

# Approaches to Promote Healthy Recreation Activities for Elderly Tourists at Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market, Prapradeang District, Samutprakarn Province

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**Abstract**—The objectives of this study are to find out the approaches to promote healthy recreation activities for elderly tourists and develop Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market to be a health tourism attraction. The research methodology was to analyze internal and external situations according to MP-MF and the MC-STEPS principles.

As for the results of this study the researcher found that the healthy recreational activities for elderly tourists could be divided in 7 groups; travelling Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market activity, homestay relaxation, arts center platform activity, healthy massage activity, paying homage to a Buddha image activity, herbal joss-stick home activity, making local desserts and food activity.

**Keywords**—Elderly tourists, recreational activities, Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market.

## I. INTRODUCTION

RECREATIONS are activities related to our lives and play roles in developing efficient human resources. These activities are necessary for us to do in our leisure time, but they are especially important for elderly people. When the senior citizens do these activities, they bring changes in their lives from social adaptation, satisfaction in helping themselves to the acceptance of facts of life [1]. According to the Statistics of Thailand's Aging Population, it was estimated that at mid-year 2014 (July 1) in the whole country there would be 9,928,000 people aged over 60 years and 6,647,000 aged over 65 years [2]. The researcher considered that a place for elderly people to do activities together with their family members should be supported and developed, because it will help the aging part of our society to go along with the rapid changes we are all faced in modern societies. Recreational activities are a powerful medium for creating enjoyment, developing healthy emotions, increasing the quality of life, strengthening love, warmth and improving relationships among family members, as well as using leisure time in a productive manner.

In the tourism sector, "health tourism" is considered a kind of tourism that can attract elder tourists very well. Apart from assisting in the mental development, elderly tourists will enjoy the benefits of nature and clean air, not very far from

Bangkok. Moreover, it is an opportunity for this group of tourists to learn local culture and share their life experiences with family members.

Following is a list of reasons the researchers chose to promote and develop health tourism for elderly tourists at Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market. Firstly, Bang Nam Phueng Community is an ancient community located on the Chao Phraya River, maintaining nature and atmosphere, including people's lifestyle through the agricultural occupation since the Ayudhaya period, especially gardening, e.g., fruit gardens and flower gardens. Secondly, the researcher viewed this community was open at cooperating with the local organizations like the Subdistrict Administrative Organization (SAO) in solving the problems of the community. The "Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market" is the result of a concept to create a major travelling place in the community to counter the 2004 economic recession, through a skillful use of the community's resources and identity in accordance with the 'Sufficiency Economy'. Thirdly, the major travelling place, Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market, has been famous and appreciated destination among Thais and foreign tourists for almost 10 years. Finally, the researcher considered that the community of Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market has the tools to create recreation activities for the elderly people due to the fact that there are homestays, platforms for garden activities, and health learning places like the traditional Thai medical center and Herbal Joss-Stick Home. These activities jointly help increasing the quality of life of the elderly people [3].

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section II presents materials and methods used in this work. Section III presents 'The Findings'. Finally, Section IV offers a conclusion and suggestions for a paper with future research.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### A. Objective and Benefits

The objective of this research is to find out the best approaches to promote healthy recreational activities for elderly tourists and develop Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market to become a health tourism place. The benefits of the research are:

1. Increase quality of life of senior citizens.
2. Create a place that reinforces health tourism for aging

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- people.
- Increase the number of visitors and income and local people in the community.
  - Build good family relationships due to the availability of communal spaces.
  - The community gains self-pride, awareness and wisdom in regards of the conservation of natural resources and local history.

*B. Theoretical Framework of the Research*

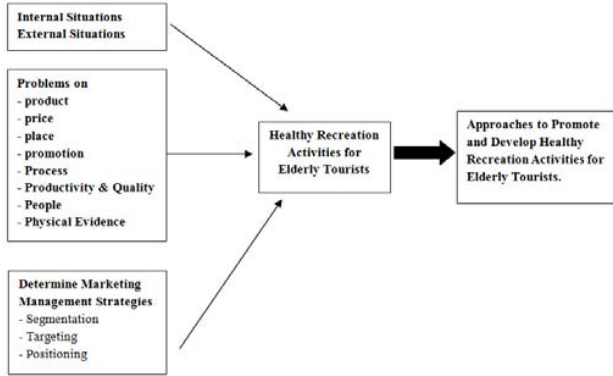


Fig. 1 Theoretical Framework of the Research

*C. Research Methodology*

The researchers studied documents, textbooks, and articles on theories and concepts, as well as research works on healthy recreational activities for elderly tourists and Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market management. Moreover, it included observation and in-depth interviews with the community leaders, the representatives of people in the community, and visitors at the floating market and surrounding areas. After that, the researchers analyzed internal and external situations of the Bang Nam Phueng Community with the MP-MF principle, consisting of Marketing (M), Production (P), Management (M) and Finance (F) and the MC-STEPS principle [4] i.e., Market (M), Competition (C), Social & Culture Value (S), Technology (T), Economic (E), Political & Legal Issue (P) and Supplier (S). Furthermore, they determined strategies to promote and develop healthy recreation activities for elderly tourists, namely through segmentation, targeting and positioning. Describing each stage of the marketing plan cycle to promote and develop healthy recreation activities for elderly tourists, required tactics in marketing, production, purchasing, finance, and personnel management to identify a marketing management strategy consisting of products, price, place, promotion, process, productivity & quality, people and physical evidence.

III. FINDINGS

According to the research, the researcher found that the healthy recreation activities for elderly tourists could be divided in 7 groups as in Fig. 2.



Fig. 2 The Healthy Recreation Activities for Elderly Tourists in 7 Groups

*A. Travelling Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market Activity*

The floating market area does not only provide a variety of food, but the community also helps to add value for the low income group and the elderly group by providing places for them to distribute Samutprakarn OTOP products.

*B. Homestay Relaxation*

Bang Nam Phueng’s homestay is certified by Homestay Standard Thailand. The elderly tourists will experience the rural culture along with the simple waterside lifestyle of Thai Raman people. This enables the body to fully relax and helps reminiscence of the past.

One effective approach to promote well-being is the typical homestay relaxation. Furthermore, value can be added by providing ways for a healthy homestay, that is, by providing the homestay for tourists and by adjusting their core values according to the healthy home concept. The researcher suggests the ‘healthy home package’, as described in the following program:

TABLE I  
HEALTHY HOME PROGRAM AT BANG NAM PHUENG

Time	Activity Details
06.00 a.m.	Activity of giving food offerings to Buddhist monks in the morning
07.00 a.m.	Prepare healthy and vegetarian food with the house-owner
10.00 a.m.	Visit Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market
11.00 a.m.	Activity of making local desserts and food with the Bang Nam Phueng Women Group
01.00 p.m.	Herbal Joss-Stick Home Activity
02.30 p.m.	Healthy massage activity at the traditional Thai medical center of Bang Nam Phueng Subdistrict
05.00 p.m.	Go back to the accommodation and relax at leisure

**Note:** The program can be changed as appropriate.

*C. Arts Center Platform Activity: Consist of*

1. Handicraft Corner: Focus on the female elderly group to do activities together, such as, crafting fish scale flowers, coconut fiber-crafted pictures, products from coconut shells and suicide trees, clay and fabric flowers, embroidery, drawing, batik painting, molded works, fabric painting, making gel candles, etc. The approach to

promote tourism is organizing the pavilion for demonstrating how to make handicraft products by focusing natural products.

2. Chess Corner: Focus on the male elderly group.
3. Collectible Corner: Gain enjoyment through memorabilia.
4. Local Plant Corner: Rare local plants like *Cyrtostachys renda* and *Cordyline*, the economic plants, can be found in Bang Nam Phueng, which is the biggest producer of these kinds of plants in Thailand. Moreover, this place produces a great variety of agricultural products, such as, young coconuts, Barracuda mangoes (well-known fruit of Bang Nam Phueng Subdistrict), Cavendish bananas, Pisang Awak, Malay Apples, as well as a variety of fresh vegetables, e.g., morning glory, White popinac, Vegetable fern, Ceylon Spinach, Ivy Gourd, *Solanum trilobatum*, *Averrhoa bilimbi*, *Spondias mombin*, *Garcinia*, *Solanum*, tamarind, Bird's eye chilis, and Gac. If tourists go for a walk or go cycling for sightseeing, along the way there will be cork trees, suicide trees, Indian oaks and Portia Trees, which the people in the community cooperate in conserving and preserving from water. The approach to promote the local biodiversity could be an educational trip to visit the botanic garden, attend a lecture on making use of local herbs, e.g., gac, as well as apply local ingredients to cook Thai local food.
5. Music and Rhythmic Activity Corner: This corner is suitable for the elderly, who are fond of music and are strong enough to move their body. The elderly tourists can relax by singing together in conjunction with other activities on important days like Elderly Day and Songkran Day. The approach to promote this activity is for the community to provide the space for associating, singing songs and listening to music to create a relaxing atmosphere, or arrange the dancing stage every second and fourth Sunday of each month. However, the Bang Nam Phueng Subdistrict Administrative Organization should also allocate a part of the budget in improving the landscape around the Arts Center and leveling the ground or activity hall. The dancing stage and the pathway should provide a ramp for the elderly tourists with wheelchairs. The ground should be leveled, be without barriers and electric wires on the floor to facilitate the use of wheelchair, and for others to use the stage in a safe manner. The Stage should not be too high and should be stable enough for them. Moreover, a number of tables and chairs should be provided to accommodate visitors.

#### *D. Healthy Massage Activity*

The learning center for traditional Thai medicine of Bang Nam Phueng Subdistrict in collaboration with the sub-district health promotion hospital provided a holistic service in health care, disease prevention and control, as well as health regeneration. We can promote activities for the elderly tourists by adding more physicians, nurses, public health officers on Saturdays and Sundays for providing free physical examination or health massage programs, such as: body massage (200 baht), spot therapeutic massage (150 baht), foot

massage (150 baht), herbal massage (150 baht) and herbal sauna (150 baht). In addition, the making of herbal compress balls should also be emphasized, for they can effectively treat bodily pain, frozen shoulder, stress and migraine.

#### *E. Paying Homage to a Buddha Image Activity*

In this program, elderly tourists will pay homage to a Buddha image in seven sacred temples of Prapradeang District. The seven sacred temples are Wat Bang Nam Phueng Nai, Wat Bang Nam Phueng Nork, Wat Songtham Wora Wiharn, San Phra Suea Mueang, City Pillar Shrine, Wat Prodketchetharam, and Wat Pa Kate.

#### *F. Herbal Joss-Stick Home Activity*

During this activity, the elderly tourists follow the well-established philosophy of 'learning by doing'. This activity makes use of local plants, such as Kaffir lime, Neem plants and Citronella Grass because they grow easily and can be commonly found in tropical zone.

#### *G. Making Local Desserts and Food Activity*

Bang Nam Phueng Community profits from various kinds of agricultural resources, especially coconuts which can be used to make many desserts, e.g., steamed pandanus cake, sticky rice and bananas, sticky rice in banana leaves, nipa palm dessert, nipa palm in syrup, deep-fried sliced bananas, fried breadfruit, Ma Haw, palmyra palm juice, Ka Nom Kong, Kao Mao Tod, Khanom Sod-Sai, sugarpalm cake, steamed banana cake, steamed cassava cake, steamed pumpkin cake, Mung bean rice crepe, Look Choup, Andaman jelly, egg white thread, gold egg yolk thread, Med Khanon, gold egg yolks drops, sweet coconut pancakes, sticky rice topped with ground dried shrimp, sticky rice topped with Thai custard, sticky rice topped with wild yam, sticky rice topped with ground dried fish, herbal crispy rolls, and Kanom Kay Sorn Lum Jiak. Meat and fish dishes are fish sausages, stir-fried rice noodle with coconut milk, crispy rice noodle, dried rice balls, deep-fried King Mackerel fish cake, crispy golden cups filled with shrimp and pork, golden bags, Miang Kham, elephant ear plant soup, steamed pork curry in banana leaves, deep-fried shrimp paste sauce dip, crab dip, Chaeng Lon, traditional sausages, Vietnamese meatball wraps, eggs filled with white pork sausage, stewed mackerel in salty soup, fried carp fish, oysters fried in egg batter, chili paste fried rice, and herbal salted eggs. As it become evident from this extensive list, there are countless traditional desserts and foods that use coconuts and other local ingredients.

If you would like to promote health tourism, cooking activities that promote healthy food can be organized on Saturday mornings. Family members can take part in these activities, which not only brings warmth to the family, but offers opportunities to hand down cooking knowledge from generation to generation as well. In addition, these activities can be held together with the Bang Nam Phueng Women Group.

The researcher considered Bang Nam Phueng Community should organize an annual calendar of healthy recreational activities to attract elderly tourists and build an image of Bang

Nam Phueng Community as an important health tourism place.

TABLE II  
HEALTH TOURISM ACTIVITY IN 12 MONTHS

Month	Health Tourism Activity
January	Samutprakarn OTOP Fair
February	Opening Herbal Home (Herbal Joss-Stick Home and Community Enterprise of Health Massage : Grained Compress Balls)
March	Vegetarian Festival with Bang Nam Phueng
April	Songkran Festival consisting of Family Day & Elderly Day Activities
May	Bang Nam Phueng Food & Dessert Festival
June	Bang Nam Phueng Organic Agriculture Fair
July	Gac Fair
August	National Mother's Day Celebration
September	Bang Nam Phueng Free Bike Day Fair
October	Suansilp & Ancient Music Fair
November	Elderly Noppamas Queen Contest
December	National Father's Day Celebration

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

People at the present time are consistently faced with fast changes of the society. A good role model in the family is the best starting point in developing any country. The family that has the opportunity of tying together at least 3 generations, that is, grandparents, parents, and children is considered a good family [5].

In this research, the researcher categorized activities to establish effective approaches in promoting healthy recreational activities for elderly tourists, and divided them into 7 groups according to self-care principles of the elderly people over 75 years old [6] for example,

1. The elderly people should consistently move their body and have a traditional lifestyle, such as, visiting the lifestyle of agricultural communities, going sightseeing at Bang Nam Phueng Floating Market, and homestay relaxation.
2. Eat local food and herbs, i.e., buying local food in the Bang Nam Phueng Community, and learning to make local desserts and food.
3. Hold dhamma as the principle of leading life, such as, visiting 9 temples to pay homage to Buddha, attending the religious ceremonies according to Thai traditions, and conserving and carrying on local wisdoms.
4. Get enough sleep.

Besides, the researcher applied the principles and the theories in creating recreational activities to benefit the elderly in physical, mental, emotional and social aspects, as well as encouraging them to be lively, vigorous and more interested in their surroundings, while motivating them to do the things they like and can do. [7] For example, they actively partake in organizing the drawing corner, the handicraft corner, the dancing corner, the plant corner, and simultaneously passing on wisdom to the public. Following such activities will help develop emotional and mental states, and therefore will lead to well-being. Finally, senior citizens who have a happy life will automatically and inevitably be considered quality citizens. If the families consist of such people, those families will

consequently become quality families and thus be good role models for others. By following this thought to its logical conclusion, we see that if there are a number of quality families, this will lead to a quality country [8]. Although Thailand gives importance to the family for taking care of the elderly, if dependence on the family becomes too much, this will become a weak point. Therefore, the government should have a policy focusing services on providing assistance and welfare for the elderly who want to live alone, so that they don't become a burden for the family under pressure of the economic crisis at present and in the future. The Bang Nam Phueng Subdistrict Administrative Organization should cooperate with the community in giving importance to this group of tourists and allocating the budget in improving the area to be easily accessible and to be safe for the travelling of the elderly tourists, such as, providing more ramps for the wheelchairs, making Braille signs, and providing more pail flush toilets. Bang Nam Phueng Community and street vendors should cooperate in preserving the canal to be clean, and not throw rubbish and food into the canal. Moreover, the construction of additional buildings should be based on the traditional lifestyle of the floating market because most tourists want to recall the Thai way of life in the past more than other aspects.

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