</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Working years</b>
1. Labor Specialist, Professional Level and Head of Labor Training before travelling to foreign country	Office of Overseas Employment Administration, Ministry of Labor	20 years
2. Minister Counselor	Royal Thai Embassy in the UAE	1 year (term - 3 years)
<b>Private Sector</b>		
<b>Executive of Thai Massage Institute and Spa Massage</b>		
<b>Position</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Working years</b>
1. Director of Bangkok Beauty and Spa School	Bangkok Beauty and Spa School	10 years
2. Director of Chetawan Health Center	Chetawan Health Center	8 years
3. Director of Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)	Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)	40 years
<b>Executive of spa business in the UAE</b>		
<b>Position</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Working years</b>
1. Spa Manager	Thailand Beauty Center	8 years
2. Spa owner	Sabaidee Massage Center	10 years
3. Spa business owner	Thailand Healthy Massage Center and Healthy Massage Palace	16 years
4. Spa Manager	Sawasdee Spa	3 years
5. Spa Manager	Top Five Spa	5 years

**Table 4.14** (Continued)

<b>Labor Sector</b>		
<b>Thai Massage Masseuse in the UAE</b>		
1. K. Uraiwan (Thai massage masseuse)	Thailand Beauty Center	7 years
2. K. Siranan (Thai massage masseuse)	Sabaidee Massage Center	3 years
3. K. Naree (Thai massage masseuse)	Sabaidee Massage Center	2 years
4. K. Jaruwan (Male therapist)	Sabaidee Massage Center	2 years
5. K. Sonapha (Thai massage masseuse)	Sabaidee Massage Center	7 years
6. K. Worajak (Male therapist)	Sabaidee Massage Centre	5 years
7. K. Plaifan (Female therapist)	Thailand Healthy Massage Center	2 years
8. K. Nujarin (Female therapist)	Thailand Healthy Massage Center	2 years
9. K. Wanna (Thai massage masseuse)	Healthy Massage Palace	4 years
10. K. Amnuay (Male therapist)	Sawasdee Spa	7 years
11. K. Sopha (Thai massage masseuse)	Sawasdee Spa	7 years
12. K. Sutthiphan (Thai massage masseuse)	Top Five Spa	3 years

#### 4.2.2.1 Causes and Background of Work Travelling of Thai Therapist and Masseuse in UAE

The information on causes and background of Thai workers travelling to be therapist and masseuse in the UAE has been obtained from government and private sector, and domestic factors and factors from the UAE relating to the support of Thai masseuse to work in the UAE.

From the in-depth interview with the government and private agencies, the cases and background of work travelling of Thai therapist and masseuse in the UAE can be concluded as follows:

- 1) Thai government policy on spa business development
- 2) The change of law of the UAE government agencies
- 3) Distinction and quality service of Thai massage
- 4) Increase demand on spa service of the customers
- 5) The rapid expansion of Dubai

- 1) Thai government policy on spa business development

The interview with Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School” illustrated that the reason of operating Spa massage was that there was the business opportunity from the development of spa business during the period of Taksin Shinawatra. The school was established and the students applied to school. The school operated Halal massage spa service so the hotels and spas in the Middle East contacted the school to offer job to students. Some students applied at school as they would like to work in the countries in the Middle East.

In 2013, the time of former Prime Minister Taksin Shinawatra, the government supported spa business and Thai massage school, or the one-stop-spa service. Moreover, the law concerning spa was legislated. Thus, I foresaw the opportunity of this business and started the massage school officially.

When the school had first opened, there were numbers of people contacted, students, hotels, and spa owners from other countries who wanted our students to work with. I am Muslim so there were lots of countries from the Middle East contacted such as Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Turkey, and UAE. This was because they knew that the students here had been trained with Halal

and this is the only school that has the training for working in the spa of the Muslim countries

### 2) The change of law of the UAE government agencies

From the interview with Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)”, he expressed the opinion on the increase of learning Thai massage that it was because the change of rule of spa massage from the UAE government agency that determined the spa masseuse to have learning hours and certificate as required by the state. Thus, the number of students who would like to go working in the UAE increased. Moreover, there was word-of-mouth about working in the UAE so more people went to the UAE for work.

It is been for 10 years that Thai people have been studying massage to work in the UAE. Last year, there was the change on the rule of spa massage in the UAE was more strict on the certificate of the masseuse who would go to work in the UAE. Thus, more people come to learn here for receiving certificate. Our certificate has been certified from Thai and the UAE government agency.....When there are numbers of students work in the Middle East countries, students spread word-of-mouth to convince friends to work there.

### 3) Distinction and quality service of Thai massage

Thai masseuse loved going to work in the UAE because Thai massage was popular and very well-known in other countries, as well as the unique service of Thai people with the certificate to certify the standard skills. This was the reason why Thai massage masseuses were required constantly.

The interview with Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)” suggested the opinion on the quality service standard of Thai masseuse as follows.

Thai therapists and masseuses are very popular in the Middle East countries and the countries worldwide because Thai people have friendly service skills with manner and smile to impress the foreigners. Though Thai people have

weakness on language skills, Thai people are still required by the market.

Besides, the interview with the Director of “Chetawan Health Center” stressed on the service of Thai people that was outstanding so there was high demand of Thai masseuse rather than from other countries.

The reason why the Middle East countries wanted Thai masseuse since the past ten years was that Thai massage became well-known in the foreign countries. Moreover, Thai people offer good service so we are outstanding, especially in spa business

Additionally, Thai government sector “Minister Counselor” at Royal Thai Embassy in the UAE emphasized on the service of Thai masseuse that had the standard certify so they had credit for performance and had got high demand in spa business.

To bring in Thai therapists and masseuses it began from the knowledge of Thai massage that is very unique so it is advantage. Moreover, most Thai therapists and masseuse have massage certificate from Thailand to assure the skills

#### 4) Increase demand on spa service of the customers

From the interview with the executive of spa business, the main reason of the high demand of Thai masseuse was discovered, which was the increase of spa resulted from the requirement of customers on Thai spa business.

The Executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center” showed the opinion on spa business expansion that:

After opening the booth at Global Village for 3 years, our regular customers request us to open the shop. There is the UAE sponsor who will support us as it is the regulation in UAE. Thus, there is the standard shop opened in the UAE. Also, we have the shop at Global Village

Moreover, the executive of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace” proposed the opinion on spa business expansion as follows.

After running the shop at Global Village for 3 years, we have regular customers so our shop become the permanent one running for almost 10 years. We totally have 3 shops now but the two shops at Global Village will only open for six months a year

5) The rapid expansion of Dubai

Because of the rapid expansion of Dubai, there are increasing number of hotels and department stores, as well as the numbers of tourists that results in the increasing spas

From the interview with “Minister Counselor” at Royal Thai Embassy in the UAE, it showed that there was more arrival of employees because of the rapid city expansion.

One of the reason of more Thai masseuse coming to Dubai is the expansion of Dubai with more hotels and department stores. Consequently, there is the spa running in this places...Besides, there are spas in other places since more and more tourists visit Dubai every year

**Table 4.15** Summary of Causes and Background of Work Travelling Thai Therapist and Masseuse in the UAE

Causes and Background	Informants	Interview Summary
1. Thai government policy on spa business development	- Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School”	- The Halal spa massage school had been established because there was the possibility of spa

**Table 4.15** (Continued)

<b>Causes and Background</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
2. The change of law of the UAE government agencies	- Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)”	<p>business with the support on spa business development during the time of former Prime Minister Taksin.</p> <p>- Thai massage spa was becoming popular because the change of the regulation of spa massage from the UAE government agency that required the spa staff to have numbers of hours and certificate as per requested.</p>
3. Distinction and quality service of Thai massage	- Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)”	<p>- Thai masseuses were very popular in the UAE because Thai massage was outstanding and very well-known in foreign countries, including the unique quality service of Thai people.</p>

**Table 4.15** (Continued)

<b>Causes and Background</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
	- Minister Counselor	- Thai masseuses had certificate for skills certify so they were confident and reliable for the spa business.
4. Increase demand on spa service of the customers	- Executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center”	- Thai spa had been more and more operated so there was higher demand on masseuses from Thailand.
	- Executive of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace”	- Thai spa had been more and more operated so there was higher demand on masseuses from Thailand.
5. The rapid expansion of Dubai	- Consulate of Labor	- The rapid expansion of Dubai led to the new construction of hotels and department stores. Also, the increase of tourists was one of the reasons of new opening spas.

#### 4.2.2.2 Differences of spa business operation in Thailand and the UAE

Though it is the same business, there are differences between spa business in Thailand and the UAE, which the entrepreneurs and the people who would like to be the masseuse in the UAE should learn about.

- 1) Strict regulations of spa massage
- 2) Decoration of spa
- 3) Massage service
- 4) Income of Thai massage masseuse
- 1) Strict regulations of spa massage

As running spa business in the UAE is different from in Thailand, the entrepreneurs who are interesting in running spa business in the UAE should study the differences in the important aspects. From the interview with the Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center” on the difference of Thai spa business and the complication, it was found that:

There is the huge difference between running spa in Thailand and in the UAE. First, the process is more complex since it requires the certificate from government agency. Second, the hygiene comes first because the officer will inspect regularly, 2-3 times a year without advance notice...For the staff, they are required the training certificate or Thai massage course certificate which the government officer will examine 2-3 times a year as well.

Besides, the Manager of “Sawasdee Spa” expressed the opinion on strict regulation and the standard consideration of the business, as well as the inspection of government agency as follows.

Spas in the UAE is different from those in Thailand and Philippines as there are more regulations here and everything needs to be qualified the standard to be the best as it needs the regular inspection

The executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center” showed the opinion and gave example of regulation of spa business as follows.

Running the spa here is quite different from in Thailand because there are many regulations while it is quite flexible in Thailand. For example, there is health check for all employees to work here

Moreover, the executive of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace” gave the example of regulation of spa business that was different from those in Thailand that:

In the UAE, the certificate should state that female services female. If there is male masseuse, the certificate for male masseuse is required to provide service for male customers only. Many spas violate the regulation they have certificate but not follow the rule

## 2) Decoration of spa

Decoration is one of the key factors the entrepreneurs should pay attention to as there is strict regulation.

The executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center” expressed the opinion on the decoration of spa in the UAE that it should be luxurious as there was the officer to inspect regularly. Moreover, there should have the separate zone for male and female.

Spa decoration should have male and female zoning with music for relaxation. In the UAE, the decoration is luxurious and cleanness is priority because the staff of Global Village always comes to inspect. The light in spa should not be too dim

From the interview with the Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center”, he also provided some opinions on spa business as well.

Apart from cleanness, it is about the arrangement. The spa room is separated two beds are not allowed in one room. Thus, the spa should be well-prepared because there is no advance notice from the staff prior to the inspection

### 3) Massage service

Though the massage service in the UAE is Thai massage, there are different massage details.

From the interview with Thai masseuse working at spa in the UAE, there were some differences of service as follows.

The in-depth interview with K. Siranan, aged 31 years old, Thai masseuse who has been working for 3 years indicated that the massage in the UAE needed the lighter massage than that in Thailand.

Giving massage in the UAE is not as tired as in Thailand. This is because the customer wants the light pressure so we use less energy. Also, it takes about 30 minutes or one hour while it takes 2-3 hours in Thailand

K. Naree, aged 28 years old, Thai masseuse who has been working for 2 years expressed the opinion that the customers in the UAE loved the softer massage than those in Thailand.

The difference is that the customers in Thailand love stronger massage than those in the UAE. People here love foot massage or specific spot while those in Thailand love body massage which takes long hours

Moreover, K. Sopha, Thai masseuse who has been working for 7 years, said that the massage in the UAE took less time than in Thailand.

Massage in Thailand is more difficult and harder than in the UAE, which is lighter and shorter. Customers don't really have query as those in Thailand

K. Uraiwan, aged 39 years old, Thai masseuse who has been working for 7 years, said that the service was clearly separate for male and female. The masseuse should ask and pay attention to the health of customer before the massage.

What is different from Thailand is the method. When I was in Thailand, I had worked at the hotel in Ubonratchani. As we know, we massage male in Thailand. Sometimes, we are upset to do so. On the other hand, we are fine in the UAE because we only massage females. Also, in the UAE, before we massage, we have to ask the customers if they are sick or have any pain as sometimes massage causes some pain because we have to stretch the body. If we massage them and they have a small bruise, they would think that we have no skills and might report to our employer, which causes the trouble to the spa. Thus, we have to be very careful

#### 4) Income of Thai massage masseuse

Full-time employees in the UAE have salary and tips from the customers while there is no monthly salary for them.

K. Wanna, aged 38 years old, Thai masseuse who has been working for 4 years, gave additional suggestion on this matter that the massage in Thailand did not pay monthly salary, which was opposite to in the UAE.

In the UAE and Thailand, massage is different. In Thailand, spa doesn't pay monthly salary but the daily wage for 350 THB. In the UAE, monthly salary is offered, mostly for 2,500 AED or 25,000 THB plus tips

**Table 4.16** Summary of Differences of Spa Business in Thailand and UAE

<b>Differences of spa business</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Strict regulation of spa massage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center”</li> <li>- The Manager of “Sawasdee Spa”</li> <li>- The Manager “Sabaidee Massage Center”</li> <li>- The Manager of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The process of running spa in the UAE was more complicated than in Thailand. Everything needed the certificate from government agency and the cleanness was priority. There was the regular inspection from the officers without advance notice.</li> <li>- Having certificate for male or female massage separately.</li> </ul>
2. Decoration of spa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center”</li> <li>- The Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The decoration of spa in the UAE was luxurious and clean as there was officers to inspect constantly. The design of spa should clearly divide the zone for male and female.</li> <li>- Massage room was individual and two beds in a room is not allowed.</li> </ul>

**Table 4.16** (Continued)

<b>Differences of spa business</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
3. Massage service	- K. Sirinun, Thai massage masseuse - K. Narere, Thai massage masseuse  - K. Sopha, Thai massage masseuse  - K. Uraiwan, Thai massage masseuse	- Massage in the UAE required light pressure than in Thailand.  - In the UAE, massage period required shorter time than in Thailand. - Service in the UAE separated for male and female and needed to question the customer about the illness before massage.
4. Income of Thai massage masseuse	- K. Wanna, Thai massage masseuse	- Massage in Thailand did not offer monthly salary while in the UAE paid salary.

#### 4.2.2.3 Religious and Cultural Dimension Affecting the Performance of Thai Therapist and Masseuse in the UAE

Regarding religious and culture dimension, it affects the performance of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE from the preparation for travelling, service pattern, restrictions, and law punishment resulted from religion and culture as the following aspects.

- 1) Teaching culture before travelling
- 2) Service zoning for male and female
- 3) Rules for prostitution prevention

### 1) Teaching culture before travelling

The teaching begins with Thai massage to acquire the certificate required by the UAE government agency as there were numbers of people who are interested to work in the UAE apply at school. Thus, apart from educating about massage, it is necessary to teach about religion and culture before the student travel to the countries in the Middle East.

The interview with Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)” revealed that Thai massage school prepared the students on the culture of countries in the Middle East before their travel.

As we know that the massage in the Middle East countries needs to follow Islam religious principle. We provide Muslim teacher and staff to train the students and educate them about the culture of Muslim countries so students understand the religion and culture

Moreover, Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School” provided the introduction of religion and culture to students as well.

Our school teaches about religion and culture to students before travelling to work in the Middle East. Muslim teachers have in-depth knowledge female masseuse for female customers and male masseuse for male customers only. Also, Muslim teachers will instruct about the habit and behavior in Muslim countries as well as the punishment in case of violation of religious principle

Similarly, the interview with Director of “Chetawan Health Center” that showed the providing of knowledge about religion and culture, apart from massage knowledge.

In terms of religion and culture, it surely affects the persons who would like to work in the Middle East countries. If the student wants to go to Muslim countries, we will suggest that most of spas are female masseuse for female customers and male masseuse for male customers only. Besides, our school have Muslim staff who can give basic knowledge to students

## 2) Service zoning for male and female

Since there is the influence of Islam religion that separate male from female obviously, especially in spa business, some spas arrange the separate massage for male and female masseuse for female customers and male masseuse for male customers. Some spas only service female, called spa for lady. Moreover, sexual deviation is prohibited.

The interview with “Labor Specialist, Professional Level” and Head of Labor Training from Office of Overseas Employment Administration, Ministry of Labor, indicated that spa business should have separate service zone for male and female.

Regarding religion and culture, in the Middle East, female masseuse for female customers and male masseuse for male customers. There is no problem on female massage, but male massage as Thai male masseuses have sexual deviation or drinking alcohol, which is the prohibition in the Middle East

The interview with the Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center” suggested that it was necessary to have a separate zone for male and female.

Religious and cultural dimension affecting spa business obviously. For example, female and male can't group together. Our spa only service female customers. Some Arab female customers don't allow us to uncover the tights. We can only massage the parts that the customer allows

## 3) Rules for prostitution prevention

Among Muslim community, prostitution is very serious wrongdoing. Therefore, the UAE government agency sets the rules and regulations for service business to prevent prostitution business in spa.

The interview with “Minister Counselor” from Royal Thai Embassy in the UAE suggested on the prostitution prohibition as follows:

Religious dimension that affects the performance of Thai masseuses and therapists is that female masseuse for female customers and male masseuse for male customers. Door-to-door masseuse is prohibited, only in spa service. With this, the officers can inspect and examine that we only offer massage service, not other hidden business such as prostitution

Moreover, Commercial Attaché gave the example of the sting operation of government agency.

The door shouldn't be closed while massaging so the people outside can see there's no illegal practice. Also, light shouldn't be too dim. Local police will disguise as the customer to examine the business regularly

In addition, from the interview with private sector, the entrepreneur of "Top Five Spa" suggested the opinion on the prostitution as follows.

Religion and culture affect spa regulations as it complicates the law. If we are compiling with the regulation, we won't be in trouble. If not, we have to make a correction otherwise we have punishment. Sometimes, there is violent infringement such as having prostitution in the spa. The spa will be withdrawn, as we can see in the past year

Besides, Director of Bangkok Beauty and Spa School indicated that there were 5% of Thai students who were working in the UAE and infringed the rules of prostitution. There were two cases of infringement, which had different punishment. He also suggested the way to earn extra money regardless prostitution as follows:

There are some who went there for prostitution, only 5% of the entire group. There are two cases: prostitution in the workplace which will be put in jail immediately, and prostitution out of working time which will be sent back to Thailand immediately. Our school can't control this kind of case so we need to

process with law. However, our school instructs students, especially those who will go the Middle East that do not earn extra money with prostitution as the law is very strict. To earn extra money they should learn about salon or make-up, or nail painting

**Table 4.17** Summary of Religious and Culture Dimension Affecting the Performance of Thai Therapists and Masseuses in the UAE

<b>Religious and Culture Dimension</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
1. Teaching culture before travelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)”</li> <li>- Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School”</li> <li>- Director of “Chetawan Health Center”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thai massage school prepared students on the culture of the countries in the Middle East before travelling.</li> </ul>
2. Service zoning for male and female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Labor Specialist, Professional Level</li> <li>- Head of Labor Training from Office of Overseas Employment Administration, Ministry of Labor</li> <li>- Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spa business had clear zone for male and female.</li> </ul>

**Table 4.17** (Continued)

<b>Religious and Culture Dimension</b>	<b>Informants</b>	<b>Interview Summary</b>
3. Rules for prostitution prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Minister Counsellor” from Royal Thai Embassy in the UAE</li> <li>- Manager of “Top Five Spa”</li> <li>- Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do not close the door while massaging so the outsider could notice the wrongdoing. Do not turn off the light or use dim light0</li> <li>- Local police would disguise as the customer to observe.</li> <li>- Prostitution would cause the withdrawal of business.</li> <li>- There were only 5% of students from the entire group who committed illegal. There were two cases: prostitution in workplace which would be in jail immediately, and prostitution out of working time that would be sent back to Thailand immediately.</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.2.4 Trend of Work Travelling of Thai Therapist and Masseuse in the UAE

Regarding the trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE, the researcher had the in-depth interview with the experts from government and private sector as follows:

1) Trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE depended on economy.

2) Trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE would definitely increase.

1) Trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE depended on economy.

The interview with “Minister Counselor” from Royal Thai Embassy in Abu Dhabi on the trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE suggested that it depended on the economic situation.

Trend of Thai therapists and masseuses import is constant because the legal employer recruits employees to replace those whose contract has ended. Anyhow, after the deflation of economy, less people use massage service as the cost of spa is quite high. This possibly affects the import of Thai therapists and masseuses, which we have to wait and see the economic situation in the future

2) Trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE would definitely increase.

For private sector, there is the same opinion that the travel to work in the Middle East, especially in the UAE, of Thai masseuse will increase definitely. The key factor is politics and the popularity of health worldwide.

The interview with Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School” showed the trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE as follows:

Trend of export Thai therapists and masseuses to the countries in the Middle East is likely to increase every year. There are more and more students who go to work in the foreign countries, particularly in Turkey, where more than 100 students go to work there. However, political situation is the main factor. For example, the countries in the Middle East that have the high political stability will interest people such as the UAE

Besides, the Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)” proposed that as the trend of alternative and natural integrated treatment for health was increased so more and more numbers of Thai masseuses travelled to work in foreign countries, including in the Middle East.

From the trend of world health, people are likely to live a long life as the advance of medical technology. As a result, there is higher requirement on Thai masseuse in the future. This is because Thai massage can treat some symptoms as it is the natural treatment which is becoming popular. Anyway, the rapid communication technology publishes the information and popularity of Thai massage so it becomes more and more famous in the foreign countries

Director of “Chetawan Massage School” analyzed the increasing statistics of students who enrolled at school every year. He suggested that the trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses would increase.

The trend of demand on Thai masseuse in the foreign countries is going to increase definitely, as well as the numbers of students and those who go to work in the Middle East. Moreover, there are more and more foreign masseuses, such as from Philippines who come from the Middle East, learn Thai massage. Thus, it is quite sure that Thai massage business will survive in the foreign countries, including in the Middle East

#### 4.2.2.5 Marketing Communications in Public Relations for Thai Spa Products in the UAE

Regarding marketing communication in public relations for Thai spa products to be well-known in the UAE, the cooperation between the agencies of government and private sector is required. The agency that is responsible for promoting Thai spa and Thai massage is Royal Thai Embassy in Abu Dhabi and Labor Division of Royal Thai Embassy. For private sector, spas are in charge of promoting Thai massage in aspects presented as follows:

- 1) Marketing communications of government agencies  
Distribution of printing advertisings of Thai massage
- 2) Marketing communications of private agencies  
Integrated Marketing Communications - IMC

- 1) Marketing communication of government agencies

The interview with “Minister Counselor” from Royal Thai Embassy in Abu Dhabi, Labor Division revealed the opinion on the public relations on Thai massage in the UAE as follows:

For the Labor Division, brochure about Thai massage introduction arranged by The Tourism Authority of Thailand is distributed. Royal Thai Embassy and Labor Division will distribute the brochure to the visitor of Royal Thai Embassy.....Besides, the promotion can be seen at the spa: mostly in on the newspaper. It always uses the word “Thai Massage” as the selling point. Moreover, there is the advertising on social media, but newspaper is the most popular one

Additionally, the interview with “Labor Specialist, Professional Level” and the Head of Labor Training from Office of Overseas Employment Administration, Ministry of Labor emphasized that Thai massage promotion was the responsibility of Royal Thai Embassy and Labor Division.

To promote and publish Thai masseuse is the responsibility of the embassy or Labor Division in the foreign country that different methods can be implemented, based on the requirements of each country. Some publish on printing media while some promote on TV or online channel that is very popular at present

## 2) Marketing communication of private agencies

In regard to marketing communication of private sector to promote Thai spa business to become well-known in the UAE, Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) of existing and new media is used in public relations. It is obvious that online media takes the important role to promote Thai spa business.

From the interview with the Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center”, it indicated that communication was used in public relations as follows:

Public relations always made on the newspaper and website. Besides, some Social Media such as Instagram, Facebook, Google+ and Whatsapp have numbers of followers. Moreover, there are new promotions such as suggest 3 friends for one free treatment. The most efficient method is promoting via online media, especially Whatsapp, as 99% of people access Whatsapp. The new promotion will be sent to the customer via this channel. This is very effective without cost. We can't ensure the feedback from the promoting on newspaper it is just wasting the money. On the other hand, we will definitely get new customers from online media

The interview with the Manager of “Sawasdee Spa” showed that though the marketing communication focused on the word-of-mouth, online media was also used in public relations.

Since we have been operated for 8 years and the spa is located in the department store, we have constant customers who have a word-of-mouth. However, we communicate via Social Media such as Instagram and Facebook. It doesn't have massive effect on our spa as we are well-known for a period of time

The executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center”, said that although the word-of-mouth was the most effective method of public relations, online marketing communication had been developed.

As we have been long operated, we offer the impressive service and rely on the word-of-mouth. Our spa focuses on the treatment. If the customer recovers from the symptom, they will tell their friends. For Social Media, we use Facebook. However, the most efficient way is word-of-mouth rather than other media. Besides, we always have new promotion to interest and attract the customers

Similarly, the executive of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace” agreed that word-of-mouth was the most efficient method of public relations. Online media is also used.

We mostly rely on the word-of-mouth as we have many regular customers. In addition, Arab customers have high loyalty so they will come back and spread the word. Thus, the best way to promote our spa is the best service. For Social Media, there are sometimes the promotion on Facebook or Email

In addition, the interview with the Manager of “Top Five Spa” indicated that online media helped to save the expense of public relations.

Our spa relies on the word-of-mouth. We emphasize on the good service to attract customers who will come back. In UAE, the customer has high loyalty if they love the service, they will come back. We always have a discount for the returning customers or free treatment. As a result, they advise friends to come. At the beginning, we promote the spa on printing media. Later, people are on Facebook so we turn to this media as it requires lower expenses than printing media

#### 4.2.2.6 Obstacles and problems of Thai spa service in the UAE

For the obstacles and problems of Thai spa service in the UAE, government and private sector, as well as labor sector propose the obstacles to spa products export by classifying into four main aspects: obstacles from Thai government sector, obstacles from the UAE government sector, obstacles from private sector, and obstacles from labor sector.

##### 1) Obstacles from Thai government sector

- (1) No notification of labor travel via Ministry of Labor
- (2) Illegal work travelling of the labors
- (3) Deception of agent
- (4) Problem on the certify of Thai massage school and the

inspection of fake certificate

##### 2) Obstacles from the UAE government sector

More strict regulations related to spa service

##### 3) Obstacles from private sector

- (1) More negotiation from the customer
- (2) High competition of Thai spa business
- (3) Illegal practice of Thai spa business affecting more

strict law

##### 4) Obstacles from labor sector

- (1) Homesick problem
- (2) Communication and language problem
- (3) High competition of being spa masseuse
- (4) Conflict with foreign colleagues

##### 1) Obstacles from Thai government sector

The in-depth interview with government and private sector suggested the obstacles and problems of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses. The aspects relate to Thai government sector are as follows:

The “Labor Specialist, Professional Level, and Head of Labor Training from Office of Overseas Employment Administration, Ministry of Labor pointed the serious problem of work travelling of Thai masseuses was that there was

no notification on travelling via Ministry of Labor and the illegal travel, as the below interview.

The current obstacle of sending the labor to work in foreign countries is that they travel by themselves without notifying the department. When there is a problem, such as haven't got paid or break the employment contract, they will ask for help from the department. In this case, it is difficult for us to help because we have no reference. In case of legal labors, we have a labor protection division that always assists and examines the case

Another issue discovering from the interview was that the deception of the agent, as the interview with Labor Specialist, Professional Level, and Head of Labor Training from Office of Overseas Employment Administration, Ministry of Labor below.

Another problem is that the labors from other provinces always trust the agent, who convinces them to apply for a job in oversea countries. Labors listen to them rather than to the officers. Some are fooled and lost money. The division always monitor this practice as it is the illegal practice: receiving money from labors regardless running the employment agent business. This is the violation of criminal law

Director of "Chetawan Massage School" stated about the problems related to the standard audit of skill certificate issue of Thai government sector. There should have more strict rules for fake certificate inspection.

Obstacle to Thai massage is the regulations of certify Thai massage school. We don't have this problem as we have been operating for a long time and been certified by government sector. Some schools that haven't been certified have a problem on fake certificate

Similarly, Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)” would like the government sector to monitor the certificate issue process for Thai massage school.

One of the obstacle to Thai massage industry is that people who really want the certificate will go to the school that hasn't been certified by government sector. As a result, there are fake certificates, and the increase of deception to work in foreign countries

## 2) Obstacles from the UAE government sector

From the in-depth interview on the obstacles to spa business that were relevant to UAE government, the private sector had the impact from the obstacles based on the major aspects discussed.

Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School” pointed the problem concerning spa business service that the UAE government sector had more strict regulations.

The obstacle to work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses is the regulation of the Middle East that becomes stricter for those who will be working in spa, particularly in the UAE that the certificate is required and should be the reliable one, and they need to be trained to complete the period required by the government sector. This is the result from the illegal practice of Thai masseuses so the other masseuses have effect from the change of law. However, the good point is that it upgrade spa standard. Our school trains students to become skillful and have perfect qualification to fulfill the requirement of the employee

The Manager of “Top Five Spa” also pointed that the strict regulations of spa business affected the service sector in spa business in the UAE.

The obstacle to the business is that the stricter regulations of spa business as there are more and more illegal spa at the moment. We are trying to adjust as

much as we can, which we are able to follow the rules and standard. We train the masseuses and teach the language to them to facilitate their work

### 3) Obstacles from private sector

The obstacles from private sector to Thai spa business are mostly from the private agencies which can be studied from the in-depth interview with spa business in the UAE as follows:

The Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center” indicated the problem related to price negotiate from customer and the problem of prostitution of the masseuses.

The problem and obstacle to the spa here is that sometimes Arab customers are trying to negotiate the price as they travelled to Thailand and recognize that the price is more expensive here. We have to tell them that the cost of living in the UAE and Thailand is different. Another problem is that the masseuse wants to do the side-business which this is the serious rule of our spa. Any infringement, they will be sending back Thailand. However, we’re lucky that all masseuses behave well

Besides, the Manager of “Sawasdee Spa” suggested the obstacle from the competition on spa business in the UAE.

There are a lot more spas opening so the competition is high. Each spa has to present the outstanding point to attract customer. Those who would like to run spa business in the UAE should look for good location as there are numbers of competitors. We’re lucky that we are located in the department store where people visit, so we have less impact

Moreover, the executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center” emphasized the problem of increasing competitors, especially spa operating by Chinese people, which are the illegal spas as there is prostitution as the side-business, that attract the customers from the legal spa. Also, the strict regulations and laws of

the UAE government sector are also the obstacles for operations.

Spa business has been well operating as there are fewer competitors. In 2012, there are more and more spas with the side business regardless Halal service. They operate under the name of Thai spa or provide Thai massage which most of them run by Chinese people. This causes the bad image to Thai spa. In addition, we have more competitors that affect the entire business. Later, when there are more illegal spas, the UAE government sector keeps an eye on us and the law has changed to become stricter. This becomes the obstacle to our spa because the government agency would like us to expand the spa with 4 masseuses per one license. Our spa has both male and female masseuses which means that we have to have 4 male masseuses and 4 females masseuses. This is the burden of our spa to hire 8 full-time masseuses

The executive of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace” agreed with the increase of spa business operating by Chinese people. They imitated Thai spa but had prostitution as the side-business. This affected the bad reputation of Thai spa and Thai massage.

Problem of Thai spa is that Chinese people operate Thai spa business with side business such as prostitution. Some are Thai who violate this rule. This is the problem that the UAE government sector is trying to resolve. Our spa is also trying to recover the fame of Thai massage and Thai spa by expanding the spa to meet the standard and religious principle as much as we can

#### 4) Obstacles from labor sector

Apart from the obstacles and problems relate to government and private sector, there are some obstacles and problems of labor sector or Thai masseuses who are working in the UAE.

The interview with K. Sirinan, aged 31 years old, the female therapist who has been working for 3 years pointed that homesick was the main obstacle of working in the foreign country for a long time.

There's not quite a problem working here, but homesick

Besides, K. Uraiwan, aged 39 years old, the female therapist who has been working for 7 years suggested that English and Arab language was the problem of working as language was the key factor for the employee to hire the masseuse, as there was high competition in this career.

Those who want to work in UAE should learn language as I had this problem earlier. This is the period of high competition that employee has many choices and people are more skillful. Thus, our capability will be the factor whether the employee will employ us or not

K. Jaruwan, aged 33 years, the female therapist who has been working for 2 years stated that language was the key barrier to work.

Language is the only obstacle to work here. The solution is to use hand language or use translator

K. Amnuay (alias), who has been working for 7 years as the male therapist mentioned that the obstacle was the conflict with foreign colleagues and persecution from foreign colleagues.

We seem to be persecuted from colleagues since they can communicate in Arab while we use English. The solution is we have to be patient but not relent or use violence since the persecution will be going on

K. Sutthiphan, aged 37 years, the female therapist who has been working for 3 years added the issue about language barrier and obstacle from the conflict with foreigner colleagues because of the cultural and communication difference.

There are two obstacles living here. The first one is language, which we are trying to develop constantly. The second issue is Arab colleagues who come from other countries such as Morocco who have different culture that causes the misunderstanding in work

#### 4.2.2.7 Solutions and suggestions for service sector on Thai spa business in the UAE

Government, private, and labor sector propose the solution and suggestions to develop Thai spa business in the UAE as follows:

- 1) Solutions and suggestions for Thai government sector
  - (1) Public relations to provide knowledge to prevent the deception on social media and TV.
  - (2) Training for labor volunteer
  - (3) Establish agency to monitor Thai massage school and the issue of certificate strictly.
  - (4) Labor Division of Royal Thai Embassy observes the living of Thai people in the UAE and examines the problem of maltreatment from the employee.
  - (5) Labor Division of Royal Thai Embassy inspects the salary of Thai labor whether it is consistent with employment contract or not.
  - (6) Government agency should recover the image of Thai massage.
- 2) Solutions and suggestions for private sector
  - (1) Spa business gives knowledge and publishes Thai massage.
  - (2) Spa business should give more precedence to human resource management.
  - (3) Spa entrepreneur should operate the business by self rather than assign the employee to run business.
  - (4) Spa entrepreneur should pay more medical care expense to the ill employees.

3) Solutions and suggestions for labor sector

(1) Have in-depth study prior to the work travel to prevent deception.

(2) Use modern communication technology to resolve homesick problem.

(3) Language problem can be resolved by using body language or having translator at the spa.

(4) Thai masseuses do not perform any act to disgrace Thai massage, particularly the prostitution.

(5) Thai masseuses should study Arab language and culture prior to the travel.

1) Solutions and suggestions for Thai government sector

Government, private, and labor sector propose the solution and suggestions that require the assistance of government sector.

Labor Specialist, Professional Level and the Head of Labor Training from Office of Overseas Employment Administration, Ministry of Labor suggested the solution for the deception to the labor for work travelling in foreign countries by providing knowledge via online media and TV.

Since numbers of the labors have been lured, the Bureau develops proactive public relations as the solution the public relations to educate labor to not being lured via social media such as Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ศูนย์อบรมคนหางานก่อนไปทำงานต่างประเทศ>). There are people query on working in foreign countries and we have staff who answers the questions all day. Sometimes, Head of Training will directly provide the information and acknowledge the problems from the labors. Moreover, there is the TV program on Channel 11 on Tuesdays it is the live show program that gives knowledge and publishes the information from Ministry of Labor. However, it is only published during November 2015-February 2016.

The Consulate from Royal Thai Embassy in Abu Dhabi, Labor Division, proposed the solution for the maltreatment from the employer by giving knowledge and training to the labor volunteer to be the representative for monitoring Thai workers who have problems.

Most solutions are published through public relations and training, and giving knowledge to labor volunteer to spread the information. If the volunteer is notified the complaint, there will be the investigation with both employee and employer. Sometimes the employee frames the employer because he wants to go back to Thailand and asks for the assistance from the embassy. Thus, there will always have the inspection for the justice

The Director of “Thai Traditional Medical School (Wat Pho)” pointed the problem of Thai massage school that was not qualified the standard and the fake certificate that required the government sector to investigate.

Some schools that haven’t been certified have the problem of fake certificate. The government sector should have the inspection measure, especially the certificate for the labors who are going to work in foreign countries that Ministry of Labor should take part in examining the certificate

Besides, the Director of “Chetawan Traditional Massage School” had the same opinion on the examining the skills certificate from the government sector.

For the problem of issue the fake certificate, the government sector should implement the measure to inspect the certificate of people who are going to work in foreign countries. Ministry of Labor might take part in examining the certificate.

Representative of labor sector, K. Uraiwan, aged 39 years old, who has been working for 7 years as the female therapist suggested the Royal Thai Embassy to monitor the living of Thai people who were working in the UAE and examine the maltreatment practice.

What I would like the government sector to take action is that the Labor Division of Royal Thai Embassy to take care of the living of Thai people who are working here and assist them in case of any problem with the employer as some are facing the problem with Chinese employer the employer deducts money for visa expense and other expenses

Moreover, K. Amnuay (alias), who has been working for 7 years as the male therapist mentioned that the Labor Division of Royal Thai Embassy should take care of the salary problem of the labors whether it was consistent with the employment agreement or not.

The most wanted assistance form the government sector at the moment is the observation on salary of Thai labors whether they receive as stated on the agreement or not because some are disadvantageous. However, if the employer is the UAE people, the labor doesn't have this problem

K. Playfan, aged 24 years old, who has been working for 2 years as the female therapist, proposed the government sector to examine the deception from the agent and the fake certificate.

What to be resolved is the deception from the agent and the fake certificate that has been issued from the person who hasn't taken the course

K. Jaruwan, aged 33 years old, who is the female therapist who has been working for 2 years suggested the government sector to create the new image of Thai masseuse as it has the negative image in the eyes of foreigners.

Government sector should build the good image of Thai masseuse as the image of Thai masseuse both in Thailand and foreign countries is negative

## 2) Solutions and suggestions for private sector

Government, private, and labor sector propose the solution and

suggestions as follows.

The Manager of “Thailand Beauty Center” suggested that knowledge of Thai massage should be educated to the customers so they knew the benefits and it was the way to publish Thai massage.

When the spa offers Thai massage, the knowledge of the massage: how the massage cure the symptom. With this the customer learns more about Thai massage. This will make them come back for the service

The executive of “Sabaidee Massage Center” suggested the employer to take care the employees because it affects their performance.

What to suggest is that the entrepreneur who would like to open the spa here should pay attention and take the best care of staff. This is because they have to live far way from the mother land, if we take a good care of them, they will be happy and work for us at their best. We take care of them as a family member and they are very happy

The executive of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace” gave the advice on the taking care of employees and the special offer for them.

Suggestion for the person who wants to work in the UAE is that the good care of employees. The employer should organize party or the trip for the employees occasionally. For example, on 5 December, we organized the ceremony for blessing the King or on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, everyone will be on the trip such as to China Town in Dubai by the transport we provided

Besides, the executive of “Thailand Healthy Massage Center” and “Healthy Massage Palace” proposed that the spa entrepreneur should manage the spa by themselves. They should not hire the employees to take care of the spa.

Thai entrepreneur who would like to run this business should be prepared on financial, mental and physical preparedness. Also, he should have leadership skills, be patient and not let the employee to run the business

For labor sector, K. Jaruwan, aged 33 years old who has been working for 2 years as the female therapist suggested the employer to take responsibility for medical care expense.

We want the employer to help on the medical care expense in case of illness

### 3) Solutions and suggestions for labor sector

The interview with the Director of “Bangkok Beauty and Spa School” indicated that labor sector should have in-depth study prior to the travelling to prevent the deception.

What to suggest is that the students or other people who would like to work in foreign countries should have deliberate consideration, check the reliability of the agent or the employment company, as well as not focus on the money and commit the wrongdoing against the country law. We want the person work with service mind, pursue knowledge, and they will earn what they deserve

Besides, the Director of “Chetawan Traditional Massage School” suggested to have in-depth study on work travelling before making decision.

Lastly, the students who would like to work in the foreign countries should well study on the information before making decision to prevent the deception

The interview with K. Sirinun, aged 31 years old, the female therapist who has been working for 3 years indicated that homesick was the obstacle to work in foreign countries. However, the advance technology helped to resolve this problem.

Homesick is the problem of working in the foreign countries. However, technology today resolves this problem. In the past, we sent the letter. Today, we send the text immediately

K. Sonapha, the female therapist who has been working for 7 years proposed that language was the barrier to work performance. However, it could be solved with body language or using translator at spa.

There is little problem on language but we can learn from work. If we can't understand, we use hand language or ask for help from the spa translator or the Manager

K. Worajak, aged 34 years, the male therapist who has been working for 5 years suggested that Thai masseuse should not perform any action to disgrace Thai massage, particularly prostitution.

The suggestion, especially for the male masseuse is to do it rightly and respect the UAE law, even the other countries in the Middle East. Sexual activities, beyond from massage is a serious wrongdoing. Male masseuse who has sexual act with male is more serious. Thus, they should be careful not to cause the trouble to themselves or the spa, as well as to the fame of Thai massage

K. Nujarin, female therapist who has been working for 2 years advised that Thai labors in spa business should learn Arab language and culture before travelling to work as it affect the performance directly.

I suggest them to learn Arab language and culture as it is the factor of the smooth work. If they don't have financial problem, I would suggest them to work in Thailand.

The conclusion of Part 2 obtained from the in-depth interview with the experts in spa business in the UAE indicated that the causes and background of work travelling of Thai therapist and masseuse was the support of government on Thai massage school establishment to develop spa business in order to build the learning and advice from schools for travelling to the UAE and other countries in the Middle East. Apart from the support of Thai government, the UAE government changed the law that Thai masseuses had to have the certificate. With this reason, although the masseuses had experience, they must have the certificate from certified Thai massage school. Those who want to go to work in the UAE always spread the words to their friends so there are numbers of students who go to work in the UAE. Moreover, Thailand was very well-known about Thai massage and good service mind. Thus, the customer required Thai masseuse mainly. Another reason of travelling to work in the UAE was the increasing need for spa service in the UAE. It caused the spa entrepreneurs to expand the branch or open the new spa, so they needed more Thai masseuses accordingly. One of the economic factors was the rapid expansion of Dubai: more hotels and department store had been constructed so there were more and more spas.

Findings from the study on the differences of spa business in Thailand and the UAE showed that spa business in the UAE had stricter rules and regulation than in Thailand such as the regular inspection of government sector for the cleanness or the inspection of the relevant government agency relating to the labor issue, work permit and disease of employee. Besides, the spa decoration was one of important factors because the zone for female and male customers should be clearly separated. Massage room was the individual room with luxurious decoration. For the difference of service, some masseuses expressed the opinion that the UAE customer loved the softer massage than Thai customers (Ratchasamnak massage) and preferred the specific spot to whole body massage. In addition, prior to the massage, the masseuse should question about the illness of the customer. Moreover, there was the difference of income of Thai masseuses. The masseuses in the UAE earned 20,000 baht income with tips, which was quite a lot per month. This was higher than those in Thailand would earn.

Findings from the study on religious and cultural dimension affecting the performance of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE revealed that Thai massage school that offered the certificate to students who would go to work in UAE would prepare students about knowledge of Arab religion and culture. This was because giving spa service in the UAE was different from in Thailand or other countries. Some schools might have Muslim teachers or staff to give advices on religion and culture matters. Besides, the influence of religion and culture that male and female could not assemble, the massage room had to be separated for male and female. Some spas only serviced either male or female customers. Additionally, religious and cultural dimension affected the prohibition of prostitution in spa business. It was consider the serious act based on Islam religious principle. Therefore, male and female customers were separately serviced. The massage room should not have closed door so the person outside could observe. The light should not be too dim, though the masseuse and the customer was the same gender. Besides, the government officer disguised as the customer to pretend asking for prostitution service. If there is prostitution, the staff and the owner of spa would be punished.

Findings from the study on the trend of work travelling of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE showed that the numbers of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE would increase or decrease depending on the economic situation in the UAE. If there is the deflation, it might affect the increasing hire of spa employee. On the other hand, if the situation was better, there was more investment on new hotels and department stores that affecting the expansion of spa service. Another aspect was that the numbers of Thai therapists and masseuses in the UAE would increase definitely. This was because the high stability of politics in the UAE there was no internal conflict. Thus, numbers of Thai masseuses chose to work in the UAE. Moreover, because of the more interest in health worldwide and in the UAE, people were more interested in natural treatment, so Thai massage became more popular. Many spa businesses emerged in the Middle East, which affected more employment.

Findings from the study on marketing communication for Thai spa business in the UAE indicated that marketing communication of the government sector based on printing media to advertise Thai massage. Printing brochure was distributed at the Royal Thai Embassy. For private sector, IMC was used to promote Thai massage. The

survey result showed that Thai spa business owner in the UAE promoted their spa via newspapers and magazines. Some spas used online media such as email, Facebook, Instagram, Google+ and Whatsapp. Online media helped to reduce cost of public relations. In addition, all surveyed spas had offered new promotions or privilege to customers and developed the service to impress customers. This was because they considered the word-of-mouth as the most influential method for spa business public relations in the UAE.

Findings from the study on the obstacles and problems of Thai spa service in the UAE showed that the obstacles and problems caused by Thai government sector, the UAE government sector, private sector, and labor sector. Most problems from Thai government sector was there was no notification of work travelling of the labors from the Ministry of Labor, the illegal work travelling, the deception of the agent, and the standard certify of Thai massage school, including the inspection of fake certificate. For the problems caused by the UAE government sector was the stricter spa business regulation. For private sector, there were the problems on price negotiation from customers, the high competition of the spa owners, and the illegal spa business. Regarding labor sector, the problems were homesick, communication and language, high competition, and conflict with foreign colleagues.

Findings from the study on solutions and suggestions for Thai spa business in the UAE illustrated the solutions and suggestions for three sectors: Thai government sector, private sector, and labor sector. For the government sector, the solutions and suggestions were to have public relations for Thai labors to prevent the deception via Social Media, and the public relations on TV by Ministry of Labor. Besides, there was the training for labor volunteer in the UAE by Royal Embassy to monitor and observe Thai workers, who worked in the UAE and inspect the maltreatment of the employers. Thai government sector should promote on the correction of Thai massage image. For the solutions and suggestions for Thai spa business entrepreneurs in the UAE were to provide knowledge and information on Thai massage to customers, give more importance to the human resource management, and support the medical care expense for the employees. Moreover, the spa owner should operate the business by himself rather than assigning the other to perform this job. The solutions and suggestions for labor sector included study the in-depth information before travelling to work in

foreign countries to prevent deception. Problem of homesick should be resolved by using communication technology. In case of language problem, non-verbal language or using translator of the spa was the solution. The suggestions for labor sector were to have the learning on language, religion, and culture before working in the UAE, and Thai masseuses should not perform any acts to disgrace Thai massage, particularly the act that related to prostitution.

### **4.3 Findings of Quantitative Research on the Satisfaction and Expectation Level of Customers Using Thai Spa Service in the United Arab Emirates**

For quantitative research, the researcher applied the accidental sampling to collect data, 170 customers who had used Thai spa service in Dubai. Sample group would complete the Self-administered questionnaire, which the questions were the general information about demographic characteristics, media perception behavior, satisfaction and expectation level of spa product and Thai spa service selection.

#### **4.3.1 General Information of Sample Group**

For general information of spa service users, the researcher applied descriptive statistics and data analysis using frequency and percentage.

**Table 4.18** General Information of Sample Group

<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender:</b>	
Male	50.5
Female	49.5
<b>Age (Year):</b>	
Lower than 20 Years old	7.5
20 – 30 Years old	40.6
31 – 40 Years old	35.8

**Table 4.18** (Continued)

<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
41 – 50 Years old	8.5
51 – 60 Years old	6.6
Over 60 years old	1.0
<b>Nationality:</b>	
UAE	79.2
The Middle East	10.4
Others	10.4
<b>Religion:</b>	
Islam	94.4
Christian	3.7
Buddhist	1.0
Bahai	0.9
<b>Education:</b>	
Under Bachelor's degree	18.2
Bachelor's degree	61.6
Master's degree	19.2
Doctoral Degree	1.0
<b>Occupation:</b>	
Student in High School	4.7
Student in Higher Education	10.3
Entrepreneur/Business owner	21.5
Employee in private company	11.2
Government officer	37.4
Housewife	14.0
Teacher/Professor	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.8 showed that from 107 people in the sample group, 50.5% were male and 49.5% were female. 40.6% of the respondents aged between 21-30 years old, followed by 31-40 years old (accounted for 35.8%), 41-50 years old (accounted for 8.5%), lower than 20 years old (accounted for 7.5%), 51-60 years old (accounted for 6.6%), and over 60 years old (accounted for 1.0%) respectively.

For the nationality, there were 13 nationalities of the respondents. Most of the respondents were from the UAE, accounting for 79.2%, followed by people for the Middle East, accounted for 10.4%, and other nationalities that accounted for 10.4%.

If classified by the nationality, Filipino was on the second rank, accounted for 3.7% while Indian and Omani were 2.8%, followed by Sudanese and Thai, accounted for 1.9%. The rest were Iranian, Lebanese, Morocco, Palestinian, Syrian, Algerian, and Somali, which accounted for 0.9%

For religion, most of respondents were Islam, accounted for 94.4%, followed by Christian, Buddhist, and Bahai, which accounted for 3.7%, 1.0%, and 0.9% respectively.

Information about education showed that most of them graduated from Bachelor's degree, accounted for 61.6%, followed by Master degree, 19.2%, lower Bachelor's degree, 18.2%, and Doctoral degree, 1.0%.

For occupation, it was found that most of them were government officer, accounted for 37.4%, followed by the entrepreneur/business owner, accounted for 21.5%, housewife, accounted for 14.0%, employee in private company, accounted for 11.20%, student in Higher Education, accounted for 10.30%, students in High School, accounted for 4.7%, and teacher/professor, accounted for 0.9%.

### 4.3.2 Media Perception Behavior of Thai Spa Products and Services Users

**Table 4.19** Media Perception Behavior of Thai Spa products and Services Users

<b>Media perception behavior</b>	<b>Types of media</b>	<b>Number of media users (Percentage)</b>
1. What type of media do	Radio	8.4

**Table 4.18** (Continued)

<b>Media perception behavior</b>	<b>Types of media</b>	<b>Number of media users (Percentage)</b>
the users learn about the public relations for Thai spa products and services?	TV	23.4
	Printing media	33.6
	Billboard	24.3
	Online media	41.1
	Word-of-mouth	47.7
2. What type of media do the users use to follow information about Thai spa products and services?	TV	19.6
	Printing media	7.5
	Billboard	2.8
	Online media	38.3
	Word-of-mouth	31.8
3. What type of media do the users of Thai spa products and services have an account?	Facebook	50.5
	Instagram	76.6
	Twitter	27.1
	Whatsapp	29.0
	Snapchat	4.7
4. How long the users of Thai spa products and services use the Social Media? (Day)	Less than 30 minutes	16.2
	30 minutes - 2 hours	42.9
	2 hours – 4 hours	24.8
	More than 5 hours	16.2

It was found that the users of Thai spa products and services had seen or heard about the public relations for Thai spa products and services via the word-of-mouth the most (47.7%), followed by online media (41.1%), printing media (33.6%), billboard (24.3%), TV (23.4%), and radio (8.4%).

The media perception behavior of Thai spa products and services users indicated that the users followed the information through online media the most (38.3%), followed by the word-of-mouth (31.8%), TV (19.6%), printing media (7.5%), and billboard (2.8%).

For social media use behavior of Thai spa products and services users, 76.60% had Instagram account, followed by Facebook (50%), Whatsapp (29.0%), Twitter (27.1%), and Snapchat (4.7%).

For social media using period per day, it was found that most users of Thai spa products and services spent time on social media 30minutes-2 hours (42.9%), followed by 2-4 hours (24.8%), less than 30 minutes and more than 5 hours (16.2%).

### 4.3.3 Satisfactions Towards Thai Spa Products and Services and the Expectation to the Influential Factor of Thai Spa Products and Services Selection

Analyze the satisfaction and expectation of Thai spa products and services users on spa products and services from Thailand using mean and standard deviation.

**Table 4.20** Satisfaction Towards Thai Spa Products

Variables	Mean (Interpretation)	Standard Deviation
1. Quality of products	4.28 (Extremely Satisfied)	.81
2. Packaging	3.85 (Very Satisfied)	.88
3. Product color	3.61 (Very Satisfied)	.91
4. Color of package	3.55 (Very Satisfied)	.92
5. Product reliability (Having standard certify)	4.11 (Very Satisfied)	.94
6. Reasonable price	3.71 (Very Satisfied)	1.00
7. Certified with Halal sign in consistent with religious principle	3.92 (Very Satisfied)	1.07
Mean	3.86 (Very Satisfied)	

The average satisfaction of the users towards quality of product was at 4.28, 3.85 for packaging, 3.61 for color of products, 3.55 for color of package, 4.11 for product reliability, 3.71 for reasonable price, and 3.92 for being certified with Halal sign in consistent with religious principle. The average satisfaction towards the overall aspects was at the high level at 3.86.

**Table 4.21** Satisfaction Towards Using Thai Spa Service

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean (Interpretation)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
1. Quality of Thai massage	4.57 (Extremely Satisfied)	.79
2. Manner of Thai massage	4.38 (Extremely Satisfied)	.92
3. Human relations of Thai masseuses	4.35 (Extremely Satisfied)	.91
4. Cleanness of Thai masseuse	4.37 (Extremely Satisfied)	.90
5. Communication/ Understanding between the service user and the masseuse	3.46 (Very Satisfied)	1.34
6. Appropriate price	3.78 (Very Satisfied)	.98
7. Halal service in consistent with religious principle	3.71 (Very Satisfied)	1.46
Mean	4.09 (Very Satisfied)	

The average satisfaction of the users towards the quality of Thai massage was at 4.57, the manner of Thai massage at 4.38, cleanness of Thai masseuse at 4.37, communication/Understanding between the service user and the masseuse at 3.46, appropriate price at 3.78, and Halal service in consistent with religious principle at 3.71. The average satisfaction towards the overall aspects was at the high level at 4.08.

**Table 4.22** Expectation of the Factors Affecting Thai Spa Products and Services Selection

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean (Interpretation)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
1. Cleanness of the venue	4.23 (Extremely Satisfied)	.94
2. Reliability of the image of Thai spa products and services	4.00 (Very Satisfied)	.97
3. Products and services convey Thainess	3.64 (Very Satisfied)	1.21
4. Quality of products and services	4.23 (Very Satisfied)	.80
5. Beauty and color of packaging	3.88 (Very Satisfied)	.88
6. Communication between the users and masseuse	3.71 (Very Satisfied)	.94
7. Uniform of Thai masseuse	3.76 (Very Satisfied)	1.05
8. Products have Halal sign according to religious principal	4.01 (Very Satisfied)	1.16

**Table 4.22** (Continued)

Variables	Mean (Interpretation)	Standard Deviation
9. Service is in accordance to Halal	3.75 (Very Satisfied)	1.34
10. Reasonable price for Thai spa products and services	3.88 (Very Satisfied)	1.10
Mean	3.91 (Very Satisfied)	

The average expectation of the users towards the quality of Thai massage on the cleanness of the venue was at 4.23, the reliability of the image of Thai spa products and services at 4.00, products and services convey Thainess at 3.64, the quality of products and services at 4.23, the beauty and color of packaging at 3.71, the uniform of Thai masseuse at 3.76, the service is in accordance to Halal at 4.01, the products have Halal sign according to religious principal at 3.75, the reasonable price for Thai spa products and services at 3.88. The average expectation of the overall aspects was at the high level at 3.91.

**Table 4.23** Mean of Satisfaction Towards Thai Spa Products and Services and Expectation of Factors Affecting Thai Spa Products and Services Selection

Variables	Mean (Interpretation)	Variables
1. Satisfaction towards Thai spa products (Mean)	3.86	.69

**Table 4.23** (Continued)

Variables	Mean (Interpretation)	Variables
2. Satisfaction towards Thai spa service (Mean)	4.09	.69
3. Expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection	3.91	.66
Mean	11.86	

The average satisfaction of the users towards Thai spa products was in moderate level, which the average of factors was at 3.86 and the satisfaction towards Thai spa service was in high level or good level with the average of factors at 4.09. Moreover, the users of Thai spa products and services had moderate level of expectation of Thai spa products and services with the average of factors at 3.91.

#### **4.3.4 Difference of Gender and Age Towards the Satisfaction and Expectation of the Use of Thai Spa Products and Services in the UAE**

Analyze and compare the difference of satisfaction and expectation of the spa users towards spa products and services from Thailand using T-test.

**Hypothesis 1** Different gender of spa users had different satisfaction level towards Thai spa products.

**Table 4.24** Different Gender and Satisfaction Level Towards Thai Spa Products

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value</b>
Male (N = 54)	3.80	.70	-1.5	.145
Female (N = 53)	3.97	.72		

From the basic test of data set on the satisfaction towards Thai spa products from male and female sample group with normal distribution, the research tested the level of satisfaction towards Thai spa products. Analysis result with independent t-test indicated that both sample groups had different satisfaction level towards Thai spa products without significance ( $t = 1.5$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .145$ ) at 95% of confidence level.

**Hypothesis 2** Different gender of service users had different satisfaction level towards Thai spa service

**Table 4.25** Different Gender and Satisfaction Level Towards Thai Spa Service

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value</b>
Male (N = 54)	3.95	.79	-2.09	.039
Female (N = 53)	4.23	.54		

From the basic test of data set on the satisfaction towards Thai spa service from male and female sample group with normal distribution, the research tested the level of satisfaction towards Thai spa service. Analysis result with independent t-test indicated that both sample groups had different satisfaction level towards Thai spa service significantly at 95% of confidence level. Female users had higher satisfaction than male users.

**Hypothesis 3** Different gender of spa users had different expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection

**Table 4.26** Difference of Gender and the Expectation of Factors Affecting Thai Spa Products and Services Selection

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value</b>
Male (N = 54)	3.74	.69	- 2.83	0.006
Female (N = 53)	4.09	.58		

From the basic test of data set on the expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection from male and female sample group with normal distribution, the research tested the level of expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection. Analysis result with independent t-test showed that both groups had different level of expectation of Thai spa products and services significantly ( $t = 2.83$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .006$ ) at 95% of confidence level. Female spa users had higher expectation of Thai spa products and services selection than male users.

**Hypothesis 4** Different gender of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards the Halal of Thai spa products

**Table 4.27** Difference of Gender and the Level of Satisfaction Towards Halal of Thai Spa Products

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value</b>
Male (N = 54)	3.89	1.16	- .353	.637
Female (N = 53)	3.96	.98		

From the basic test of data set on the satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa products from male and female sample group with normal distribution, the research tested the level of satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa products. Analysis result with independent t-test showed that both groups had different level of satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa products without significance ( $t = -.353$ ,  $P$  value = .637) at 95% of confidence level.

**Hypothesis 5** Different gender of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa service

**Table 4.28** Difference of Gender and the Level of Satisfaction Towards Halal of Thai Spa Service

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value</b>
Male (N = 54)	3.50	1.54	-1.58	.057
Female (N = 53)	3.94	1.36		

From the basic test of data set on the satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa service from male and female sample group with normal distribution, the research tested the level of satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa service. Analysis result with independent t-test showed that both groups had different level of satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa products without significance ( $t = -1.58$ ,  $P$  value = .057) at 95% of confidence level.

**Hypothesis 6** Different gender of spa users had different level of expectation of the Halal of Thai spa products

**Table 4.29** Difference of Gender and the Level of Expectation of the Halal of Thai Spa Products

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value</b>
Male (N = 54)	3.87	1.39	-1.33	.008
Female (N = 53)	4.17	.87		

From the basic test of data set on the expectation of Halal of Thai spa products from male and female sample group with normal distribution, the research tested the level of expectation of Halal of Thai spa products. Analysis result with independent t-test showed that both groups had different level of expectation of Halal of Thai spa products significantly ( $t = -1.33$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .008$ ) at 95% of confidence level. Female spa users had higher expectation of Halal of Thai spa products than male users.

**Hypothesis 7** Different gender of spa users had different level of expectation of the Halal of Thai spa service

**Table 4.30** Difference of Gender and the Level of Expectation of the Halal of Thai Spa Service

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P value</b>
Male (N = 54)	3.33	1.39	-3.46	.000
Female (N = 53)	4.12	.87		

From the basic test of data set on the expectation of Halal of Thai spa service from male and female sample group with normal distribution, the research tested the level of expectation of Halal of Thai spa service. Analysis result with

independent t-test showed that both groups had different level of expectation of Halal of Thai spa service significantly ( $t = -3.46$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .000$ ) at 95% of confidence level. Female spa users had higher expectation of Halal of Thai spa products than male users.

**Hypothesis 8** Different age of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa products

**Table 4.31** Different Age and Satisfaction Level Towards Thai Spa Products

Age	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	P value
30 Years old or lower	3.92	.60	.83	.411
Over 30 years old	3.81	.76		

From the basic test of data set on the satisfaction towards Thai spa products from the sample group aged 30 years old or lower and over 30 years old with normal distribution, the research tested the level of satisfaction towards Thai spa products. Analysis result with independent t-test indicated that both sample groups had different satisfaction level towards Thai spa products without significance ( $t = .83$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .411$ ) at 95% of confidence level.

**Hypothesis 9** Different age of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa service

**Table 4.32** Different Age and Satisfaction Level Towards Thai Spa Service

Age	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	P value
30 Years old or lower	4.10	.78	.145	.885
Over 30 years old	4.08	.61		

From the basic test of data set on the satisfaction towards Thai spa service from the sample group aged 30 years old or lower and over 30 years old with normal distribution, the research tested the level of satisfaction towards Thai spa service. Analysis result with independent t-test indicated that both sample groups had different satisfaction level towards Thai spa service without significance ( $t = .145$ , P value = .885) at 95% of confidence level.

**Hypothesis 10** Different age of spa users had different expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection

**Table 4.33** Different Age and Level of Expectation of Factors Affecting Thai Spa Products and Services Selection

Age	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	P value
30 Years old or lower	4.09	.66	2.74	.007
Over 30 years old	3.75	.62		

From the basic test of data set on the expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection from the sample group aged 30 years old or

lower and over 30 years old with normal distribution, the research tested the level of expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection. Analysis result with independent t-test indicated that both sample groups had different expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection significantly ( $t = 2.74$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .007$ ) at 95% of confidence level. The users aged 30 years old or lower had higher expectation of Thai spa products and services than those aged over 30 years old.

#### **4.3.5 Relationship between Nationality and Education Towards the Satisfaction and Expectation of the Use of Thai Spa Products and Services in the UAE**

Analyze the difference of satisfaction and expectation of the spa users using ANOVA (F-test)

**Hypothesis 11** Different education level of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa products

To analyze that the different education level of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa products, education level was classified into three levels: under Bachelor's degree, Bachelor's degree, and higher than Bachelor's degree.

**Table 4.34** Difference of Education Level and the Satisfaction Towards Thai Spa Products

<b>Education level</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P value</b>
Under Bachelor's degree	18	4.17	2.23	.113
Bachelor's degree	61	3.83		
Higher than Bachelor's degree	28	3.75		

Findings showed that the three sample groups had different satisfaction towards Thai spa products without significance ( $F = 2.23$ ,  $P$  value = .113) at 95% of confidence level.

**Hypothesis 12** Different education level of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa service

To analyze that the different education level of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa service, education level was classified into three levels: under Bachelor's degree, Bachelor's degree, and higher than Bachelor's degree.

**Table 4.35** Difference of Education Level and the Satisfaction Towards Thai Spa Service

Education level	Quantity	Mean	F	P value	Difference
Under Bachelor's degree	18	4.37	4.55*	.013	1 > 3
Bachelor's degree	61	4.15			2 > 3
Higher than Bachelor's degree	28	3.80			

Findings showed that the three sample groups had different satisfaction towards Thai spa service significantly ( $F = 4.55$ ,  $P$  value = .013) at 95% of confidence level.

Additional analysis from Post Hoc Tests table showed that the group of under Bachelor's degree and higher than Bachelor's degree had different satisfaction towards Thai spa service significantly. The group of under Bachelor's degree had higher satisfaction towards Thai spa service than the group of higher than

Bachelor's degree.

The group of Bachelor's degree and the group of higher than Bachelor's degree had different satisfaction towards Thai spa service significantly. The group of Bachelor's degree had higher satisfaction towards Thai spa service than the group of higher than Bachelor's degree.

**Hypothesis 13** Different education level of spa users had different level of expectation of Thai spa products and services selection

To analyze that the different education level of spa users had different level of expectation of Thai spa products and services selection, education level was classified into three levels: under Bachelor's degree, Bachelor's degree, and higher than Bachelor's degree.

**Table 4.36** Difference of Education Level and the Level of Expectation of Thai Spa Products and Services Selection

Education level	Quantity	Mean	F	P value	Difference
Under Bachelor's degree	18	4.22	6.04*	.003	1>3
Bachelor's degree	61	3.97			2>3
Higher than Bachelor's degree	28	3.59			

Findings showed that the three sample groups had different expectation of Thai spa products and services selection significantly ( $F = 6.03$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .003$ ) at 95% of confidence level.

Additional analysis from Post Hoc Tests table showed that the group of under Bachelor's degree and higher than Bachelor's degree had different expectation of Thai spa products and services selection significantly. The group of under Bachelor's degree had higher expectation of Thai spa products and services selection than the group of higher than Bachelor's degree.

The group of Bachelor's degree and the group of higher than Bachelor's degree had different expectation of Thai spa products and services selection significantly. The group of Bachelor's degree had higher expectation of Thai spa products and services selection than the group of higher than Bachelor's degree.

**Hypothesis 14** Different nationality of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa products

To analyze that the different nationality of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa products, nationality was classified into three groups: Emirates group, the Middle East group, and other nationalities.

**Table 4.37** Difference of Nationality and the Satisfaction Towards Thai Spa Products

Nationalities	Quantity	Mean	F	P value
Emirates	84	3.94	2.66	.075
The Middle East	11	3.44		
Others	11	3.82		

Findings showed that the three sample groups had different satisfaction towards Thai spa products without significance ( $F = 2.66$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .075$ ) at 95% of confidence level.

**Hypothesis 15** Different nationality of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa service

To analyze that the different nationality of spa users had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa service, nationality was classified into three groups: Emirates group, the Middle East group, and other nationalities.

**Table 4.38** Difference of Nationality and the Satisfaction Towards Thai Spa Service

Nationalities	Quantity	Mean	F	P value	Difference
Emirates	84	4.16	3.14*	.047	1 > 2
The Middle East	11	3.62			
Others	11	4.16			

Findings showed that the three sample groups had different satisfaction towards Thai spa service significantly ( $F = 3.14$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .047$ ) at 95% of confidence level.

Aadditional analysis from Post Hoc Tests table showed that the group of Emirates and the Middle East nationality had different satisfaction towards Thai spa service significantly. The group of Emirates had higher satisfaction towards Thai spa service than the group of higher than the Middle East.

**Hypothesis 16** Different nationality of spa users had different level of expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection

To analyze that the different nationality of spa users had level of expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection, nationality was classified into three groups: Emirates group, the Middle East group, and other nationalities.

**Table 4.39** Difference of Nationality and the Level of Expectation of Factors Affecting Thai Spa Products and Services Selection

Nationalities	Quantity	Mean	F	P value
Emirates	84	3.97	2.79	.066
The Middle East	11	3.48		
Others	11	3.98		

Findings showed that the three sample groups had no difference of expectation of factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection significantly ( $F = 2.79$ ,  $P$  value = .066) at 95% of confidence level.

The quantitative research data was collected with 107 sets of questionnaire from 107 respondents, 54 males and 53 females. The respondents aged 21-30 years old (35.80%) were the main group of respondents, followed by aged 41-50 years old (8.50%), under 20 years old (7.50%), aged 51-60 years old (6.50%), and over 60 years old (1.00%), respectively. There were 13 nationalities of the respondents, which Emirates was the main group of respondents (79.20%), from the Middle East (10.4%), and other nationalities (10.4%). For the religion, most of respondents were Islam (94.40%), followed by Christianity (3.70%), Buddhism (1.00%), and Bahai (0.90%), respectively. Most respondents graduated from Bachelor's degree (61.60%), followed by Master's degree (19.20%), under Bachelor's degree (18.20%), and Doctoral degree (1.00%). Most of them were government officer (37.40%), followed by the entrepreneur/business owner (21.50%), housewife (14.00%), employee in private company (11.20%), students in Higher Education (10.30%), students in High School (4.70%), and teacher/professor (0.90%).

In addition, information from questionnaire concluded the behavior on media perception of the sample group. Most of the sample group had seen or heard the public relations about Thai spa products and services from the word-of-mouth the most (47.70%), followed by online media (41.10%), printing media (33.60%), billboard (24.30%), TV (23.40%), and radio (8.40%). Besides, it was found that the users of Thai spa products and services followed the information from online media the most (38.30%), followed by the word-of-mouth (31.80%), TV (19.60%), printing media (7.50%), and billboard (2.80%). For the social media use behavior of the users of Thai spa products and services, it was found that the users had the account of Instagram the most (76.60%), followed by Facebook (50.50%), Whatsapp (29.00%), Twitter (27.10%), and Snapchat (4.70%). For the time spending on Social Media per day, it was found that most users of Thai spa products and services spent time on social media for 30mins-2 hrs (42.90%), 2 hrs-4 hrs (24.80%), less than 30 mins and more than 5 hrs were equal (16.20%).

Regarding the satisfaction towards Thai spa products, it was found that the satisfaction towards the quality of spa products was in the highest level (4.28%), the packaging was in high level (3.85%), the color of products was in high level (3.61%), the color of package was in high level (3.55%), the reliability of products was in high level (4.11%), the reasonable price was in high level (3.71%), and the products with Halal certify based on religious principle was in high level (3.92%). Regarding the satisfaction towards Thai spa service, it was found that the users had the satisfaction towards the quality of Thai massage in the highest level (4.57%), manner of Thai massage in high level (4.38%), human relations of the masseuse in the highest level (4.35%), the cleanness of masseuses in the in the highest level (4.37%), the communication/understanding between the service users and masseuse in high level (3.46%), the reasonable price in the high level (3.78%), and Halal service in consistent with religious principle in the high level (3.71). For the level of expectation of the factors affecting the use of Thai spa products and services, it was found that the highest expectation of Thai spa products and services users in UAE was on the cleanness of venue at 4.23%, the high expectation of the reliability of Thai spa products and services at 4.00%, the high expectation of products and services representing Thainess at 3.64%, the high expectation of quality of products and services at 4.23%, the high expectation of the beauty and color of package at 3.88%, the high expectation of communication between the users and masseuse at 3.71%, the high expectation on the uniform of the masseuse at 3.76%, the high expectation of products with Halal at 4.01%, the high expectation of Halal service at 3.75 %, and the high expectation on the reasonable price of Thai spa products and services at 3.88%.

From the comparison of the difference between male and female and the satisfaction towards Thai spa products, it was found that both groups had different level of satisfaction towards Thai spa product without significance ( $t = 1.5$ ,  $P$  value = .145). The analysis of the difference between gender and the satisfaction towards Thai spa service showed that both group had the different mean of satisfaction towards Thai spa service significantly ( $t = 2.09$ ,  $P$  value = .039) female had higher satisfaction towards Thai spa products than male. The analysis of the difference between gender and the expectation of Thai spa products and services selection showed that both group had different mean of expectation significantly ( $t = 2.83$ ,  $P$  value = .006) female

had higher expectation than male. The analysis of the difference between gender and the satisfaction towards Halal in Thai spa products showed that the satisfaction of male and female was different without significance ( $t = -.353$ ,  $P$  value = .637) female had higher satisfaction towards Halal in Thai spa products than male. The analysis of the difference between gender and the satisfaction towards Halal in Thai spa service showed that the satisfaction of male and female was different without significance ( $t = -1.58$ ,  $P$  value = .057) female had higher satisfaction towards Halal in Thai spa service than male. The analysis of the difference between gender and the expectation of Halal in Thai spa products showed that male and female had significant difference of expectation of Halal in Thai spa products ( $t = -1.33$ ,  $P$  value = .008) female had higher expectation of Halal in Thai spa products than male. The analysis of the difference between gender and the expectation of Halal in Thai spa service showed that there was significant different between male and female expectation ( $t = -3.46$ ,  $P$  value = .000) female had higher expectation of Halal in Thai spa service than male. The analysis of the difference between the group of 30 years old or lower and the group of over 30 years old and the satisfaction towards Thai spa products indicated that both group had different satisfaction without significance ( $t = .83$ ,  $P$  value = .411). The analysis of the difference between age and the satisfaction towards Thai spa service indicated that both group had different satisfaction without significance ( $t = .145$ ,  $P$  value = .885). The analysis of the difference between age and the expectation of the factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection indicated that both group had significant different expectation ( $t = 2.74$ ,  $P$  value = .007) the group of 30 years old or lower had higher expectation than the group of over 30 years old.

The analysis on the difference of education level of spa users and the satisfaction towards Thai spa products classifying the education into three levels: under Bachelor's degree, Bachelor's degree, and higher than Bachelor's degree showed that all three sample groups had different satisfaction towards Thai spa products without significance ( $F = 2.23$ ,  $P$  value = .113). The analysis on the difference of education level of spa users and the satisfaction towards Thai spa service indicated that all three sample groups had significant different satisfaction towards Thai spa service ( $F = 4.55$ ,  $P$  value = .013). Additional analysis from Post Hoc Tests table showed that the group of under Bachelor's degree and the group of higher than

Bachelor's degree had significant different satisfaction. The group of under Bachelor's degree had higher satisfaction towards Thai spa service than the group of higher than Bachelor's degree. The group of Bachelor's degree and the group of higher than Bachelor's degree had significant different satisfaction the group of Bachelor's degree had higher satisfaction towards Thai spa service than the group of higher than Bachelor's degree. The analysis on the difference of education level of spa users and the expectation of the factors affecting Thai spa and products selection showed that all three groups had significant different expectation ( $F = 6.04$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .003$ ). Additional analysis from Post Hoc Tests table showed that the group of under Bachelor's degree and the group of higher than Bachelor's degree had significant different expectation of the factors affecting Thai spa and products selection. The group of Bachelor's degree had higher expectation of the factors affecting Thai spa and products the group of higher than Bachelor's degree. The group of Bachelor's degree and the group of higher than Bachelor's degree had significant different expectation the group of Bachelor's degree had higher expectation of the factors affecting Thai spa and products than the group of higher than Bachelor's degree. The analysis on the difference of nationality of spa users and the satisfaction towards Thai spa products classifying nationality into three groups: Arab Emirates, nationalities in the Middle East, and other nationalities showed that all three groups had different satisfaction towards Thai spa products without significance ( $F = 2.66$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .75$ ). The analysis on the difference of nationality of spa users and the satisfaction towards Thai spa service indicated that the three sample groups had significant different satisfaction ( $F = 3.14$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .047$ ). Additional analysis from Post Hoc Tests table showed that the group of Arab Emirates and the group of nationalities in the Middle East had significant different satisfaction towards Thai spa service the group of Arab Emirates had higher satisfaction than the group of nationalities in the Middle East. The analysis on the difference of nationality of spa users and the expectation of the factors affecting Thai spa and products indicated that the three sample groups had different expectation without significance ( $F = 2.79$ ,  $P \text{ value} = .066$ ).

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

From the findings obtained from document research, in-depth interview, and questionnaire, the researcher presents all the findings based on the following aspects.

5.1 Marketing communications of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates and the current communication innovation

5.2 Religious and cultural context and marketing communication of Thai spa business in the United Arab Emirates

5.3 Strategies for Thai spa business development in the United Arab Emirates

#### **5.1 Marketing Communications of Thai Spa Business in the United Arab Emirates and the Current Communications Innovation**

In order to design the international marketing communications, it is necessary that the communicator should study the influential information of purchasing or using service. Worawan Ongkrutraksa (2010, p. 15) presented in Introduction to Marketing that the factors that the marketing communicator should study are 1) Demographic characteristics, 2) Economic factor, 3) Politics and law, 4) Geographic characteristics, and 5) Cultural factors. All five factors are the main factors of marketing communications.

The research from documents relating to all five factors for marketing plan planning for export Thai spa product to the UAE were studied. Thai spa services in the UAE could analyze the influential factors affecting marketing communications planning as discussed in the following section.

5.1.1 Regarding the demographic characteristic in the UAE, population rate increases constantly. In 2006, there were only 4.88 million people in UAE. In 2014, there were 9.45 million people (World Bank, 2014). The main reason is the migration of foreign people to work in the UAE. The main age range of people was the working

age, 25-54 years or 61.5% of the entire population. The demographics analysis indicated that the continual increase of population and the age range of population were the main drivers of the use of products for beauty and recreation, including the use of spa service for relaxation. Similarly, the information of Research and Markets (2012) revealed that people in UAE had a hasty working life, so people were stressful. This was the reason why people were interested in spa massage. Moreover, more and more Muslim females were engaged in work so they would like to take care of themselves, both for health and beauty.

5.1.2 From the analysis on economic factors in the UAE by analyzing the research findings of GDP, GNP per capita, and GNP, it was found that the numbers constantly increased since 2010-2014. GDP of 2010 was at 286.0 billion USD and 399.5 billion USD in 2014. GNP per capita of 2010 was at 34,341 USD and 43,962 USD in 2014. Besides, GNP had increased 34,140 USD in 2010 and 44,600 USD in 2014. With this increasing revenue of the population in the UAE, they spent more money for fulfill their need such as for beauty and recreation. Additionally, information of Research and Markets (2012) revealed that 21% of people in the UAE spent money for health care and beauty for 367-734 AED or about 3,600-7,300 THB per month and 735-1,100 AED or 7,300-11,000 THB per month (6%).

5.1.3 The analysis on the economic factors of city development of the UAE showed that it was the supportive factor of spa products export and spa business. This was because the UAE had developed major cities continuously such as Abu Dhabi and important port such as Dubai. There was the plan to construct more department stores and hotels, particularly in 2020 that Dubai would host the World Expo. The UAE government planned 12 projects of city development. Each project would attract numbers of tourists to Dubai. In 2020, there would be new department stores and hotel construction where spa business would be located as well. From the analysis on this factor, it could be seen that city development would be useful for Thai spa products export and Thai spa business.

5.1.4 The analysis in political situation in the UAE indicated that it had high political stability comparing to other countries in the Middle East. Moreover, the current UAE government had high acceptance from the people. Likewise, the information of Research and Markets (2012) presented that the result of Arab Spring,

or revolts in the Middle East, obstructed the countries that were facing the political problem to welcome the tourists who travelled to the region. Thus, the UAE had more numbers of tourists and those used more spa services. In addition, the UAE government had the policy for friendly economic investment and development, both domestic and international investment. As result, more and more UAE as well as foreign investors made more investment.

5.1.5 The analysis on the UAE legal factor found that Codes of law and Sharia Law, which were strict laws, were practical. Thus, the entrepreneurs should study relevant legal systems for business. For instance, to operate spa business, the service should be separated for male and female customers and prostitution business was prohibited. Consequently, law of spa business operations was directly related to Sharia Law. For example, the massage room should not be closed so the outsiders could observe the service, or the light should not be too dim. The exporter should study export laws and relevant laws to the ingredients and packaging design. Moreover, the entrepreneurs of spa business in the UAE should learn more about the law relating to spa business establishing, spa service, and spa staff employment.

5.1.6 The analysis on geography indicated that the UAE, particularly Dubai, was the domestic products distribution and the hub to other regions such as the countries in the Middle East and Africa. Most products were distributed via the two ports in Dubai. Therefore, the spa products exporter transported the products by ship. Besides, as there were only two seasons in UAE, summer and winter, Thai workers should prepare themselves for the weather as well, especially the summer that has very high temperature during May-September sometimes reaching 50°C. In regards to the high temperature, the entrepreneurs should pay attention about this issue since the texture of some products such as balm might melt in the heat. Thus, some Thai entrepreneurs modified the texture to liquid such as Phlai Oil that had been developed from balm.

5.1.7 The analysis of the cultural factor showed that most cultures were based from Islam beliefs. The entrepreneurs had to have deep understanding on this issue in order to facilitate business. Cultures affected spa products export. For instance the packaging should not have female image on and the products should not mix with lard or alcohol as it violated religious principle. Moreover, culture that affected spa

business was that the zoning for male and female customers, and the police efforts to wipe out prostitution. Arab language was the main language used in spa business. However, English was widely accepted and used on products such as English label and in communications.

Moreover, the study on the Fifth Ring (2012) pointed out the important characteristics of spa business operation in the UAE that business culture emphasized on “people centric”. Business be based on trust, familiarity, and relationship building. Therefore, operating business in the UAE must be based on trust to build reliability. In addition there must be the understanding of culture to design packaging and service to respond to the need of customers. Moreover, personal relationship building was the main factor of operating business. Thus, connection was very important for business in the UAE.

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**Figure 5.1** Three Main Factors of Business Pperation in the UAE

**Source:** Fifth Ring (2012).

The analysis showed that five factors in seven aspects affected the international marketing communications planning for Thai spa products and services in the UAE. The factors are 1) demographic characteristics, 2) economic factor, 3) politics and law, 4) geographic characteristics, and 5) cultural factors. Apart from the above 5 factors, it was undeniable that the extensive use of online media and social

media was another factor affecting international marketing communications planning. Therefore, the information of communication pattern of the target group was another factors the marketing communicator should study and plan the public relations plan to approach the target group. The model of factors affecting the international marketing communication planning is illustrated in the following figure.



**Figure 5.2** Model of Factors Affecting the International Marketing Communications Planning

When analyzing the findings from qualitative research obtained from the in-depth interview with the experts in marketing communications for Thai spa products and services public relations in the UAE, it was found that the public relations of Thai government sector by DIPT promoted products by setting the booth in the fair and expo such as Gulf Beauty Global Village and Beauty World Middle East, and the advertising on TV through Al Jazeera channel. For private sector, Thai entrepreneurs promoted the products using Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) such as advertised on magazine, through word-of-mouth (by Thai labor who work in the UAE), via online media such as website, Facebook, and Beauty World Middle East.

For Thai spa service sector in the UAE, there was the public relations by government sector via Royal Thai Embassy in Abu Dhabi, and the distribution of brochure to introduce Thai massage, on the printing media by TAT. For private sector, there was the public relations using Integrated Marketing (IMC) such as setting the booth at Global Village, advertising on newspaper, word-of-mouth (develop the service to impress customer or offer new promotions), and advertising via online media such as website, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, and Whatsapp.

**Table 5.1** Model of Marketing Communications of Government and Private Sector in Promoting Thai Spa Products and Services in UAE

<b>Products</b>	<b>Service</b>
<b>Government Sector</b>	<b>Government Sector</b>
1. Public relations in trade fair and expo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gulf Beauty</li> <li>- Beauty World Middle East</li> <li>- Global Village</li> </ul> 2. Public relations via TV. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Al Jazeera channel</li> </ul>	1. Public relations via print media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brochure introducing Thai massage and spa</li> </ul>

**Table 5.1** (Continued)

<b>Private Sector</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>
1. Public relations in trade fair and expo - Gulf Beauty	1. Public relations in trade fair and expo - Global Village
2. Product development for word-of-mouth	2. Service/Promotion development for word-of-mouth
3. Public relations via print media - Magazine	3. Public relations via print media - Local newspaper
4. Public relations via online media - Website - Facebook	4. Public relations via online media - Website - Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp

When analyzing the media perception behavior, the customers of Thai spa products and services had been seen or heard about Thai spa products and services via word-of-mouth the most (47.0%), followed by online media (41.10%). When analyzing the behavior on information following up, the customers of Thai spa products and services followed the information from online media the most (38.30%), followed by the word-of-mouth (31.80%). The study on the use of social media behavior, found that the users of Thai spa products and services used Instagram the most (76.60%), followed by Facebook (50.50%). Besides, the users used Whatsapp and Twitter for 29.00% and 27.10% respectively. Moreover, some used Snapchat (4.70%). The average time spending on social media was 30 mins-2 hrs. per day.

**Table 5.2** Table of Media Perception Behavior and the Use of Online Media of the Users of Thai Spa Products and Services in the UAE

<b>Media Perception Behavior</b>	<b>Online Media Use Behavior</b>
Rank 1 Online media	Rank 1 Instagram
Rank 2 Word-of-mouth	Rank 2 Facebook
Rank 3 TV	Rank 3 Whatsapp
Rank 4 Printing media	Rank 4 Twitter
Rank 5 Billboard	Rank 5 Snapchat

The analysis in the factors for planning marketing communication for Thai spa products and services in the UAE provides guideline for implementation of IMC. From both qualitative research and quantitative study with the users of Thai spa products and services, the findings were correlated. The entrepreneurs used online media and word-of-mouth as the main communication channel while the customers received the information via online media and word-of-mouth the most. The most used online media was Instagram. Anyhow, to plan the marketing communications to approach the target group effectively, the entrepreneurs should analyze other factors proposed earlier in order to make the communications successful in communicating to the target group.

## **5.2 Religious and Cultural Context and Marketing Communications for Thai Spa Products and Services in the UAE**

Though the UAE is an open country for technology and modern sciences, people in the UAE slowly learn about the health care and beauty because of the religious restriction. Sometimes the advancement of goods and beauty products was against the religious principle (Gulf Businee Consulting, 2012, p. 12). Therefore, it is necessary that the entrepreneurs learn about the influence of religion and culture in

the UAE that affect the spa business.

The discussion in the religious and cultural context and marketing communications for Thai spa business in the UAE is based on the results of the study on documents, in-depth interview, and quantitative study of the products users. The findings can be classified into two aspects: 1) the overall of religious and cultural influences in the UAE affecting Thai spa products and services, and 2) the expectation of the importance of Halal of Thai spa products and services in the UAE.

The study of the documents and in-depth interview regarding the factors affecting the planning of international marketing communications in the UAE found that religion was a major factor affecting the achievement of the business goal. This is because of the different religion and culture influencing Thai spa products export and service. The issues are concluded in the following section.

### **5.2.1 The Overall Analysis of Religious and Cultural Influences in the UAE Affecting Thai Spa Products and Services**

#### **5.2.1.1 Religious and Cultural Context Relating to Thai Spa Products Export in the UAE**

As it was known that the UAE is a Muslim country, where alcohol and animal ingredients are prohibited according to the Halal principle. Muslim consumers are unable to use such products. Thus, the entrepreneurs should export natural spa products without alcohol and ingredients from animals. Moreover, religion and culture have influences on the packaging design. For instance there should not be female or animal image on the package as it is against the religious principle.

Although some spa products in the UAE are natural products and did not contain ingredients from animal, they still need to apply for Halal sign to assure the customers, despite the fact that it is not the regulation from the UAE government.

Spa entrepreneur and spa products exporter in the UAE suggested that for the 100% natural spa products, it was unnecessary to request for Halal sign. Some customers in the UAE who operated hotel and spa business would order only Thai spa products that showed Halal sign.

The Thai government sector such as National Innovation Agency considered that Halal sign could help to increase value of Thai spa products and the

confidence on spa products. DITP agreed that having Halal sign on spa products would assure some customers the accordance with religious principle while confused other customers as the products were presented as 100% natural but still had Halal sign.

#### 5.2.1.2 Religious and Cultural Context Relating to Thai Spa Service in the UAE

The service of spa business should be separated for male and female customers and female masseuse would only service female customers while male masseuse serviced male customers only. Moreover, the spas in some cities such as Abu Dhabi would determine that they only serviced either male or female customers.

According to the law of the UAE government, the masseuses should have certificate before travelling to work in the spa in the UAE. With this reason, there were large numbers of people came to learn Thai massage for beauty and for treatment. As a result, the massage schools should provide knowledge for students who were going to work in the UAE about Arab religion and culture, as it was different from those in Thailand. Some schools had Muslim teachers to instruct the students before travelling.

Anyhow, although Thai massage is very popular in UAE, the image of Thai masseuses on gender matter was negative. This was because male and female Thai masseuses had a sexual trade besides massage service. Moreover, some male masseuses were likely to become homosexual, which was prohibited in Islam. Additionally, there were some Chinese spas, which claimed as Thai spa that had prostitution issue. As a result, the UAE government agency legislated the law to prevent and control the prostitution in spa business.

Needless to say Thai entrepreneurs of Thai spa products and services who would operate Thai spa business in the UAE should study the influence of religion and culture before operating business to facilitate marketing planning and business management.

### 5.2.2 The Expectation of the Importance of Halal of Thai Spa Products and Services in the UAE

The quantitative research on the satisfaction and expectation of Halal of Thai spa products and services found that male and female customers who used spa products and services had similar satisfaction and expectation of Halal of Thai spa products and services. It implies that most customers trusted and were satisfied with spa products and services from Thailand that they were in consistent with religious principle in acceptable level. However, for the expectation of Halal of Thai spa products and services, it was found that female customers had higher expectation than male customers. Besides, the mean of satisfaction and expectation level of Halal of spa products and services in the UAE showed that male had lower expectation of Halal of Thai spa products and services than the satisfaction level. On the other hand, female customers had higher expectation level of Halal of spa products and services than the satisfaction level as presented in the following table.

**Table 5.3** Table Showing the Mean of Satisfaction and Expectation of Halal of Thai Spa

<b>Gen</b>	<b>Satisfaction/Expectation</b>	<b>Mean of satisfaction/expectation</b>		
Male	Halal of Thai spa product	3.89	>	3.87
Female	Halal of Thai spa product	3.96	<	4.17
Male	Halal of Thai spa service	3.50	>	3.33
Female	Halal of Thai spa service	3.94	<	4.12

Although the mean of satisfaction towards Halal of Thai spa products and services and the expectation of Halal of Thai spa products and services was different without significance, the different mean of satisfaction and expectation of Halal of

Thai spa products and services, especially the expectation of the consistence with religious principle, of male customers implied that they gave less precedence to the Halal of products and services. This might be the signal of the change of cultural structure in the UAE.

From the concept of the Toronto School about the change of communications technology affecting social and cultural change, it was believed that communication technology caused cultural and social change, new social movement, and social structure. Moreover, the key thinker of Toronto School, Harold Innis suggested that communication technology changed the overall culture. Besides, Marshall McLuhan stated that if communications technology changed, the individual changed as well. The impact of the change of social institute resulted from the communications technology such as the use of new technology caused the reduced interaction within family, as could be seen nowadays (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2010). Moreover, the clash of civilization concept, which was the main concept of Huntington (1993), the author of “The Clash of Civilization”, presented the main idea mentioning Islam clashing with the west. After the Cold War, Islam had been watched closely and presented as having violent conflicts with the west. Huntington suggested that the use of communications technology creatively would help people to better understand other cultures and civilization. However, if communications technology was used for religious purposes, it might cause the clash of civilization.

The study on the society of the UAE revealed that the UAE expanded rapidly and had great development in innovation and technologies, as well as the sciences. Communications technology was one of the great developments in the UAE. Research results of Arab Social Media Report (2015) found that the use of social media of people in the countries in Arab region forced the Arabs to have less interaction with family and friends. Social media also had impact on religion and culture because the Muslims were likely to do fewer prays. Furthermore, another negative impact of social media was that it led the Arabs to behave against religious principle such as showing the face of woman on social media. Moreover, social media caused more divorce.

In short, the concept of Toronto School and Huntington indicated that the development of communications technology in the globalization affected either

negative or positive cultural impact. For the positive impact, there was the learning of culture of each nation. In contrast, communications technology created conflicts or the effacement of some cultures, as could be seen from the development of communication technology in the UAE. Also, being an open city for foreign tourists might affect the decreasing expectation of Halal or the lower consistency with religion of Thai spa products and services, as well as the inconsistency with the Halal of Thai spa products and services.

### **5.3 Strategy for the Development of Thai Spa Business in the UAE**

To design the strategy for the development of Thai spa business in the UAE the entrepreneur of products and services may have different paths depending on their capability, knowledge, proficiency, and the identity of the products and services. Thus, to discuss the strategy for the development of Thai spa in the UAE five components would be analyzed: 1) the comparison between the findings and the guideline for Thai spa business development of Ministry of Public Health (2015); 2) SWOT Analysis of Thai spa products and services in the UAE; 3) the study on the rake of satisfaction of customers towards Thai spa products and services; 4) the study on the rank of expectation of Thai spa products and services selection; and 5) suggestions from customers to improve Thai spa products and services.

From the manual of spa business of Ministry of Public Health (2015), it suggested the strategy for the development of spa business in six aspects: 1) strategy for customer service 2) strategy for service; 3) strategy for system service; 4) customer operation system; 5) employee operation system; and 6) customers and employees. These aspects include components and factors of operations along with the guideline for Thai spa business development as follows:

**Table 5.4** Guideline for Spa Business Development

<b>Components</b>	<b>Factors</b>	<b>Guideline for development</b>
1. Strategy for customer service	- Set clear business path and target group	- The executive should analyze and make decision on the management path and pattern, as well as the set the clear target group.
	- Set the method of customer satisfaction measurement	- Develop criteria and factors of measuring the satisfaction of the customers to suit the customer group.
2. Strategy for employee service	- Participation and communications with employees	- The entrepreneurs should consider the promotion of participation and communications with employees in business both formal and informal pattern.
	- Development of employee potential	- Determine the details of human resource development of each level clearly.
3. Strategy for system service	- Development of customer database for operation development	- Apply software to manage customers' information and analyze the need of customer constantly.
	- System improvement for the constant development of customer service	- Set the system for management development using modern management concept to promote work constantly.

**Table 5.4** (Continued)

Components	Factors	Guideline for development
4. Strategy for customer operation system	- Set measure of service	- Determine clear work procedure and explain the operational standard of activity to the employees of all levels.
	- Complaint record system	- Have a meeting and present the information, suggestion, and complaints from customer to find the solution or inform the solution to employees.
5. Strategy for employee operation system	- Skills evaluation system	- Identify the skills and potential for each type of work, and determine the evaluation method, as well as the training for employees.
	- Human resources development planning	- Set the policy of advancement and the time to develop the potential of employees.
6. Customers and employees	- Development of work rotation system	- Support employees to work in other field, especially in the relevant and close to the responsible regular work to encourage them, including support the overall operation to reach the standard and be efficient.

From the study of the literature review on the documents, in-depth interview, and the quantitative study of the users of Thai spa products and services in the UAE, it was found that the development of Thai spa lacked of the following components:

1) The format of customer satisfaction measurement

Thai spa products and services lacked of the format of customer satisfaction measurement so the entrepreneur provided the service or policy to increase the satisfaction of customer in overall aspects rather than the policy for the specific customer group.

2) Participation and communications with employees

In most of service sector, the owner of the spa did not have communications with employees to develop the service policy. Most of the communications were commands for action. Thus, there was the misunderstanding between the owner of business and the employees because of the lack of communications. To allow the employees to have participation and suggesting the opinion would make them feel they belong to the organization so they work efficiently and have loyalty to organization. This would directly affect the satisfaction of customers.

3) Development of customers database for developing work procedures

The study showed that Thai spa service lacked of the development of customers' database for developing the work process system because of the limitation of human resources. The Spa Manager did not have time to query the information from the customer to arrange the database. As a result, they could not analyze the need of customers or had insufficient information for public relations or creating promotion for customers.

Apart from the factors that might be the guideline for the development of Thai spa business in the UAE, operating spa business in the UAE had the difference in language, religion, and culture comparing to Thailand. Although the UAE had high purchasing power and labor employment from Thailand, Thai entrepreneurs lacked of information of business and the development of strategy for Thai spa business. With this reason, Thai entrepreneurs should study the strengths, weaknesses, opportunity, and threat of spa business. Moreover, the study focused on the factors affecting the decision making on Thai spa products and services selection in order to develop the most efficient strategy for Thai spa business operation in the UAE.

From the literature review on documents, in-depth interview, and quantitative study of the users of Thai spa products and services in the UAE, strengths,

weaknesses, opportunity, and threat of Thai spa products and services could be analyzed as follows:

**Table 5.5** SWOT Analysis of Thai Spa Products and Services in the UAE

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thai spa products were reliable in the UAE.</li> <li>- Thai products were outstanding in terms of natural and herbal products.</li> <li>- Exporting products to the UAE covered the lower, middle, and upper market.</li> <li>- In overall, Thai spa had readiness of production resources and human resources.</li> <li>- Thai service providers were outstanding in the manner, and friendliness for providing service.</li> <li>- Thailand had standard massage schools that provided the certificate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Packaging design and color of packaging should be beautiful and consistent with religious principles.</li> <li>- The lack of testability system of Halal sign issue.</li> <li>- Illegal travelling of Thai masseuses.</li> <li>- Problem of fake certificate of Thai massage schools.</li> <li>- The lack of English or Arab using skills of Thai masseuses.</li> <li>- The illegal acts such as prostitution in Thai spa.</li> <li>- Negative image of Thai masseuses.</li> <li>- Problem of cost that was the obstacle to Thai spa entrepreneur to make the investment to expand to foreign countries while the foreign countries needed Thai spa products and services.</li> <li>- The lack of knowledge and understanding of religion and culture to perform business in the UAE.</li> </ul>

**Table 5.5** (Continued)

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trend of health care with natural products and alternative medicine in the UAE so there is the need for Thai spa products and services.</li> <li>- Dubai is the port to distribute products to other countries in the Middle East, including Africa, so Thai entrepreneur can expand business to other region.</li> <li>- From the high rate of working age people and increasing number of female working outside, people are more likely to use products for beauty and recreation.</li> <li>- The UAE organizes trade fairs and expos about spa and beauty products regularly.</li> <li>- Development of communications technology facilitates the international marketing and save public relations cost.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-continuity of spa products export promotion project of the Thai government.</li> <li>- Strict rule and regulation of export of the UAE government.</li> <li>- Delay of import registration.</li> <li>- Spa business that had not been operated by Thai entrepreneurs and no Thai masseuses in the spa that claimed to use Thai spa name.</li> <li>- New regulation of Thai massage learning period and the test for Thai masseuse of the UAE government agency.</li> <li>- Price negotiation of spa customer who had been in Thailand and expected the similar price.</li> <li>- Conflicts of work between Thai and foreign staff.</li> <li>- Increasing competitors affected the lowering of price by the manufacturers so there was the problem of product standard and service control.</li> <li>- The unstable income as it depending on the travel of foreigners and world economic situation affecting the spa owners.</li> </ul>

From the quantitative study regarding the factor of expectation of spa products service selection, it was found that the customers expected the factors discussed in the following section.

**Table 5.6** Table Showing the Rank of Factors Affecting the Expectation of Customer to Use Thai Spa Products and Services in the UAE

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Factors affecting the expectation of customers</b>
1.	Cleanliness of spa venue and the quality of Thai spa products and services.
2.	Halal of Thai spa products, without the ingredients of animals based on religious principle.
3.	Reliability and image of Thai spa products and services.
4.	Beauty and color of packaging
5.	Uniform of Thai masseuses
6.	Halal service zoning: separating for male and female
7.	Communication between Thai masseuses and the service users
8.	Products and services convey Thainess.

Furthermore, from the suggestion in the quantitative study, it was found that the users of Thai spa products and services suggested the following advice for improving Thai spa products and services.

1) Having public relations on the factual information. The actual products should be distributed to the customers as sometimes the products had been advertised but not placed in the market.

2) Spa should have separated zoning

The spa should have separate service zone for male and female customers, start from the entrance for male and female customers.

3) Spa should improve the equipment used in the venue

Only white towel should be used and more chairs for the waiting customers should be provided.

4) Spa should create the relaxing atmosphere

Light and soft music should be opened during the massage and used the appropriate light: not too dark or bright. Also, the decoration should be luxurious.

5) The price should be decreased.

6) More branches should be operated in the UAE.

7) UAE government should support Thai spa business to support the increasing number of tourists travelling to the UAE.

In short, the conclusion was summarized mainly from the five components: 1) the comparison of the findings and the guideline for the development of spa business of Ministry of Public Health (2015); 2) SWOT Analysis of Thai spa products and services in the UAE; 3) the study on the level of satisfaction and expectation of the customers towards Thai spa products and services; 4) the study on the factors affecting the expectation of Thai spa products and services selection; and 5) suggestions from the customers on the improvement of Thai spa products and services. With these, it revealed that the guideline for the development of spa business required the support from the government, private, and labor sector for the sustainable and efficient development. In order to set the strategy for spa business, it depends on the capability, knowledge, and proficiency of the entrepreneurs, as well as the identity of products and services they would like to present. Therefore, the entrepreneur was the key person who had to study the five components mentioned above to design the appropriate strategy for the development of spa business.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the research “International Marketing Communications: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and services in the United Arab Emirates” which applied mixed method to study literature reviews, documents, and in-depth interview to obtain the required information to answer the research objectives. The researcher summarized and presents the main conclusions in the following section.

#### **6.1 International Marketing Communications of Thailand for Thai Spa Products and Services Export in the UAE**

Marketing communications in product sector by the government sector was done through trade fairs and expos such as Gulf Beauty, Beauty World Middle East and Global Village. Besides, there have been public relations via TV on Al Jazeera channel. In private sector, Integrated Marketing Communications or IMC was used via the expo such as Beauty World Middle East. Moreover, the product development was done through word-of-mouth, advertising on magazine, and online media.

For Thai spa service business, Thai government promoted the brochure to advertise Thai spa and massage arranged by TAT and distributed to the visitors at Royal Thai Embassy in Abu Dhabi. It was found that IMC was implemented as well by attending the expo such as Global Village. Moreover, there was the service development of the spread of word of mouth, advertising on print media such as newspaper and via online media such as website, Facebook Instagram Whatsapp, and Google+

## **6.2 Beliefs, Culture, and the Way of Life of Muslim in Thai Spa Products and Services Export in the UAE**

In the product sector, belief and culture affected the products export. The ingredients should not contain alcohol or animal fats. If so, Halal standard certification was required. However, although there was no alcohol or ingredient from animal mixed in the products, some Thai entrepreneurs applied for Halal sign to assure the products to the customer that they were consistent with religious principles. Furthermore, for the packaging design, it should be in accordance with religious principles as well. For example, there should not have female or animal image on the packaging. As the religious principle forced the spa service to separate the service zone for male and female, and the masseuse and the customer should be the same gender, and the masseuses were not likely to be the homosexual.

## **6.3 Satisfaction and Eexpectation of the Spa Users in the UAE Towards T Thai Spa Products and Services**

From the study on the satisfaction and expectation of the spa users in the UAE towards Thai spa products and services, it was found that spa products users were satisfied with the quality of products the most, followed by the reliability of the products, the Halal standard of the products, the beauty of packaging, the reasonable price, and the color of packaging.

On the average, the spa users were satisfied with the quality of Thai traditional massage the most, followed by the cleanness of the masseuses, the manner of Thai traditional massage, the human relations of the masseuses, the reasonable price, the Halal based on religious principle, and the communication and understanding between the masseuse and the service users, respectively.

To conclude the expectation of the factors affecting Thai spa products and services selection, it was found that the customers expected of the cleanness of spa venue and the quality of Thai spa products and service the most, followed by Halal of Thai spa products without the prohibited ingredients, the reliability and image of Thai

spa products and services, the beauty and color of packaging, the uniform of masseuses, the service zone separating for male and female customers, the communications between the masseuse and the customers, and the products representing Thainess, respectively.

#### **6.4 Information Perception Behavior and the Behavior of Social Media Use of Spa Users in the UAE**

The behavior of media perception of the users of Thai spa products and services indicated that they had been seen or heard about Thai spa products and services from the word-of-mouth the most, followed by via online media, printing media, billboard, TV, and radio.

Besides, from the behavior of media perception of the users of Thai spa products and services showed that they followed the information from online media the most, followed by the word-of-mouth, TV, printing media, and billboard, respectively.

For the behavior of social media use, it was found that the users of Thai spa products and services had the account of Instagram the most, followed by Facebook, Wahtapps, Twitter, and Snapchat, respectively.

For the time spending on social media, it was discovered that the most of the users spent time on social media about 30 mins-2 hrs. (42.90%), followed by 2-4 hrs. (24.80%), and less than 30 mins and more than 5 hrs (16.20%), respectively.

#### **6.5 Problems, Obstacles, and Business Operation in Spa Products and Services Export in the UAE**

The study on problems and obstacles of Thailand marketing communications in Thai spa products and services could be concluded as follows: 1) Design and color of packaging should be improved to be more beautiful and to follow religious principles; 2) The lack of testability system of Halal issue; 3) The illegal travel of Thai masseuses; 4) The problem of issue fake certificate of Thai massage schools; 5)

The lack of English or Arab language skills of Thai masseuses; 6) The illegal action such as prostitution in spa; 7) The negative image of Thai masseuses; 8) Problem of investment cost so the entrepreneurs of Thai spa business did not take the risk to expand the business to foreign countries while many countries required products and services from Thailand; 9) the lack of knowledge and understanding of religion and culture of operating business in the UAE; 10) the non-continuity of the support for Thai spa products export from the Thai government; 11) the strict regulations of the UAE for products import; 12) the delay of import registration; 13) spa business that did not operate by Thai owner and no Thai masseuses in spa claimed Thai spa name; 14) the new regulations of the period of Thai massage training and the test for Thai masseuse of the UAE government agency; 15) price negotiation of the spa users who had been in Thailand and expected the same rate; 16) the conflicts between Thai and foreign masseuses 17) the increasing number of competitors caused the price reduction that resulted in the difficulty of products and services standard control; 18) the unstable income as it depended in the travel of foreign tourists and world economic situation the might affect the spa entrepreneurs.

### **6.6 Possible Factors to Develop the International Marketing Communications for Thai Spa Products and Services to the UAE**

The study on the factors of developing the international marketing communications discovered that there were five key components of international marketing communications planning, which were 1) geographic characteristics, 2) economic factors, 3) politics and law, 4) geographic characteristic, and 5) cultural factors. However, the rapid development of communications technology was one of the factors the marketing communicators could not deny. Its impact on each community were different based on the characteristics of the communications. Therefore, the communications characteristics such as the behavior of media perception of the consumers, the use of online channel, and the behavior of online media use of the consumers should be studied.

## **6.7 Recommendations**

Recommendations from this research are divided in to two parts: recommendations for practice for government and private sector, and the recommendation for the further research.

### **6.7.1 Recommendation for Practice**

#### 6.7.1.1 Recmmenstation for products

- 1) The entrepreneurs should have public relations and advertise the products based on the factual information. Sometimes the customers see the product on the advertising but cannot find the actual product in the market.
- 2) The entrepreneurs should design the packaging based on the religious principles.
- 3) The entrepreneurs should not use human or animal photo on the packaging.
- 4) The entrepreneurs should not add the pattern that represents Thainess, but internationalization.
- 5) The entrepreneurs should set the standard to measure the customers' satisfaction.
- 6) The entrepreneurs or government agency should join the expo should arrange the database of the audience for the highest benefits.
- 7) The entrepreneurs should study the religious, cultural, and legal context of the UAE relating to Thai spa products export to the UAE.
- 8) Thai government agency should be appointed to be responsible for the testability system of Halal issue.
- 9) The Customs Department should have zoning for customs clearance.

#### 6.7.1.2 Recommendations for service sector

- 1) Thai spa business should have zoning area for male and female customers from the entrance.
- 2) Thai spa business should improve spa equipment.
- 3) Only white towel should be used in the spa and have more

chairs provided for the customers.

4) Thai spa business should create the relaxed atmosphere during the massage with the suitable light: not too dim or too bright, and the decoration shall be luxurious.

5) Thai spa business should reduce the price.

6) Thai spa business should set the method of measuring the satisfaction of customers.

7) Thai spa business should develop the customer database system for the development of the process and have the customer database who join the exhibitions in order to convince them to come using the service after the exhibition.

8) The entrepreneur should study the religious and cultural context, and law of UAE relating to the Thai spa operation in the UAE.

9) The executive of spa should communicate with the employees by having formal and informal communication about the performance, listen to the opinion of employees to develop the performance.

10) The UAE government supports the Thai spa opening to support the increasing number of tourists who travelling to the UAE every year.

## **6.7.2 Recommendation for Further Research**

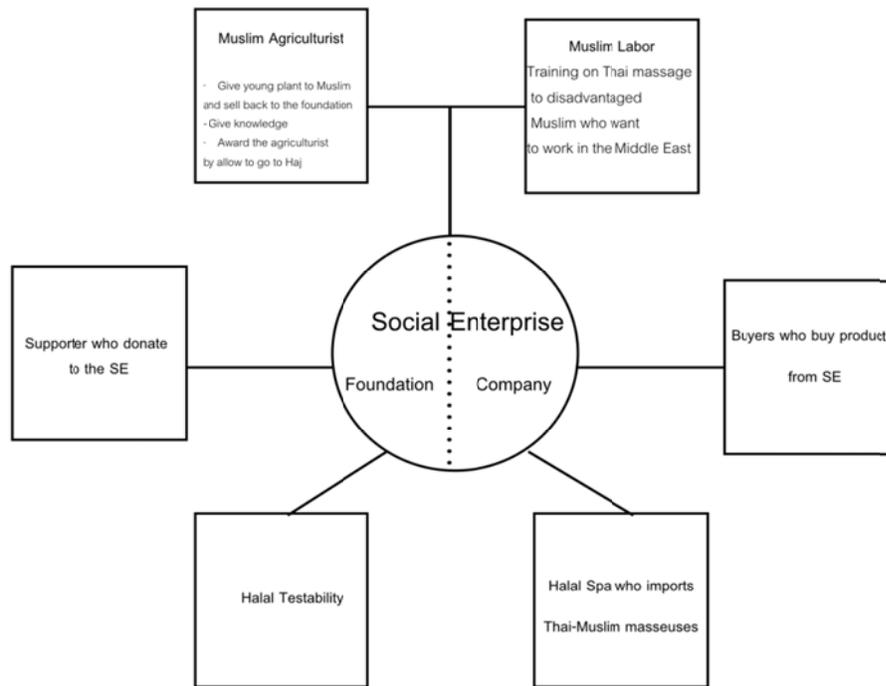
6.7.2.1 Behavior of social media use of the population in the UAE affecting the marketing communications in other businesses of Thai entrepreneurs

6.7.2.2 The most efficient marketing communications channel via social media for Thai entrepreneurs in the UAE.

6.7.2.3 How does marketing communications and marketing of Thai entrepreneurs in the exhibitions and expo in the UAE affect the business of Thai entrepreneurs?

6.7.2.4 Influence of Islam affecting the marketing communications in the UAE and the countries in the Middle East at the present time.

6.7.2.5 The proposed concept from NIA, there is the attempt to develop the model of products and workers export business to the Middle East as the Social Enterprise – SE, as shown in the following figure.



**Figure 6.1** Model of Spa Products and Labors Business Operation for Export to the Middle East Market

The figure showing the Social Enterprise (SE) consists of two parts: the foundation and the company. It has the complex administration because there are agencies that need to cooperate with one another. The operation of SE is to aid the agriculturists and Muslim workers. The organization will provide knowledge for the agriculturists to process the productivity to become the natural products for export. For the Muslim workers, who have been trained Thai traditional massage, they are able to work in Halal spa in foreign countries via SE.

Therefore, apart from providing knowledge to Muslim people, it originates the revenue to the country from the products and services sector. Besides, SE originates revenue from the donation from the people who would like to support the project to assist disadvantaged Thai-Muslim. Further, the foundation is the NGO that can perform Halal testability, which is the decentralization from the agency issuing Halal certification. This is another source of revenue.

The development of business model requires the researcher to study and develop the business operation of spa products and labors to export to the Middle East. The researcher can study various dimensions such as the communications between the divisions of the organization, the complex management, and the participation of government agencies for the actual practice. If there is the study on this business model and it is implemented, it is expected to create the opportunity, employment, and revenue to the Muslim in Thailand, as well as create great revenue to Thailand.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### KEY QUESTIONS FOR IN - DEPTH INTERVIEW

**In-depth interview with National Innovation Agency**

**“International Marketing Communications:**

**A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

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Part 1 General information of the respondents consisting

1.1 Name-Surname

1.2 Position: \_\_\_\_\_

1.3 Service Year: \_\_\_\_\_

1.4 Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 Background and current situation of Thai spa products export to the UAE and the Project “Middle East market project: new market of Thai natural products”.

2.1 What is the history of the import of Thai spa products to the UAE?

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2.2 What is the history and background of the Project “Middle East market project: new market of Thai natural products”?

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2.3 How does your organization take part in the support for import/promote Thai spa products to the UAE?

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2.4 Currently, how does the popularity of Thai spa products export to the UAE? Who are the main target groups?

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2.5 Why do Thai spa products become popular in the UAE? (The difference of Thai spa products from those from other countries)

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2.6 What kinds of products are highly required in the UAE?

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2.7 Which institution should certify Thai spa products from Thailand?

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Part 3 Religious and cultural dimension affecting export/public relations of Thai spa products to the UAE

3.1 How does religion and culture affect the export/public relations of Thai spa products to the UAE? (Based on cultural regulations and Islam principle)

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3.2 Should Thai spa products be certified Halal? Why?

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Part 4 Ingredient of spa products and packaging

4.1 What are the ingredients of products exported to the UAE?

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4.2 How does pattern, color, and form of Thai spa products packaging should be designed?

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---

Part 5 The trend of Thai spa products export to the UAE in the future

5.1 What is the trend of Thai spa products export to the UAE in the future?

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Part 6 Marketing communications for public relations of Thai spa products in the UAE

6.1 What is the image of Thai spa products in the UAE?

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---

6.2 Currently, what is the marketing communication smethod used to publish Thai spa products in the UAE?

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6.3 What type of marketing communications Thai entrepreneur should implement for the most efficient communications?

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Part 7 Obstacles and problems of export/public relations for Thai spa products to the UAE

7.1 What are the obstacles and problems of Thai spa products export to the UAE? (components/packaging/marketing communications/import process)

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Part 8 Guideline for promotion and solution for problems of export/public relations for Thai spa products

8.1 What is your organization's policy to promote the export of Thai spa products to the UAE to increase the satisfaction of customers there? (marketing communications/export process)

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8.2 What are the guidelines for the solution to the problem of Thai spa products that can increase the satisfaction of customers in the UAE? (components/packaging/marketing communications/import process)

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Part 9 Suggestions

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**In-depth Interview with the Scholars from  
Overseas Employment Administration Division on  
“International Marketing Communications: A Case Study of Thai Spa Products  
and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

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Part 1 General information of the respondents consisting

1.1 Name-Surname \_\_\_\_\_

1.2 Position: \_\_\_\_\_

1.3 Service Year: \_\_\_\_\_

1.4 Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 Current situation of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses

2.1 What is the history of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses?

---

---

2.2 How does Overseas Employment Administration Division take part in promoting work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses?

---

---

2.3 What is the popularity of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses?

---

---

2.4 What are the reasons of the popularity of Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?  
(Differences of Thai therapists/masseuses comparing to those from other countries)

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---

Part 3 Religious and cultural dimension affecting work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses

3.1 Religion and culture affecting work travelling of Thai spa products to the UAE (based on cultural regulations and Islam principle)

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---

Part 4 Trend of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses in the future

4.1 What is the trend of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses in the future?

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---

Part 5 Marketing communication in public relations for Thai therapists/masseuses in UAE

5.1 What is the image of Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

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5.2 What are the methods of promoting Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

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5.3 What are the media channels to promote Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

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Part 6 Obstacles and problems of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses

6.1 1 What are the obstacles and problems of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses? (Illegal labor/illegal acts/problem of language/communication/ etc.)

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Part 7 Guideline for promotion and solution for problems of work travelling to the UAE of Thai therapists/masseuses

7.1 What are the guidelines for promoting the export, performance, or the care for Thai therapists/masseuses who are going to work in the UAE?

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7.2 What is the training process for Thai therapists/masseuses to work in the UAE?

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7.3 What are the guidelines for solution to the problems of Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE? (language/communication/export process/solution to illegal labor/etc.)

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Part 8 Suggestions

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**In-depth Interview with Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP)  
on “International Marketing Communication:  
A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

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Part 1 General information of the respondents consisting

1.1 Name-Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Company establishment period: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 Background and current situation of Thai spa products export/public relations  
in the UAE

2.1 What is the history and background of Thai spa products import to the UAE?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.2 How does Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP) in Dubai relate to  
the promotion/public relations for Thai spa products import in the UAE?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.3 What is the current popularity of Thai spa products import to the UAE? Who is  
the main target group?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.4 What are the reasons of the popularity of Thai spa products in the UAE?  
(difference of Thai spa products comparing to those from other countries)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.5 What are Thai spa products that are highly required in the UAE?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.6 Which institution should certify Thai spa products from Thailand?

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---

Part 3 Religious and cultural dimension affecting Thai spa products import/public relations in the UAE

3.1 How does religious and cultural dimension affecting Thai spa products import/public relations in the UAE? (Based on cultural regulations and Islam principle)

---

---

3.2 Do Thai spa products with Halal sign and those without Halal sign have different popularity? How?

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---

Part 4 Trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE in the future

4.1 What is the trend of Thai spa products import to UAE in the future?

---

---

Part 5 Marketing communication in public relations for Thai spa products in UAE

5.1 What is the image of Thai spa products in the UAE?

---

---

5.2 What are the methods of promoting Thai spa products in the UAE?

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---

5.3 What type of marketing communication Thai entrepreneur should implement for the most efficient communication?

---

---

Part 6 Obstacles and problems of import/public relations for Thai spa products to the UAE

6.1 What are the obstacles and problems of import/public relations for Thai spa products to the UAE?

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Part 7 Guideline for promotion and solution for problems of import/public relations for Thai spa products

7.1 What is your organization's policy to promote the import of Thai spa products to the UAE to increase the satisfaction of customers there? (marketing communications/import process)

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---

7.2 What are the guidelines for the solution to the problem of Thai spa products that can increase the satisfaction of customers in UAE? (components/packaging/marketing communications/import process)

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Part 8 Suggestions

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**In-depth Interview with Scholars from Royal Thai Embassy at UAE  
on “International Marketing Communications:  
A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

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Part 1 General information of the respondents consisting

1.1 Name-Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

1.2 Position: \_\_\_\_\_

1.3 Service year: \_\_\_\_\_

1.4 Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 Current situation of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE

2.1 What is the history and background of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE?

---

---

2.2 How does Royal Thai Embassy at UAE relate to the promotion of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE?

---

---

2.3 Currently, what is the popularity of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE?

---

---

2.4 What are the reasons of the popularity of Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE? (difference of Thai therapists/masseuses comparing to those from other countries)

---

---

2.5 Are there any illegal Thai therapists/masseuses working in the UAE? (How many of them comparing to the total number of legal Thai therapists/masseuses)

---

---

Part 3 Religious and cultural dimension affecting Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE

3.1 How does religious and cultural dimension affecting Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE? (Based on cultural regulations and Islam principle)

---

---

3.2 Does the religion of Thai therapists/masseuses affect the recruitment or service to Islam customers? How?

---

---

Part 4 Trend of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE in the future

4.1 What is the trend of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE in the future?

---

---

Part 5 Marketing communications in public relations for Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE

5.1 What is the image of Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

---

---

5.2 What are the methods of promoting Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

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---

5.3 What are the media channels to promote Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

---

---

Part 6 Obstacles and problems of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE

6.1 What are the obstacles and problems of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE? (illegal labor/illegal acts/problem of language/communications/ etc.)

---

---

Part 7 Guideline for promotion and solution for problems of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE

7.1 What are the guidelines for promotion, performance, or care for Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE?

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---

7.2 What are the guidelines for solutions to problems of Thai therapists/masseuses import to the UAE? (language/communications/export process/solution to illegal labor/etc.)

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Part 8 Suggestions

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**In-depth Interview with the Entrepreneurs of  
Thai Spa Products Export to UAE  
on “International Marketing Communications:  
A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

---

1.1 Name-Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

1.1 Name-Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 Background and current export/public relations situation of Thai spa products to the UAE

2.1 What is the history and background of Thai spa products export to UAE?

---

---

2.2 What is the current popularity of Thai spa products export to the UAE? Who is the main target group?

---

---

2.4 What are the reasons of the popularity of Thai spa products in the UAE?  
(Differences of Thai spa products comparing to those from other countries)

---

---

2.5 What are Thai spa products that are highly required in the UAE?

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---

2.6 From which institution your products have been certified?

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---

2.7 How does your company distribute the products to the UAE?

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---

Part 3 Religious and cultural dimension affect import/public relations for Thai spa products to the UAE

3.1 How does religious and cultural dimension affect import/public relations for Thai spa products to the UAE? (Based on cultural regulations and Islam principles)

---

---

3.2 Is it necessary that Thai spa product have to be Halal certified?

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---

Part 4 Trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE in the future

4.1 What is the trend of Thai spa products import to the UAE in the future?

---

---

Part 5 Marketing communication in public relations for Thai spa products in the UAE

5.1 What is the image of Thai spa products in the UAE?

---

---

5.2 What are the methods you implement to promote your Thai spa products in the UAE?

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---

5.3 What type of marketing communications Thai entrepreneur should implement for the most efficient communications?

---

---

Part 6 Obstacles and problems of Thai spa products export to the UAE

6.1 What are the obstacles and problems of Thai spa products export to the UAE?

---

---

Part 7 Guideline for promotion and solution for problems of Thai spa products export/public relations in the UAE

7.1 What are the guidelines for the promotion of Thai spa products that can increase the satisfaction of customers in the UAE?

---

---

7.2 What are the guidelines for the promotion of Thai spa products that can increase the satisfaction of customers in the UAE? (components/packaging/marketing communications/import process)

---

---

Part 8 Suggestions

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**In-depth Interview with the Executive of Thai spa school  
on “International Marketing Communications:  
A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

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Part 1 General information of the respondents consisting

1.1 Name-Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Company establishment period: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 Background and current situation of Thai massage learning of Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas.

2.1 When does the Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas, especially those who want to go to the Middle East, start to learn Thai massage?

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2.2 At your school, is there any Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in the Middle East?/How many?

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---

2.3 Why does Thai therapists/masseuses are popular in the Middle East or UAE? (difference of Thai therapists/masseuses comparing to those from other countries)

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---

2.4 Does your school provide massage service to the outsiders?

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2.5 Have you ever been contacted to send Thai therapists/masseuses to work in overseas?

---

---

2.6 Is there any foreign masseuses learn the massage at your school in order to work in overseas?

---

---

Part 3 Thai massage training to work in overseas

3.1 What is the process for application/training?

---

---

3.2 How much does the application/training cost?

---

---

3.3 What is the date, time, and training period?

---

---

3.4 At your school, how do you train or teach Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas? (What are the courses?)

---

---

3.5 What is the process of proficiency test to issue the certificate after training?

---

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Part 4 Religious and cultural dimension affecting the Thai therapists/masseuses export to the countries in the Middle East

4.1 How does religion and culture affect the Thai therapists/masseuses export to the countries in the Middle East? (Based on cultural regulations and Islam principles)

---

---

4.2 Does your school educate knowledge about religion and culture to Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in the countries in the Middle East?

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---

Part 5 Trend of Thai therapists/masseuses export to the countries in the Middle East in the future

5.1 What is the trend of Thai therapists/masseuses export to the countries in the Middle East, particularly to the UAE in the future?

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Part 6 Marketing communications in public relations for Thai massage

6.1 What is the image of Thai therapists/masseuses in the eyes of foreigners, especially people in the Middle East?

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6.2 How do you promote your school?

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6.3 What are the media channels you use to promote your school?

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Part 7 Obstacles and problems of the training of Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas?

7.1 What are the obstacles and problems of the training of Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas, especially the countries in the Middle East?

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Part 8 Guideline for promotion and solution to the training of Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas, especially the countries in the Middle East?

8.1 What are the guideline for promotion the training of Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas, especially the countries in the Middle East?

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8.2 What are the guideline solution to the training of Thai therapists/masseuses who want to work in overseas, especially the countries in the Middle East?

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Part 9 Suggestions

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**In-depth Interview with Spa Entrepreneurs in UAE**  
**on “International Marketing Communications:**  
**A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

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Part 1 General information of the respondents consisting

1.1 Name-Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Spa name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spa establishment period: \_\_\_\_\_

Part 2 Background and the overall Thai spa business operation in the UAE

2.1 What is the history and reason for operating Thai spa in the UAE?

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---

2.2 What is the process of running spa business in the UAE?

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2.3 What are spa products imported from Thailand?

---

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2.4 What is the most popular product?

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2.5 How many Thai therapists/masseuses do you have? (male/female)

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---

Part 3 Import process of Thai spa products/ therapists/masseuses

3.1 What is the import process for Thai spa products from Thailand?

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---

3.2 What is the import process of Thai therapists/masseuses for Thai spa business?

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Part 4 Comparison of work operations in Thailand and in the UAE

4.1 What are the differences of spa business in Thailand and UAE?

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4.2 What are the characteristics of spa venue? (Special characteristics that are different from that in Thailand)

---

---

Part 5 Religious and cultural dimension affecting spa business

5.1 1 How does religion and culture affect spa business? (Based on cultural regulations and Islam principles)

---

---

5.2 Is there any difference in the popularity between Thai spa products that having Halal and those without Halal sign? How?

---

---

5.3 Does the religion of Thai therapists/masseuses affect the recruitment or service to Islam customers? How?

---

---

Part 6 Marketing communication/public relations to interest customers in UAE

6.1 What is the image of Thai spa in the UAE?

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6.2 What is the image of Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

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6.3 How do you have marketing communication/public relations for your spa?

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6.4 What is the most efficient communication channel to promote your spa?

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Part 7 Obstacles and problems of the training of Thai spa business in the UAE

7.1 What are the obstacles and problems of the training of Thai spa business in the UAE?

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Part 8 Guideline for promotion and solution to Thai spa business operation in the UAE

8.1 What is your guideline for promotion and solution to Thai spa business operation in the UAE?

---

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8.2 How do you plan to develop your spa business to fulfill the need of customers and increase their satisfaction?

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Part 9 Suggestions

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**In-depth Interview with Thai Masseuses in UAE**  
**on “International Marketing Communications:**  
**A Case Study of Thai Spa Products and Services in the United Arab Emirates”**

---

Part 1 General information of the respondents consisting

1.1 Name-Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of spa: \_\_\_\_\_ Service year: \_\_\_\_\_

Income: \_\_\_\_\_ (per month)

Part 2 Background and the overall situation to choose to work in the UAE

2.1 What is your reason to work in the UAE?

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2.2 How do you learn about the application for Thai therapists/masseuses?

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2.3 Do you come to work via the agent or by yourself?

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2.4 Do you have certificate for Thai massage? If so, from which school? (How long does the course take?)

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2.5 How do you prepare yourself before working in the UAE?

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2.6 How long do you plan for working in the UAE?

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Part 3 Work operation

3.1 What is your job? (Please explain in details)

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Part 4 Comparison of working in Thailand and the UAE

4.1 What are the differences between working in Thailand and in the UAE?

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---

Part 5 Religious and language dimension affecting work

5.1 Does religion and culture affect your work performance?

---

---

5.2 What are the religious and cultural aspects that Thai labors should understand before working as Thai therapists/masseuses in the UAE?

---

---

5.3 What is the way of life/personality of customers in the UAE that Thai therapists/masseuses should know before working in the UAE? (what do most customers like/dislike)

---

---

5.4 Is language a barrier to work? How? (How do you solve the problem)

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---

Part 6 Obstacles and problems of work

6.1 What are the obstacles and problems of work? (What is the most important problem that need to be resolved?)

---

---

Part 7 Guideline for solution to work

7.1 What is the guideline for solution to suggest the employer or for self?

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7.2 Is there any support you require from government sector?

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Part 8 Suggestion

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## APPENDIX B

# ENGLISH QUESTIONNAIRES OF SATISFACTION AND EXPECTATION OF THAI SPA CUSTOMERS IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### Satisfaction and Expectation Surveys

#### For Customers of Thai Spa in the United Arab Emirates

#### Clarifications:

1. To create acknowledgement among Thai spa entrepreneurs and to the researcher regarding satisfaction with products and services of Thai spa business, and to improve them for more efficiency and meeting customers' demand.
2. Please fill in the blanks with ✓ and complete the forms.

#### Part 1: General Information of the Respondent.

**Gender**     Male             Female

#### Career Status

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Student       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneur        | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government Officer  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housewife           | <input type="checkbox"/> Others.....(Please specify) |

**Institute/Organization/Bureau**.....

**Educational Level**     Below Bachelor     Bachelor     Master     Doctorate

**Age**     Under 20 years             21-30 years             31 - 40 years             41 – 50 years  
 51 – 60 years             60 years up

**Nationality**     United Arab Emirates             Middle East Countries.....(Please specify)  
 Others.....(Please specify)

**Religion**     Islamic             Christian             Buddhist  
 Others..... (Please specify)

**Part 2: Media Exposure Behaviour among Consumers of Thai Spa Products and Services.**

2.1 Which public relations channel(s) that you have seen/heard about Thai spa products and services from? (The answer can be more than 1)

- Radio       Television       Print Media       Advertisement  
 Online Media     Word of Mouth       Others..... (Please specify)

2.2 Which media that you use most to follow current news/information?

- Radio       Television       Print Media       Advertisement  
 Online Media     Others..... (Please specify)

2.3 Which social network account(s) that you have? (If none, please skip to Part 3)

- Facebook                       Instagram       Twitter  
 Others..... (Please specify)

2.4 How long do you regularly use social media per day?

- Less than 30 minutes per day       30 minutes - 2 hours  
 2 hours - 4 hours                       More than 5 hours per day

**Part 3: Satisfaction with Thai Spa Products and Services.**

5 = at most or very good    4 = much or good    3 = average or fair    2 = a little or below standard

1 = least or need to be improved

Satisfaction with Thai Spa Products		Level of Satisfaction with Thai Spa Products				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Quality of Products					

2	Attractiveness of Packaging					
3	Colors of Products					
4	Colors of Packaging					
5	Reliability of Products (With Certification Standard)					
6	Reasonable Prices					
7	Products are with Halal Standard in Compliance with Islamic Principles					

Satisfaction with Traditional Thai Massage	Satisfaction with Thai Spa Services				
--	-------------------------------------	--	--	--	--

1            2            3            4            5

1	Quality of Traditional Thai Massage					
2	Politeness of Thai Masseurs / Masseuses					
3	Hospitality of Thai Masseurs / Masseuses					
4	Cleanness of Thai Masseurs / Masseuses					

5	Communications between Customers and Thai Masseurs / Masseuses					
6	Reasonable Prices of Massage					
7	Services are with Halal Standard in Compliance with Islamic Principles					

**Part 4: Factors Influencing Thai Spa Product and Service Selection.**

5 = at most or very good 4 = much or good 3 = average or fair 2 = a little or below standard

1 = least or need to be improved

Factors Influencing Thai Spa Product and Service Selection	Level of Customers' Expectations Regarding Thai Spa Products and Services				
--	--	--	--	--	--

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

1	Cleanness of Spas					
2	Reliability and Images of Thai Spa Products and Services					
3	Products and Services Represent Thainess					

**Part 5: Suggestions**

5.1 Your particular satisfaction with Thai spa products and services.

.....  
.....  
.....

5.2 Your suggestions for the improvement of Thai spa products and services.

.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you for your cooperation.

Researcher

**ARABIC QUESTIONNAIRES OF SATISFACTION AND EXPECTATION OF  
THAI SPA CUSTOMERS IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

**استطلاعات للرأي عن الرضا والتوقعات**

**لعملاء منتجات سبا التايلاندية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة**

**توضيحات:**

- 1 - من أجل إتاحة الفرصة لرجال الأعمال وأصحاب منتج سبا التايلاندي والباحثين التعرف على رضا العملاء وإرتياحهم في استخدام المنتجات والخدمات المقدمة إليهم ومن أجل تحسين المنتجات والخدمات في أعمال منتج سبا التايلاندي أكثر كفاءة وتلبية لطلب العملاء.
- 2 - يرجى ملء الفراغات مع ✓ واستكمال النماذج.

**الجزء 1: معلومات عامة عن المجيب.**

الجنس  ذكر  أنثى

**الحالة الوظيفية**

طالب ثانوي  طالب في المرحلة الجامعية

رجل الأعمال  عامل

موظف الحكومة  سائح

ربة البيت  أخرى..... (يرجى تحديد)

.....مؤسسة/ منظمة/ مكتب

المستوى التعليمي  أقل من البكالوريوس  البكالوريوس  الماجستير  الدكتوراه

العمر  أقل من 20 سنة  21-30 سنة  31-40 سنة  41 - 50 سنة

51 - 60 سنة  أعلى من 60 سنة

الجنسية  إماراتي  دول الشرق الأوسط.....(يرجى تحديد)

أخرى..... (يرجى تحديد)

الديانة  مسلم  مسيحي  بوذي  ديانة أخرى.....(يرجى تحديد)

الجزء 2: سلوك الاستقبال لوسائل الإعلام من مستخدمي المنتجات والمنتجات الصحية سبا التايلاندية

2.1 - هل رأيت / سمعت من العلاقات العامة عن المعلومات حول المنتجات والخدمات للمنتجات الصحية سبا التايلاندية وما هو نوع وسائل الإعلام (الإجابة على السؤال أكثر من واحد).

- الراديو  التلفزيون  وسائل الاعلام المطبوعة  اللافتات  
 وسائل الإعلام عبر الإنترنت  كلمة الفم  أخرى..... (يرجى تحديد)

2.2 - متابعتك للأخبار المختلفة وأي نوع من أنواع وسائل الاعلام التي استخدمتها.

- الراديو  التلفزيون  وسائل الاعلام المطبوعة  اللافتات  
 وسائل الإعلام عبر الإنترنت  كلمة الفم  أخرى..... (يرجى تحديد)

2.3 - هل أنت من مستخدمي وسائل الاعلام الاجتماعية أو الشبكة الاجتماعية (إذا كان الجواب لا، إنتقل إلى الجز 3).

- الفيسبوك  اينستاگرام  تغريد  
 أخرى..... (يرجى تحديد)

2.4 - كم الساعة التي استخدمتها لوسائل الاعلام الاجتماعية أو الشبكة الاجتماعية.

- أقل من 30 دقيقة في اليوم  30 دقيقة إلى 2 ساعة في اليوم  
 2 - 4 ساعات في اليوم  أكثر من 5 ساعات في اليوم

الجزء 3: رضا العملاء وارتياحهم في استخدام المنتجات والخدمات للمنتجات الصحية سبب التايلاندية.  
 درجة 5 = أعلى الدرجات أو جيد جدا 4 = كثير أو جيد 3 = متوسط أو مقبول 2 = قليلا أو دون المستوى  
 1 = الأقل أو تحتاج إلى تحسين

مستوى رضا العملاء وارتياحهم في استخدام المنتجات					رضا العملاء وارتياحهم في استخدام المنتجات	
1	2	3	4	5		
					جودة المنتجات	1
					جاذبية التعبئة والتغليف	2
					ألوان المنتجات	3
					ألوان التعبئة والتغليف	4
					موثوقية المنتجات (مع شهادة المعيار)	5
					بأسعار معقولة	6
					المنتجات الحاصلة على ماركة الحلال	7

مستوى رضا العملاء وارتياحهم في استخدام المنتجات					الارتياح مع التدليك التايلاندي التقليدي	
1	2	3	4	5		
					جودة التدليك التايلاندي التقليدي	1
					أدب المدلك / المدلكة	2
					حسن الضيافة للمدلك / المدلكة	3
					نظافة المدلك / المدلكة	4
					التواصل/التفاهم بين العملاء والمدلك/المدلكة	5
					أسعار معقولة للتدليك	6
					الخدمات مطابقة لمعيار الحلال	7

الجزء 4: العوامل المؤثرة في اختيار المنتجات أو الخدمات للمنتجات الصحية سبا التايلاندية.  
 درجة 5 = أعلى الدرجات أر جيد جدا 4 = كثير أو جيد 3 = متوسط أو مقبول 2 = قليلا أو دون المستوى  
 1 = الأقل أو تحتاج إلى تحسين

مستوى الرضا والتوقعات من العملاء وارتياحهم في استخدام المنتجات والخدمات للمنتجات الصحية سبا التايلاندية					العوامل المؤثرة في اختيار المنتجات أو الخدمات للمنتجات الصحية سبا التايلاندية	
1	2	3	4	5		
					1	نظافة المنتجات سبا
					2	الموثوقية وصور المنتجات سبا والخدمات التايلاندية
					3	المنتجات والخدمات تمثل التايلاندية
					4	جودة المنتجات والخدمات
					5	جانبيه التعبئة والتغليف / ألوان التعبئة والتغليف
					6	التواصل / التفاهم بين العملاء والمدلك / المدلحة
					7	الأزياء الرسمية للمدلك والمدلحة
					8	المنتجات المستخدمة مطابقة لمعيار الحلال
					9	الخدمات مطابقة لمعيار الحلال
					10	أسعار معقولة للمنتجات والخدمات للمنتجات سبا

#### الجزء 5: الاقتراحات

5.1 - رضاكم وارتياحكم في استخدام المنتجات والخدمات للمنتجات سبا والعناية في هذه المرة.

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5.2 - ما هي اقتراحاتكم لتحسين المنتجات والخدمات للمنتجات سبا التايلاندية.

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نشكر لكم على حسن تعاونكم

الباحث

## **BIOGRAPHY**

<b>NAME</b>	Alhuda Chanitphattana
<b>ACADEMIC BACKGROUND</b>	Bachelor's Degree with a major in Political Science, International Relations from Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand in 2010 and Master's Degree in International Relations and Development Studies at University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, in 2011
<b>PRESENT POSITION</b>	Business Development Executive™ at VEGA Intertrade & Exhibitions LLC, Dubai, Unites Arab Emirates Consultant™ at Thai Business Council in Dubai and Northern Emirates (TBC)
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	Regional Manager - Middle East™ at VL Siam Development Co.,Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand Policy Analyst™ at Future Innovative Thailand Institute (FIT), Bangkok, Thailand
<b>SCHOLAR</b>	Visiting Scholar (Marketing, Kelley School of Business), Indiana University, Indianapolis, USA. in 2017