

**INTERNATIONAL RETIREMENT MIGRATION(IRM) PROGRAMMES
FOR JAPANESE RETIREES:
MOTIVATIONAL PUSH-PULL FACTORS AND BEHAVIORAL
PHENOMENA TOWARDS CULTURAL ASSIMILATION**

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Abstract

In recent years, Japanese immigrants have emerged as a significant demographic group influencing Thailand's socio-economic development. One of the key trends contributing to this shift is the aging population in Japan, coupled with the growing demand for foreign labor in Thailand. This has resulted in a rise in international retirement migration (IRM), a unique form of mobility that involves the relocation of elderly individuals to foreign countries for the primary purpose of residing abroad in a warmer climate. For Japanese retirees, Thailand represents an attractive destination due to its combination of favorable conditions, including a lower cost of living, political stability, and an abundance of cultural and natural attractions. The increasing flow of retirees from Japan is not only a response to the country's own demographic challenges but also an essential factor in Thailand's evolving socio-economic landscape. IRM has become a viable strategy for many retirees, offering them the opportunity to maintain a desirable lifestyle in their later years while contributing to the host country's economy. The purpose of this study is to investigate the push and pull factors driving Japanese retirees to Thailand and to explore the broader implications of their migration, specifically in terms of their cultural assimilation and integration into Thai society. By examining these factors, the research aims to clarify the underlying motivations for Japanese retirement migration and the subsequent impact on both the retirees and their host country. The push factors that encourage Japanese retirees to migrate include economic considerations, health concerns, and social dynamics. In Japan, the rising costs of living, limited healthcare options for the elderly, and the challenges of an aging society create strong incentives for retirees to seek a more affordable and comfortable living environment abroad. In contrast, the pull factors in Thailand are rooted in its appeal as an international retirement destination, with lower living costs, accessible healthcare, and a welcoming cultural environment that makes it an ideal place for elderly migrants. The natural beauty, rich history, and warm climate of Thailand further enhance its attractiveness as a retirement haven. This research employs a quantitative methodology, utilizing a sample of 200 Japanese retirees residing in Thailand under the International Retirement Program (IRM). The respondents were selected through purposive sampling, and data was collected through surveys designed to assess their experiences and perceptions of migration. Specifically, the study aims to identify the key push and pull factors from an economic, health, and social perspective, and to explore how these factors influence retirees' decision to settle in Thailand. In addition to examining the motivations for migration, the study also focuses on the behavioral phenomena that impact cultural assimilation. These phenomena include social integration, well-being, life satisfaction, and cultural assimilation, which are critical to understanding how retirees adapt to their new environment. Using correlation analysis, the research investigates the relationships between social integration, well-being, and cultural assimilation, providing insights into how these factors contribute to the overall experience of migration. Furthermore, the study employs linear regression analysis to examine the mediating role of local support in the relationship between retirees' attitudes and their level of social integration. It also explores the moderating effect of language acquisition on the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation. These analyses aim to uncover the underlying dynamics that either facilitate or hinder the process of cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees in Thailand. The findings of this research offer valuable insights into the push-pull factors influencing international retirement migration, as well as the complex interplay of social, economic, and cultural elements that shape the experiences of Japanese retirees. The results contribute to a better understanding of how these retirees integrate into Thai society and how their migration impacts the broader social and economic landscape. Ultimately, this study provides a comprehensive exploration of the forces driving Japanese retirees to Thailand and the factors that affect their adaptation and cultural assimilation in the host country.

Keywords: International migration; Japanese retirees; push and pull factors; cultural assimilation; social integration; well-being; Thailand; retirement migration.

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ACRONYM

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
β	Beta
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CI	Confidence interval
CLL	Chiang Mai Longstay Life Club
CLMV	Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DV	Dependent variable
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
HCACC	Hinder cultural assimilation cultural clash
HCALB	Hinder cultural assimilation language barrier
ILS	International Long Stay
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPSS	National Institute of Population and Social Security Research
IRM	International retirement migration
ISH	International second home
IV	Independent variable
JLF	Japanese Longstay Foundation
LCA	Level cultural assimilation
LSIa	Level social integration attitudes
LSIs	Level social integration socialization
LSIsw	Level social integration subjective-wellbeing
LSF	Long Stay Foundation
LTC	Long-Term Care
LTCI	Long-Term Care Insurance
LTS	Long term stay
MM2H	Malaysia My Second Home Program
PERMA	Positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement
RMP	Retirement migration program

SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Standard error
SET	Social Exchange Theory
Spss	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRRV	Special Resident Retiree's Visa
SWB	Subjective well-being
THB	Thai baht
TAT	Tourism Authority of Thailand
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nation
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION OF CHAPTER 1

Due to the rapid development of transportation and technology and its accessibility, world tourism has gained importance in people's lives. This creates an interest in the people for hyper-mobile where people visit foreign locations, live abroad experience a new way of life and visit interesting places. Greater connectivity between and among countries has promoted human mobility within the region and outside the region that involves internal and international migrants. The Asia and the Pacific region are the homes to a growing number of migrants moving from their communities to others in the same country or to other countries. A large number and proportion of international migrants arrive and settle in cities, mainly in large metropolitan areas or "global cities" which also serve as "immigrant gateways".

As a result of increasing communication technology and the internet in the globalization of information, both investment and people have increasingly crossed over national borders. In the 21st century, many new forms of mobility have developed such as overseas working, studying, cross-border marriage, season stay, and international retirement migration. In the past, most migration of people was from developing countries to the more developed ones, but now the movement from developed countries to less developed ones is obviously increasing. The phenomenon of international retirement migration to a new country has been taking place from as early as the 1970s in Northern Europe (R. King et al., 1998). Retirees from the United Kingdom and Germany migrated to areas near the Mediterranean Sea. Retirees from Japan migrated to America's Pacific coast and Hawaii at the end of the 19th century until the 1970s as a consequence of economic reasons. However, in the 1980s most Japanese migrate for other reasons, such as lower prices of goods and services, more comfortable living environment, and self-satisfaction with a new lifestyle (Stapa et al., 2013). Overseas living in the retirement period is known as long-stay tourism, season stay, international retirement migration, and lifestyle migration, depending on the definition of each organization, for example, Long Stay Foundation (LSF), Ministry of Tourism and Culture of Malaysia, Chiang Mai Longstay Life Club (CLL), and so on.

Between the 1960s and 1970, human mobility occurred among retirees and high-income earners to seek a better environment to live abroad which is called International Retirement Migration (IRM) or long stay tourism. IRM is part of the international migration movement, defined as long-term or permanent migration abroad rather than leisure for the short term as holidays and business trips (C. M. Hall & Müller, 2004). IRM started as countryside recreation as a part of lifestyle and leisure culture especially in Nordic countries (Lipkina, 2013) and has

become popular since the purchase or rental of estates in foreign destinations (Nouza et al., 2018). It, later, contributes to the regional economies in most tourism destinations (C. M. Hall & Müller, 2004). Long stay homes range in type from non-mobile apartments, villas, and semi-mobile caravans to tents and movable sailing boats (C. M. Hall & Müller, 2004). Retirees from the United States of America (USA), Europe and Japan move to Southeast Asia, including Malaysia and Thailand, especially for a better quality of life after their retirement (Howard, 2008; Ono, 2008, 2010). They look at retirement as an opportunity for their second life to set new goals, activities, experience living in foreign destinations and opportunity to do volunteer work (Williams et al., 2000).

The LSF's annual report ranked the most popular destinations of Japanese migrants worldwide, with Thailand consistently being ranked second since 2011 after Malaysia (Figure 1.1).

No	1992	2000	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
1	Hawaii	Australia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia
2	Canada	Hawaii	Australia	Australia	Australia	Hawaii	Hawaii	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand
3	Australia	New Zealand	Thailand	Thailand	Hawaii	Australia	Thailand	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii	Hawaii
4	U.S.A	Canada	New Zealand	Hawaii	Thailand	Thailand	Australia	Australia	Australia	Australia	Australia	Australia	Taiwan	Taiwan	Philippines
5	New Zealand	Spain	Hawaii	New Zealand	New Zealand	New Zealand	Canada	Canada	New Zealand	New Zealand	Canada	Philippines	Philippines	Philippines	Australia
6	Swiss	British	Canada	Canada	Canada	Canada	New Zealand	New Zealand	Canada	Philippines	New Zealand	New Zealand	Australia	Australia	Taiwan
7	British	Swiss	Spain	Philippines	Spain	Philippines	Philippines	Indonesia	Philippines	Singapore	Singapore	Canada	Canada	U.S.A	Canada
8	France	Italy	Indonesia	Indonesia	Indonesia	Indonesia	Spain	Philippines	Singapore	U.S.A	U.S.A	Singapore	Singapore	Singapore	Indonesia
9	Spain	U.S.A	British	Spain	Philippines	Spain	Indonesia	Taiwan	Indonesia	Canada	Philippines	Taiwan	Indonesia	Canada	Singapore
10	U.S.A	Malaysia	U.S.A	U.S.A	U.S.A	U.S.A	Swiss	Singapore	Taiwan	Indonesia	Indonesia	Indonesia	New Zealand	New Zealand	U.S.A

Figure 1.1 Popular destinations of Japanese migrants by country

Source: Long Stay Foundation, <https://www.longstay.or.jp/releaselist/entry-3449.html>

Before the year 2000, Japanese had a desire to stay in English-speaking countries, like the USA, Canada, and Australia, but since the year 2000 to date, Southeast Asian countries, like Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines have become more popular due to the warm weather and cheaper cost of living than their country of origin (Japan).

Statistics released revealed that tourist arrivals in the region under long stay program have increased steadily between 2011 and 2015, within those five years, tourist arrivals increased from 81.3 million to 108.9 million people (Siew, 2017). While Thailand is one of the most visited countries in the region and is better known among foreigners, Malaysia is actually one of the top global retirement destinations. According to 'The World's Best Places to Retire in 2017

from Live and Invest Overseas' and the most current 'Best Places to Retire Abroad' list from 'International Living', Malaysia is one of the few countries that are ranked within the top 10 of both lists (Siew, 2017). The Malaysian government established the "Malaysia My Second Home Program" ("MM2H") policy, promoting the climate, security and medical level, in addition to using media exposure to establish the image of Malaysia as a desirable long stay country. The Philippines, ranked 4th in the survey, offers the high convenience of a "Retirement Visa (SRRV)" that can be acquired from the age of 35 and allows permanent residence, and was highly evaluated. In contrast, Thailand offers a "Non migrant type O" visa to foreigners who are aged over 50-years-old with at least 800,000 Thai Baht in a savings account in a bank in Thailand, and the need to report to immigration every time they spend a night elsewhere and every 90 days. The purpose of stay is not for income generation, and the visa must be extended yearly. In order to understand the movement of retirees, section 1.1 introduces the background of Japanese retirement and the steps for supporting them in Thailand.

Tourism could be seen as a recruiting post of retirement migration (Rodriguez, 2001), several Japanese retirees have lived most of their retirement life outside Japan while still keeping close contact with friends and family at home. The rapidly changing demographic structure directly affected Japan's social welfare system, hence in 1989, the Japanese Government established a long-stay project to encourage Japanese retirees to spend their pension wisely by traveling to long-stay amenities abroad. On the other side, the receiving countries in Southeast Asia were also trying to attract well-off long-stayers by offering special visas and hassle-free mechanisms (Toyota & Xiang, 2012).

1.1 BACKGROUND OF INTERNATIONAL JAPANESE RETIREMENT

Since 1986 to 1989 Japan was in a booming economy, and the Japanese government offered the option of migrating abroad, called the "Silver Columbia 92" plan, to retired people to move to Spain, Canada, Australia, and U.S. The purpose of this plan was mainly to live a life that they could afford overseas due to the strong Japanese Yen and to invest in real estate. Although it ended up being like an abandoned elderly plan, the demand of staying abroad continued. In 1989, the Japanese government established a long stay 90 project, replacing the Silver Columbia 92 plan to encourage Japanese retirees to travel to a long-term residence abroad.

In the early 2000s, when the retirement of baby boomers was approaching, "long stay" was featured in the mass media as not emigration but about spending most of the year abroad. This was marketed as in order to allow pensioners to use pensions to live in a foreign country with a lower cost of living and live more comfortably than in Japan. The definition of "long stay" by the general foundation corporation Long Stay Foundation of Japan (LSF) consists of the

following five requirements. The first is a relatively long stay. It is leisure time for a long stay type of more than two weeks. The second is owning or renting a “residential facility” abroad and the third is that the purpose of living is for leisure and exchange activities with local people. The fourth is an aim for life rather than travel, while the fifth is having a source of living capital in Japan and no local labor income. Under long stay program, Japanese retirees are generating overseas leisure time that contributes to international goodwill to the local society. Thailand is chosen as a research study for Japanese International Retirement Migration due to a few factors like:

Popularity Among Japanese Retirees:

Thailand is one of the most favored destinations for Japanese retirees due to its affordability, warm climate, and proximity to Japan. The country has a well-established Japanese expatriate community, making it easier for retirees to integrate and access familiar cultural and social networks. Based from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2023), Thailand becomes the fifth popular country of Japanese nationals residing abroad as shown below:

United States: Approximately 415,000 Japanese nationals.

China: Around 101,790 Japanese nationals.

Australia: About 99,830 Japanese nationals.

Canada: Approximately 75,110 Japanese nationals.

Thailand: Around 72,310 Japanese nationals.

United Kingdom: Approximately 64,970 Japanese nationals.

Brazil: Approximately 48,000 Japanese nationals.

Germany: Around 42,000 Japanese nationals.

South Korea: Approximately 41,000 Japanese nationals.

France: About 36,000 Japanese nationals.

Therefore, Thailand is chosen for the study on Japanese international retirement migration due to its significant appeal among Japanese retirees. Its appeal stems from factors such as an affordable cost of living, a warm climate, high-quality healthcare services, cultural compatibility, and a well-developed infrastructure that caters to the needs of foreign retirees. These factors make Thailand an ideal location to explore the patterns and impacts of international retirement migration.

Among other factors are:

Government Support for Retirement Migration:

Thailand actively promotes International Retirement Migration (IRM) through programs like the Retirement Visa (O-A Visa), which specifically targets foreign retirees, including Japanese nationals. These policies make Thailand an attractive and practical destination for retirees looking to relocate, and a better place for studying about IRM program among Japanese retirees.

Economic and Lifestyle Factors:

The cost of living in Thailand is significantly lower than in Japan, allowing retirees to maintain a comfortable lifestyle on limited pensions or savings. Thailand offers high-quality healthcare at competitive costs, which is a critical consideration for aging populations. These incentives also make Thailand a popular country to study about IRM program.

Cultural Appeal and Familiarity:

Many Japanese retirees are drawn to Thailand's cultural compatibility, including its cuisine, traditions, and the friendliness of Thai people. Established Japanese amenities, such as Japanese restaurants, schools, and businesses in areas like Bangkok and Chiang Mai, cater specifically to the needs of Japanese residents. These factors make Thailand an ideal setting for exploring the motivations and experiences of Japanese retirees choosing to live abroad.

Growing Trend of Retirement Migration:

The phenomenon of retirement migration from Japan to Thailand has been steadily increasing. Studying this specific flow provides valuable insights into how destination countries can adapt policies to attract and support retirees from abroad.

Gap in Existing Research:

While international retirement migration is a growing area of interest, there is limited research focusing specifically on Japanese retirees in Thailand. This makes the subject both relevant and unique, addressing a specific niche in migration and aging studies.

Thailand represents a unique and well-suited case for examining IRM programs, especially for Japanese retirees. Its policies, affordability, cultural appeal, and growing retiree population

make it an ideal destination for analyzing the dynamics of international retirement migration. According to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the number of Japanese residents in Thailand was approximately 72,310 as of October 2023, down from about 78,431 in October 2022 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2024). This indicates a decline rather than an increase in recent years. Additionally, data from 2017 reported around 72,000 Japanese residents in Thailand, suggesting that the population remained relatively stable over the past decade.

As of September 15, 2024, Japan's population aged 65 and over reached a record high of 36.25 million, accounting for 29.3% of the total population. However, specific data on the number of retirees, individuals who have exited the workforce is not directly provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2024) or other official sources. It's noteworthy that a significant portion of Japan's senior population remains active in the labor market. In 2023, there were 9.1 million workers aged over 65, marking the twentieth consecutive year of increase in this demographic. This trend reflects a cultural inclination among older Japanese individuals to continue working beyond traditional retirement age, influenced by factors such as financial necessity, a sense of purpose, and societal norms. Therefore, it can be estimated that the number of retirees in Japan in 2023 is around 27.15 million, but there is a lack of detailed statistics on the exact number of Japanese retirees living abroad (Statista. (2023).

This research focuses more on the push-pull factors, the effect of subjective well-being, social integration and life satisfaction towards cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees who live in Thailand. Focusing on Thailand, the study will reveal the push-pull factors and factors that help the cultural assimilation among them.

1.1.1 Historical population

According to the Statistical Bureau of Japan, the population of Japan as of August 2022 is at 125.08 million, including foreign residents. The population of only Japanese nationals was 122.2 million in August 2022 (Statistic Bureau of Japan, 2022). Japan was the world's eleventh-most populous country as of 2018. The total population had declined by 0.8 percent from the time of the census five years previously, the first time it had declined since the 1945 census. Since 2010, Japan has experienced net population loss due to falling birth rates and minimal immigration, despite having one of the highest life expectancies in the world, at 85.00 years as of 2016. Using the annual estimate for October of each year, the population peaked in 2008 at 128,083,960 and had fallen by 2,983,352 by October 2021 (United Nation, 2022).

Based on 2012 data from the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Japan's population will keep declining by about one million people every year in the coming

decades, which would leave it with a population of around 70 million by 2060 and 42 million by early 22nd century if the current projections do not change (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2012). More than 40% of the population is expected to be over the age of 65 in 2060 (BBC News, 2012). In 2021 the population had for fifteen consecutive years declined by 644,000 on this year, the largest drop on record since 1945 and also reflecting a record low of 831,000 births. As of 2013 more than 20 percent of the population of Japan were aged 65 and over (Japan Today, 2014).

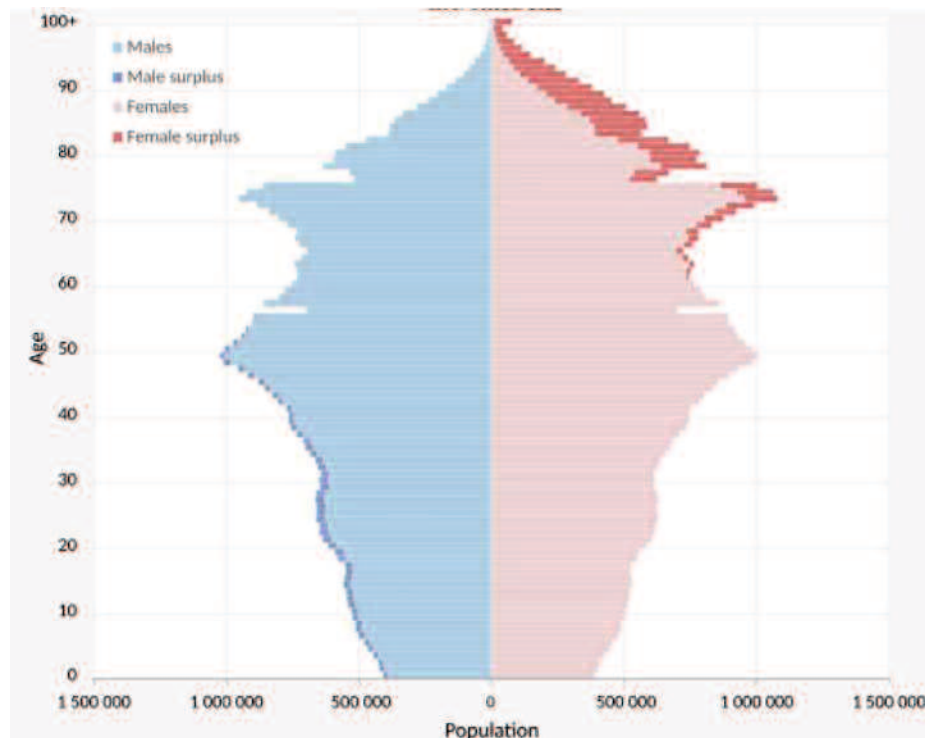


Figure 1.2: Japanese Population Pyramid of year 2021

Source: Statistic Bureau of Japan

Population pyramid 2021	
Population	124,840,000 ⁽¹⁾ (11th)
Growth rate	-0.39% (2022 est.)
Birth rate	6.95 births/1,000 population
Death rate	11.59 deaths/1,000 population
Life expectancy	84.83 years
• male	81.82 years
• female	87.9 years
Fertility rate	1.30 children
Infant mortality rate	1.9 deaths/1,000 live births
Net migration rate	0.74 migrant(s)/1,000 population
Sex ratio	
Total	0.95 male(s)/female (2022 est.)
At birth	1.06 male(s)/female
Nationality	
Nationality	Japanese
Major ethnic	Japanese

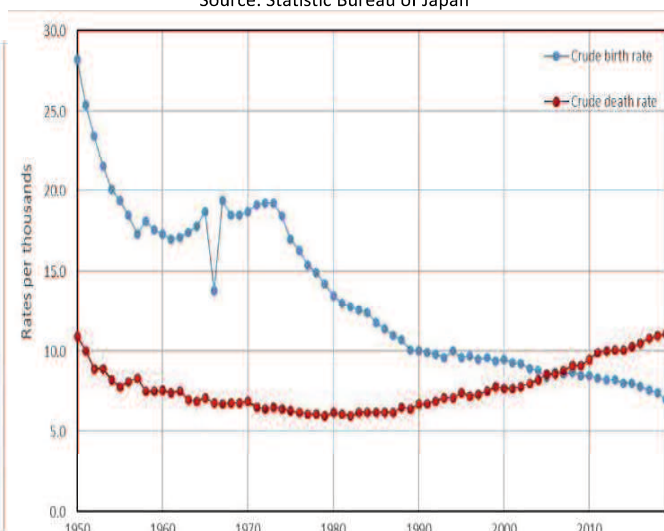


Figure 1.3: Japanese birth and death rates since 1950

Source: Statistic of Bureau of Japan

<http://www.stat.go.jp/English/data/handbook/c02cont.htm>

1.1.2 Aging of Japan

Japan's population is aging faster than that of any other nation (D.M., 2014). In 2014, 26% of Japan's population was estimated to be 65 years or older, and the Health and Welfare Ministry has estimated that over-65s will account for 40% of the population by 2060 (The Guardian, 2014). The demographic shift in Japan's age profile has triggered concerns about the nation's economic future and the viability of its welfare state.

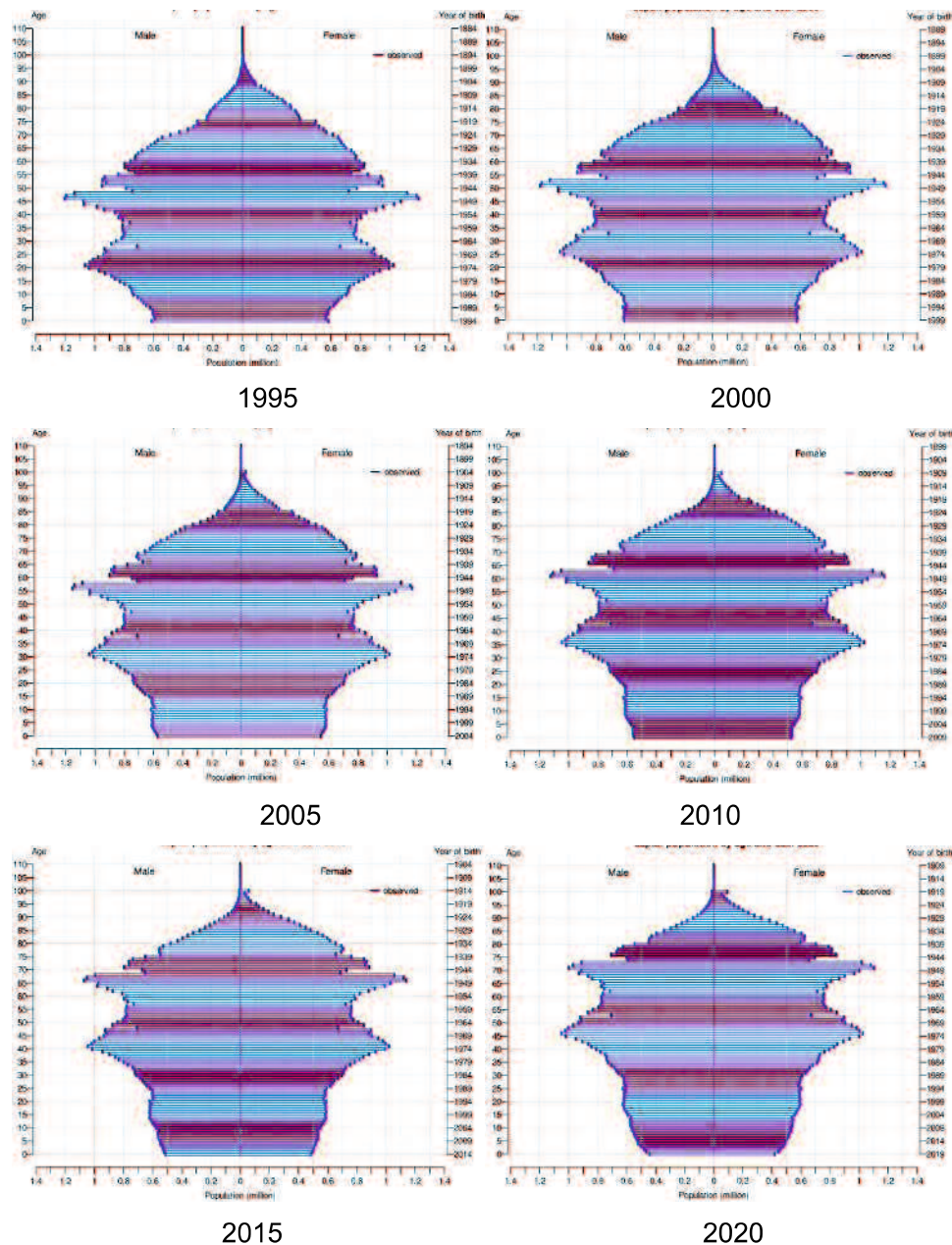


Figure 1.4: The demographic shift in Japan's age profile

Source: <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/>

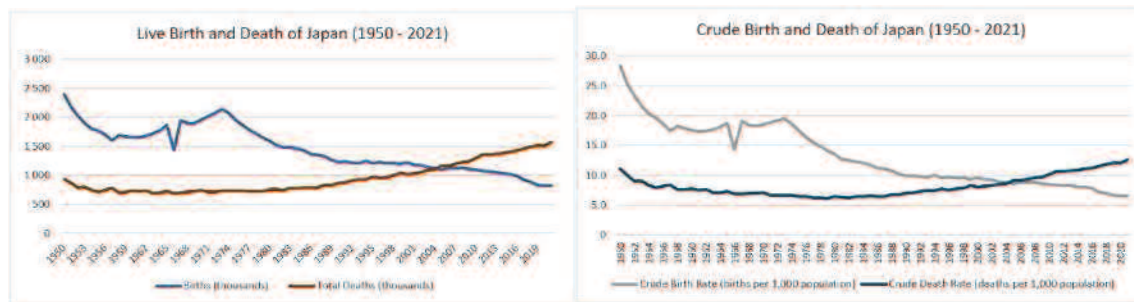


Figure 1.5: Live and crude of birth and death in Japan

Source: Population UN, <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/>

Year	Total Population (census; in thousands)	Population by age (%)		
		0-14	15-64	65+
1940	73,114	36.1	59.2	5.7
1945	71,998	36.8	58.1	5.1
1950	83,199	35.4	59.6	4.9
1955	89,275	33.4	61.2	5.3
1960	93,418	30.2	64.1	5.7
1965	98,274	25.7	68.0	6.3
1970	103,720	24.0	68.9	7.1
1975	111,939	24.3	67.7	7.9
1980	117,060	23.5	67.3	9.1
1985	121,048	21.5	68.2	10.3
1990	123,611	18.2	69.5	12.0
1995	125,570	15.9	69.4	14.5
2000	126,925	14.6	67.9	17.3
2005	127,767	13.7	65.8	20.1
2010	128,057	13.2	63.7	23.1
2015	127,094	12.6	60.7	26.6
2020	126,226	12.0	59.3	28.8

Table 1.1: Overview of the changing age distribution 1935–2020

Source: Statistic Bureau of Japan

<http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/nenkan/1431-02.htm>

Japan is aging fast. Its 'super-aged' society is the oldest in the world: 28.7% of the population are 65 or older, with women forming the majority. The country is also home to a record 80,000 centenarians. By 2036, people aged 65 and over will represent a third of the population. Since 2011, the Japanese population has also been shrinking: it is a rare case of large country whose overall population is becoming smaller in prosperous and peaceful times. Japan's population is expected to drop from 127 million in 2015 to 88 million by 2065. Japan's demographic crisis is the consequence of the combination of two elements: a high life expectancy and a low fertility rate.

In 2018, Japan had the second highest life expectancy in the world. Meanwhile, since the 1970s the country has failed to raise its fertility rate to the replacement level. The working culture, a deterioration of employment opportunities for young men and the traditional gender

division of labour are possible explanations for this trend. The consequences of the country's aging and shrinking population include economic crisis, budgetary challenges, pressure on job markets and depopulation of rural areas. The silver economy is meanwhile flourishing and Japan is at the forefront of robot development to face a declining labour force and to take care of its elderly. The government's efforts to address the demographic crisis have yet to succeed however, and immigration has been limited. Tokyo is engaged in global health cooperation and succeeded in incorporating the concept of human security in the sustainable development goals. It has also been active in international cooperation on ageing, with a focus on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region. The EU's own ageing society is not far behind Japan. It could benefit from learning from Japan's experience, and cooperating on all aspects relating to demographic challenges, including on 'agetech': technology making comfortable longevity accessible to all. (D'Ambrogio, 2020)



Figure 1.6: Japan as the World Oldest 'super-aged' society

Source: The Diplomat, https://thedi diplomat.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/sizes/td-story-s-2/thedi diplomat_2016-11-

Population projections from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs confirm that Japan will remain the world's most aged country for at least the next few decades. The 2019 Revision of World Population Prospects, released in June 2019, predicts the proportion of people aged 65 years and older in Japan will increase from the current level of 28 percent to 38 percent by 2050 (Nakagawa, 2019). During this period, Japan's population will shrink by nearly 20 percent. These demographic trends set the fundamental context for challenges and changes in Japanese society in the coming decades.

Japan's population has been getting older over the past 100 years, but this process accelerated at the turn of the century when the large cohort of post-war baby boomers, born in the late 1940s to early 1950s, began joining the elderly population. Between 2000–2010, the country's population aged 65 and over increased by an unprecedented 7 million. This population is likely to increase by another 7 million by 2020 (Nakagawa, 2019). According to

the government's official population projections conducted by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (IPSS), the elderly population will continue to grow though at a slower pace until it peaks at around 2040, when the second baby-boomer generation (the children of the post-war baby boomers) passes the age of 65. At this time, a much smaller younger population will face the task of supporting this large number of elderly Japanese (Nakagawa, 2019). The conventional indicator of an aging population: the proportion of people aged 65 and over may lead to its extent and impacts in Japan being underestimated. IPSS projections suggest that the country's population aged 75 and over will increase by 20 percent from 2020 to 2040, while the increase will be limited to around 8 percent for those aged 65 and over. The most significant growth is projected for the 'oldest old population': 65 percent for those aged 85 and over, and more than 250 percent for those aged 100 and over. The 'aging of the elderly population' has serious implications for the public systems of medical and long-term care, pensions and social protection for older people. Much attention is being paid to the provision of care services, and in this regard knowing where older people live is fundamental to ensuring appropriate public policy and community responses. IPSS projections expect the most significant growth in Japan's elderly population to occur in metropolitan regions, where there are currently relatively large working-age populations.



Figure 1.7: Japan's population aged 65 and over increased by an unprecedented 7 million.

Source: East Asia Forum, <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2019/10/17/japan-is-aging-faster-than-we-think/>

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Japan currently has the world's highest proportion of older people and the largest number of centenarians. According to the stereotype, Japan's tradition of strong family care for older people means that dedicated and responsible children look after dependent older parents within extended family living arrangements, with very few institutions for the elderly. In reality extensive family 'care' sometimes featured disturbing neglect and abuse of vulnerable older people, with many 'abandoned' older patients effectively left resident in hospitals with little or no need of medical care. Japan's post-2000 social care reform widened the spectrum of

service delivery beyond traditional family practice, but has resolved neither 'care-giving hell' nor 'social hospitalisation'.

As informed earlier, Japan, the world's third largest economy, has been experiencing the issue of population aging to an unprecedented degree. More than 20 percent of Japan's population is over 65 years old, the highest proportion in the world. The proportion was 28.4% in 2019 and is expected to reach 33.3% in 2036 and 38.4% in 2065 (Sawaji, 2021). By 2030, one in every three people will be 65 or older, and one in five people will be over 75 years old. The rapid aging process in Japan is striking because of the high rate of economic growth and changes in family and social structures in the post-war period and low fertility rates. The decline in Japan's fertility rate has been attributed to several factors such as changing lifestyles, people marrying later in life or not marrying at all, and the economic insecurity of younger generation. Factors such as improved nutrition, advanced medical and pharmacological technologies, and improved living conditions have all contributed to the longer than average life expectancy which is 84 years, as compared to 72 years fifty years ago.

There are two fundamental aspects behind Japan's aging population. One aspect is the increase in the proportion of the elderly in the total population. The other is the slower growth of the population, arising directly from the declining fertility rate. The former affects Japan's economic performance by increasing the social security burden. The latter has a direct impact on economic growth by reducing the labor force, which is a major factor in production. The labor force will be reduced as senior workers will eventually retire and leave the workforce. Unfortunately, there is not enough young people in Japan to fill this vacuum owing to the decline in the fertility rate as well. The impact of aging could drag down Japan's average annual GDP growth by 1 percentage point over the next three decades. The causal effect of aging is leaving its mark on the macroeconomy of Japan, especially the labor force and capital accumulation. This further implies that some of Japan's big industries like motor vehicles and electronics do not possess the manpower to continue at the current level of production. If Japan cannot maintain its levels of production, it may subsequently lose its spot as the third largest economy in the world. (Walia, 2019)

The rapid population aging causes acute and profound changes in intergenerational relations, national pension systems, medical care and long-term care programs, and gender relations in the family and the workplace. The IMF also calculated that the impact of aging could drag down Japan's average annual GDP growth by 1 percentage point over the next three decades and will inevitably increase financial pressure on the social security system, which will be transferred to their younger citizens, making it increasingly expensive to live. The issue of

aging is also likely to make untenable the seniority system among the labor force, in which wages increase in proportion to length of service with a company. This leads to fewer promotion opportunities and also damages workers' morale.

Higher female labor force participation is needed and companies are pressured to hire more women and give more leadership positions to women. More elderly people are encouraged to play active roles in the labor force, but this is not a good idea as healthier individuals are better able to work longer and with more energy, which suggests that protecting older individuals' health will intensify their productivity and labor force participation. (Walia, 2019). In addition to save in healthcare costs, effective health promotion programs will therefore lead to gain in productive labor. A healthy population will also lead to higher savings rates, lower medical expenses, and increased foreign direct investment. Therefore, the nation came up with the idea of allowing more younger and skilled foreign workers to work in Japan in a controlled manner. A new regulation that came into effect in April 2019 created two residence/visa status types for foreign individuals working in sectors that are suffering from labor shortages. The government has also come up with an idea of making Japan an "age-free society" in which people age 65 and older will not be considered senior citizens and will rather be encouraged to stay healthy and keep working.

According to the stereotype, Japan's tradition of strong family care for older people means that dedicated and responsible children look after dependent older parents within extended family living arrangements. However, the ability of families to care for elderly members today is declining. As people are living longer and fewer babies are being born, the factors behind the rapid aging of the population, the ability of families to take care of their elderly members has weakened. Another significant factor is the change in the role of women who have been chiefly responsible for household duties such as housework, child care, and care of the elderly. It has become economically difficult for women to live simply as a "housewife", and a double-income family has become necessary due to high cost of living. Nowadays, both husband and wife work outside the home and housing is often small and too crowded for the old parents to live together. Similarly, a shift of population from rural to urban areas resulted in the overcrowding of cities and depopulation of the country side, causing a breakdown in traditional community ties. Neighborly relationships and mutual assistance prerequisites for living in the traditional society have become weaker and weaker with advanced industrialization and urbanization. Caring for the elderly is sometimes neglected and many 'abandoned' older patients are left in the hospitals with little of medical care. Therefore, care and support programs for the elderly are becoming necessary and there is pressing concern to make the elders more active and healthier in their old age.

Public assistance for long-term care for the elderly began to be carried out as “welfare” under the Act on Social Welfare for the Elderly, which was enacted in 1963. Older persons in need of assistance were considered “low-income seniors without close family members to support them.” Thus, “nursing homes” (yoro shisetsu)¹ under the public assistance system were considered to be outlets for those older persons who were exceptions to the rule. The Act on Social Welfare for the Elderly continued to support public assistance-based nursing facilities as “nursing homes for the elderly” (yogo rojin hoomu)² and also established intensive care homes for the elderly” (tokubetsu yogo rojin hoomu, or “tokuyo”)³ in response to the need to provide for those elderly people in need of constant care. In 1983, the Health and Medical Services Act for the Aged was introduced, abolishing free healthcare for the elderly which require the elderly to pay a modest copayment. The Health and Medical Services Act for the Aged also played an important role in terms of long-term care. Not only did this law create a system to share the burden of medical expenses for those aged 70 and up among all of the medical insurance systems, but it also prescribed consistent health and medical services from prevention to rehabilitation.

It was owing to this legislation that municipalities started offering medical check-ups for the elderly. With the revision of the act in 1987, health facilities for the aged (rojin hoken shisetsu)⁴,

¹yoro shisetsu: (養老施設)

Meaning: "Elderly Welfare Facilities."

Explanation: These are facilities established to provide care and support for older adults who cannot live independently due to age or disability. They offer general assistance, housing, meals, and sometimes light medical care.

Example: An older adult without family support might reside in a yoro shisetsu to receive daily assistance with meals and basic living needs.

Source: Linguee. (n.d.). 特別養護老人ホーム (Tokubetsu Yōgo Rōjin Hōmu).

² yogo rojin hoomu:(養護老人ホーム)

Meaning: "Care Homes for the Elderly."

Explanation: These are residential facilities designed for older adults who do not require intensive medical care but need assistance with daily activities due to aging, physical weakness, or limited family support.

³ tokubetsu yogo rojin hoomu, or tokuyo: (特別養護老人ホーム) or Tokuyo (特養)

Meaning: "Special Nursing Homes for the Elderly."

Explanation: These facilities cater to elderly individuals who require more intensive, long-term care due to significant physical or mental disabilities. They are typically reserved for those with the highest levels of need under Japan's long-term care insurance system.

Example: A person with severe dementia or physical disabilities requiring 24-hour care might be admitted to a tokubetsu yogo rojin hoomu

Source: Kiracare. (n.d.). *What are Special Nursing Homes for the Elderly? Entry conditions and facility features explained*

⁴ rojin hoken shisetsu: 老人保健施設

Meaning: "Elderly Health Care Facility" or "Elderly Health Care and Welfare Facility."

Explanation: This type of facility provides medical care, rehabilitation, and support for elderly people who need assistance but do not require the high level of care found in nursing homes (tokubetsu yogo rojin hoomu). It serves as an intermediate care option for elderly people who require support in maintaining their health and mobility but are not severely disabled. These facilities focus on health care and rehabilitation services, including physical therapy, nursing care, and daily life support.

or roken⁵) were established as intermediary facilities to take care of the elderly between being hospitalized and staying at home; these were intended to complement the already existing intensive care home for the elderly. A further revision of the act in 1991 introduced the visiting nursing system. To address the elderly issues, Japanese government has introduced and implemented the following major policies and programs: Japan's initial overall success with Long-Term Care Insurance (LTCI) is encouraging the elderly to migrate to other countries. Within a short period, LTCI has been widely accepted in Japanese society.

The increase in the proportion of the elderly in the total population, and the need of foreign labors to address the labor shortage resulting in the increasing demand for international retirement migration (IRM), or second home program. Retirees' migration become more popular with the intention to search for a more affordable living environment and a second home retirement destination. This is a new form of international human mobility, where the movement of elderly people in their later lives to places that offers more favorable features and better life quality after retirement (Balkir & Kirkulak-Uludag, 2009).

International retirement migration (IRM) become popular among Japanese people, especially Japanese retirees. For Japanese retirees who utilise this program, the primary purpose to stay abroad is to enjoy living in a warm climate, to explore the cultural and natural attractions that the country offers, and to take advantage of the relatively inexpensive living cost. Moreover, rising costs in major cities like Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama and Nagoya also encourages more retirees to move to cheaper locations within Japan and abroad. In these respect overseas destinations with cheaper costs of living, political stability and countries with a semblance of safety will attract an increasing number of retirees from Japan, Therefore, travel by those aged 65 years has increased rapidly, while the number of people aged less than 65 years traveling overseas is in decline (Hongsrnagon, 2005).

Example: An elderly individual recovering from a surgery or stroke, requiring rehabilitation and medical supervision, would be placed in a rojin hoken shisetsu for rehabilitation and monitoring.

⁵ Roken (ロケン)

Source: Japanese Law Translation. (n.d.). *Medical Care Act*. Retrieved from <https://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp/en/laws/view/4006>

Explanation: In everyday conversation or informal contexts, the term "Roken" is used as shorthand for the full term "Rojin Hoken Shisetsu". It refers to the same type of facility but is more commonly used in casual discussions.

Example: Elderly person needing health care or recovery from illness/surgery

Source: Japan Association of Geriatric Health Services Facilities. (2012)

Year	Total	Population (in 1,000)			Proportion (%) by age group		
		Age 0-14 (years)	Age 15-64 (years)	Age 65+ (years)	Age 0-14 (years)	Age 15-64 (years)	Age 65+ (years)
2015	126,597	15,827	76,818	33,952	12.5	60.7	26.8
2020	124,100	14,568	73,408	36,124	11.7	59.2	29.1
2025	120,659	13,240	70,845	36,573	11.0	58.7	30.3
2030	116,618	12,039	67,730	36,849	10.3	58.1	31.6
2035	112,124	11,287	63,430	37,407	10.1	56.6	33.4
2040	107,276	10,732	57,866	38,678	10.0	53.9	36.1
2045	102,210	10,116	53,531	38,564	9.9	52.4	37.7
2050	97,076	9,387	50,013	37,676	9.7	51.5	38.8
2055	91,933	8,614	47,063	36,257	9.4	51.2	39.4
2060	86,737	7,912	44,183	34,642	9.1	50.9	39.9

Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (2012)

Table 1.2: Changes in absolute population size (in 1,000) and proportion (%) by age group: Japan 2015-2060

Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research https://www.ipss.go.jp/site-ad/index_english/Survey-e.asp

At the same time, Japan has opened its country to foreigners to fill the labor shortages. Japan now is internationalizing with many foreigners especially young expatriates who are working here and this process is on the cusp of rapid acceleration. Japan's population is the fastest aging in the world, leaving behind huge swaths of jobs in the country that need filling. In December 2018, Japan's parliament accepted that proposal in a contentious and unprecedented move to let in more immigrant workers than ever before which is 300,000 throughout the next five years, starting in April 2019 (Lufkin, 2018).



Figure 1.8: More elderly people are encouraged to play active roles in the labor force due to shortage of workers

Source: BBC, <https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/images/ic/1024xn/p06v6jbx.jpg.webp>

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to study the motivational push-pull factors that lead the Japanese retirees to stay abroad for long stay program. This research also wants to investigate whether the behavioral phenomena like well-being, social integration, and attitudes play important role for cultural assimilation.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of this research are:

1. To study the intentions (push factor) of the retirees residing in Thailand on their inclination under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program
2. To study the attractions (pull factors) that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.

3. To study the other motivational factors that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
4. To identify the level of social integration of Japanese retiree's communities with the locals.
5. To identify the level of well-being of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
6. To identify the level of life satisfaction of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
7. To identify the level of cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
8. To identify the factors that hinder cultural assimilation among the Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Long Stay (ILS) program
9. To identify the relationship between language acquisition and social integration of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
10. To identify the relationship between social integration and retirees' cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
11. To identify the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
12. To identify the relationship between retirees' attitude and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program
13. To identify the most important factors that cause cultural assimilation among the retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.
14. To study whether high level of support mediates the association between attitudes and social integration.
15. To study whether the language acquisition moderate the linkage between well-being and cultural assimilation.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research questions for this research are as follow:

1. What are the intentions (push factor) of the retirees residing in the host countries on them inclination under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

2. What are the attractions (pull factors) that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
3. What are other motivational factors that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
4. What is the level of social integration among Japanese retirees and towards host country?
5. What is the level of well-being among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
6. What is the level of life satisfaction among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
7. What is the level of cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
8. What are the factors that hinder cultural assimilation among the Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Long Stay (ILS) program?
9. Is there any correlation between language acquisition and social integration of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
10. Is there any correlation between social integration and retirees' cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
11. Is there any correlation between well-being and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
12. Is there any correlation between retirees' attitude and retirees' cultural assimilation?
13. What is the most important factors that cause cultural assimilation among the retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
14. Does high level of support mediate the association between attitudes and social integration?
15. Does language acquisition moderate the linkage between well-being and cultural assimilation?

1.6 DEFINITIONAL OPERATION

1.6.1 Retirement Migration Program

Retirement Migration Program (RMP) is defined by the properties subject to certain conditions such as minimum length of occupancy and proof of possession of documents of the second residence (De Wilde, 1969; Ranee, 2019). This Long Stay Tourism decision is made by people who wish to relocate to a different region in the world for various factors.

1.6.2 Push factors

Internal factors that drive the retirees to travel or live away from their country of residence.

1.6.3 Pull Factors

External attributes that attract and pull the retirees to retire in a particular retirement destination overseas.

1.6.4 Subjective well-being

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to how people experience and evaluate their lives and specific domains and activities in their lives. It is the personal perception and experience of positive and negative emotional responses and global and (domain) specific cognitive evaluations of satisfaction with life.

1.6.5 Social integration

Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society. Social integration, together with economic integration and identity integration, are three main dimensions of a newcomers' experiences in the society that is receiving them.

1.6.6 Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction has been defined as “a person’s cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life” (Diener et al., 2009a). Life satisfaction, meaning in life and hope are some of the most important factors that affect the individual’s thoughts and feelings in situations of danger. In addition, these factors affect how the current situation and the future are evaluated if the danger continues for a long time and people’s order of life starts to deteriorate.

1.6.7 Cultural assimilation

Cultural assimilation is the process in which a minority group or culture comes to resemble a society's majority group or assume the values, behaviors, and beliefs of another group whether fully or partially (Spielberger, 2004). During cultural assimilation, minority groups are expected to adapt to the everyday practices of the dominant culture through language and appearance as well as via more significant socioeconomic factors such as absorption into the local cultural and employment community.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THIS STUDY

As this study involves international retirees who perform extensive trans mobility, the respondents are chosen only from those who migrate in Thailand. The survey questionnaires

are in English and Japanese languages. As the study is based on international retirement migration participants, this may put constraints on the generalisability to the global perspectives. However, it will be able to provide new insights and understanding of international retirees' motivations and overall satisfaction in a retirement destination.

1.8 SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

This study extends the contributions to International Long Stay Tourism or International Retirement Migration program under two categories: theoretical and practical. Theoretical significance deals with how the theory will gain new understanding when applied to the study. This is accomplished by looking at earlier studies similar to ours technically, and this is something a researcher should do anyway to establish the gap in the literature she is attempting to fill. Once the researcher sees how the previous studies expanded the understanding of the theory, she will find the next logical step in how she will further this expansion. Therefore, good understanding of the relevant theory is important and help in better understanding of the study in question while at the same time putting forth a justification for the current study. For example, Lee's Push-Pull Theory gives a clearer explanation why people move from their countries to the foreign countries leaving their sibling and family far from them. Social Exchange Theory provides a better explanation of how individuals' actions are contingent upon rewarding actions from others, which focus more on the attempts to measure and explain the social assimilation among retirees toward the local society.

Practical significance is concerned with whether the result of the research study is useful in the real world. For example, this study concerns more on the pull-push factors for the migration of the retirees and how they adapt themselves to the different society through the cultural assimilation process. This knowledge is very important to be shared to the academics and layman to build a community with good cultural literacy. Previously, upheld discussions on all previous literatures, it is inferred that past studies have not yet looked further on the latest push-pull factors that drive the retirees to migrate and also cultural assimilation among the retirees towards the local society and actions being taken by them to adapt with the new environments. Therefore, this research will study push-pull factors, new cultural assimilation being adapted and factors that attract/hinder them to assimilate in the local culture of the host countries. Besides, social integration, subjective well-being and life satisfaction among the retiree also will be study.

1.9 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 1

This chapter has comprehensively outlined the foundational elements of this study by thoroughly addressing the research questions and objectives that serve as the cornerstone of

the investigation. These research questions and objectives have been carefully articulated and aligned to guide the structure of the discussions in subsequent chapters, ensuring coherence and consistency throughout the study.

A key focus of this chapter has been the delineation of the study's scope, which defines its boundaries and focus areas. By explicitly stating the limitations and specific aspects under consideration, this chapter ensures that the research remains aligned with the requirements of the study title and avoids digressions. This clarity not only streamlines the research process but also strengthens the precision and reliability of the findings. To enhance understanding, important terms and concepts relevant to the study have been defined and discussed. These explanations provide a solid conceptual foundation, enabling readers to grasp the key ideas and variables that underpin the research. This is particularly crucial for complex or nuanced topics, as it ensures that both theoretical and practical aspects are thoroughly understood by a diverse audience, including academics, practitioners, and policymakers.

Furthermore, the significance of the study has been articulated in terms of both theoretical and practical contributions. On the theoretical front, this study aims to fill critical gaps in existing literature by addressing issues that have been underexplored or inadequately addressed in prior research. Practically, the study offers insights that can inform decision-making, policy development, or other real-world applications, thus highlighting its relevance and value.

The review of previous studies has been instrumental in shaping this chapter. By synthesizing and analyzing prior research, this chapter has provided an overview of the current state of knowledge, identifying trends, contradictions, and areas requiring further exploration. These findings have not only contextualized the study within the broader academic discourse but have also facilitated the identification of research gaps. These gaps, which represent opportunities for new contributions, serve as the basis for the study's unique perspective and value.

In conclusion, this chapter lays a strong groundwork for the research by establishing its purpose, focus, and significance. It bridges the existing body of knowledge with the objectives of this study, providing the necessary clarity and justification for the research direction. The discussions in this chapter serve as a roadmap for subsequent chapters, ensuring a well-structured and focused progression of the study. This approach ensures that the study remains meaningful, relevant, and capable of addressing the identified gaps effectively.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION OF CHAPTER 2

International Retirement Migration (IRM) Program is a program that normally occurs on a temporal or semi-permanent basis depending on previous tourist experience, time spent in the origin and host destination, and the ownership of property (King & Warnes, 2000; O'Reilly, 2013). Through globalization (Warnes, 2009), IRM becomes a residential strategy for the retirees upon leaving their career and changing in personal and social conditions (Abellan Garcia, 1993; R. King et al., 1998). It is worthwhile to note that the term IRM may not necessarily refer to the ownership of property in a different country or permanently leaving the original country of residence to reside overseas. Thus, in general, researchers termed "IRH" as the destination of homers on a long-term basis, which acts as a residence of the person who comes from a different location (McIntyre, 2006; Visser, 2006) around the world. Generally, all the motivations could be divided into push and pull factors motivation theory.

IRM has emerged as a significant area of research on tourism related mobility and multiple dwelling. It directly and indirectly contributes a significant number of domestic and international visitors to famous destinations. IRM program all over the world nowadays allow foreign retirees and expatriates who fulfill the requirements to stay in certain countries as their second home. Second home offers a long-term stay at a destination after retirement to enjoy different lifestyle and amenity migration. The concept of residential tourism as one of the most important subsectors of the nowadays tourist industry matches the second home tourism well. IRM users are visitors who stay many nights more than other types of tourists, use owned, rented or time-shared properties in the place chosen for spending their time off, they come to enjoy a lifestyle that they are already used to, and their funds come from their place of origin (Vágner & Fialová, 2011). IRM is therefore deeply embedded in notions and understandings of circulation, home, mobilities, and multiple dwelling as well as their wider impacts, planning, and governance (Ellingsen & Hidle, 2013; Hall & Müller, 2004).

IRM are being originated from Denmark, Finland and Sweden (Khan et al., 2019). It started in 1890's because of the increasing of motivation to rent and possess a second home with the access of nature and beach. At first, people bought their second homes for recreational and leisure-time activities, not for other purposes as it is today. The reason is to be far from hectic life in cities and spend time with family and away from working lifestyle (Khan et al., 2019). In 1960's, second homes became a part of mass culture due to the evolution of mobility and car ownership. This creates a phenomenon where it enables the visitors to drive far away from

their first homes to remote places on the coasts. Not long after that, in 1970's, foreigners start to occupy second homes abroad, it all started after the advertisement made by Danish Tourism Board to encourage foreign tourists to stay in second homes, where then international market starts to evolve in second home tourism. From 1980's to 1990's, second home tourism has been commercialized, and the number of foreign and domestic second home tourists has dramatically increased during this time and become economic importance and dominant branch of tourism industry. In modern second home tourism, since 2000's, second homes started to be a way as international retirement migration for the elderly all over the world.

According to Müller (2011), there are increasing number of retirees began to invest in recreational second homes with the aim to migrate permanently. Retired migrants are presented as a relatively privileged group with few serious problems (Gustafson, 2008). They tend to be financially better off, immune from economic downturns and less destructive and seasonal than tourists (Rodriguez, 2001). Though less than one quarter of 1% of retirees is estimated to spend their retirement days overseas (Banks, 2004), this trend is expected to strengthen with increasing elderly population (United Nation, 2022). Cross-border residential mobility of retirees has become a growing facet of the broad sphere of lifestyle migration (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009) due to a combination of increasing longevity, thriving international mobility, burgeoning telecommunications and widening disparity in post-work incomes (Warnes & Williams, 2006).

This shows that there is demand in the long stay tourism industry from this specific cohort, elderly and retirees around the globe (Vanhove, 2005). Second home program has become new preference for the retirees due to the increase in the wealth, income, mobility and the availability of long-term tourism (Müller, 2006). It is estimated that those above 60 years old, is a growing segment of the global population which will increase from 841 million in 2013 to 2 billion by 2050 (Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, 2013, p. 9), to account for about 21 per cent of the total world population. Among the impacts of an aging population on society particularly in the developing nations is the increase in financial pressure on the social security system which will eventually be passed on to their younger citizens, making it ever increasingly expensive to live. As a result, the demand for overseas second home retirement has increased, urging the retirees to search for a more affordable living environment which offers the better life quality and fulfills their self-actualization needs (Wong & Musa, 2014). For example, with the increasing living costs in the Singapore metropolis, Singaporean retirees and families are shifting to the border city of Johor Bahru in Malaysia (Ormond, 2014).

2.1 THAILAND INTERNATIONAL LONG STAY PROGRAMME FOR JAPANESE RETIREES

Thailand is a target country for many international tourists to travel and also to retire under long-stay tourism, including Japanese retirees. The Japanese are a prominent foreign ethnic minority in Thailand and have a long-term presence there for a variety of reasons, including employment, travel, education, and retirement. Thailand has many things to offer which have attracted tourists like friendly people, beautiful beaches, unique culture, hot climate and low cost of living. The trend of tourism of Thailand has increased continuously. Tourism is an important sector that has gained lucrative income to Thailand; in 2019, US\$63.37 billion, up from US\$23.8 billion in 2010 (The World Bank, 2023).

2.1.1 Long Stay International Retirement Migration: Japanese Retirees in Thailand

Japanese visitors and senior citizens have stayed in a variety of lodging options, including hotels, apartments for rent, and condominiums. The Thai government investigated and conducted several efforts to encourage long-stay tourism, particularly the retirement segment, after realizing the importance of the sector. After the global economic crisis of 2008, it became abundantly clear that the tourist industry was a mainstay of the Thai economy. Thailand is a nation whose economy heavily relies on the travel and tourism sector. Thailand's natural beauty in Southeast Asia has earned it the nickname "Land of Smiles." Many individuals in Thailand depend on the tourism sector to provide a living. Thailand, which is ranked as the ninth nation with the most money generated by tourism, has received THB 2000 yearly since 2014, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). Thailand also drew 32.6 million tourists globally in 2016, placing ninth overall and second in Asia (Madhyamapurush, W., 2023). Thailand's foreign visitors have greatly expanded, and because of this quick expansion, the country placed fourth globally in terms of incoming tourists in 2015. Thailand's capital, Bangkok, continued to rank second among the most popular cities for international travelers.

The fourth quarter of 2016 saw challenges for Thailand's tourism industry as a result of the Thai government's efforts to combat illegal immigration and impose various entertainment-related regulations. The growth of the tourist sector, however, remained steady. Additionally, the foreign tourist receipts for Thailand's tourism business were \$49.9 billion in 2016 and \$44.9 billion in 2015. In 2016, these earnings made up 12.3% of Thailand's GDP. This significant portion of the income from foreign visitors, primarily from China and Europe, is broken down as follows: Europe (THB 460 billion), China (THB 439 billion), America (THB 102 billion), CLMV2 (THB 97 billion), the Middle East (THB 5 billion), and other regions (THB 489 billion) (Madhyamapurush, W., 2023, p. 3).

Based on research conducted by the Population Division, DESA, and the United Nations, the Japanese are a clear example of the rising elderly population. The government has a program to relocate most elderly pensioners to locations that are suited for them to live out their remaining years with a fixed amount of pension. They willfully purchase products and services that support independent living. Their worries about aging and death have sparked the creation of novel goods and services. The creation of specialized goods and services in the fields of health and medical care, home care, real estate, construction, financial services, education and learning, cuisine, cosmetics, travel, and entertainment are all part of the silver market. Most of the real estate and personal financial assets are owned by seniors, and when these assets are passed down through inheritance, there will be a greater need for new financial management services that include more investment than saving and making use of personal financial assets. Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines are three popular travel destinations. Given that Japan is a sizable trading partner and a popular tourist destination, it seems to sense that some of them would choose Thailand as their retirement residence. Currently, a bilateral company oversees other Japanese retirement complexes, and some Japanese families also maintain their private residences for both short-term accommodation and retired living.

Nowadays, many Japanese retirees choose Thailand under long stay tourism (second home program). Thailand is one of the most popular destinations for Japanese older people and becomes second-most popular long-stay destination after Malaysia (Long Stay Foundation, 2018). The Thai government, particularly the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), has been actively promoting long-stay tourism since 2001 as part of the national development strategy (Toyota & Xiang, 2012). Long Stay is regarded as staying in the country for more than 30 days and not for sightseeing activities or working but with a purpose of living with the intention to return to the home countries (Hongsrnagon, 2005). As retirees are the main target group, a special renewable one-year visa is provided for people aged 50 years and above who fulfill certain financial criteria. The Thai government has designated Japan as a primary target country. The idea of Second Home or Long Stay was proposed by Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and approved by the Thai Government in 1998. The registration data for overseas residents in Thailand from 2017 shows that the number of Japanese expatriates doubled in the previous decade, and it was around 81,000 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2022). Immigration Bureau statistics suggest that in 2014, at least 3000 Japanese people stayed in Thailand for over a year using retirement visas, which was up from 1400 in 2007 (Miyashita et al., 2017, p. 2). Phuket and Chiang Mai have great potential because these places have what the retirees are searching for which is accessibility, accommodation options, attractions, including the Lanna Culture and other activities which contribute to the long stay

tourism sectors. Thailand's policy to promote long-stay tourism encourages Japanese retirees to relocate to Thailand. One concern of such an influx is the impact of these elderly foreign residents on the Thai health system.

Many Japanese retirees were healthy and wealthy when they moved to Thailand, so they could enjoy good living conditions and experiencing a different culture during a long stay. Friendly locals, white sand beaches, picturesque ocean shapes, exquisitely preserved rainforests and low cost of living attracts foreign expatriates and retirees to stay here under long stay program. However, those who became sick identified the language barrier as an obstacle when visiting hospitals (Fukahori et al., 2011). Japanese older people living in Thailand seem to be happy, but their quality of life and mental health status are unknown and need to be investigated.

2.2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Conducting a comprehensive review of a previous research study can provide a number of benefits, including the identification of gaps in existing research, a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic, the identification of methodological issues, and the identification of potential areas of the study. Reviewing a previous research study is an important part of the scientific process that allows researchers to build upon existing knowledge and to identify gaps in the literature. By critically evaluating the methods and results of a study, researchers can gain insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the study and can use this information to inform their own research. Here are a few previous studies to be examined to understand more of the new study big done.

A study of 'Push and Pull Factors of Japanese Immigrant in Thailand Since 2002' was done by Thanapum Limsiritong, Tomoyuki Furutani, Prapassorn Chansatitporn and Karnjira Limsiritong was done in 2018. The research aimed to find out and clarify the push and pull factors of Japanese immigrant in Thailand to indicate the Japanese migration role, to analyze the role of Japanese immigrant in Thailand through nationality issues and to indicate migrant management system reconstruction in Thailand in the future. This research was a critical study case of documentary research from the accessible secondary data, and PEST analysis (Political with economic, society, and technology) was used to analyze in clarifying of macro push and pull factors of external concerned points with relate to government and Japanese migrant. According to Thailand-Japan situations that concerned to Japanese migrant in Thailand, the long-term effect of Japanese immigrant was cultivated to Thailand society over generation in the sense of migrant management. Results of this study indicated that the role of Japanese migrant under push and pull factors became essential point of development issues, and a few second-generation studies of Japanese migrant in Thailand was crucial for

government approach. Consequently, the study indicated that Japanese migrant increasing in Thailand as investment part to social adaptation and therefore, the government should realize to reallocate the migration system such as social credibility to Japanese migrant group. This study has strengthened linkages between Thai and Japanese sectors (investment enterprises, society, and positive diversity).

A study made by Asami Kawamata (2015) with title 'The Factors That Affect Japanese Retirees' Decision Making on The Long Stay Tourism in Bangkok'. This study focused on Japanese pensioners who were residing in Bangkok with retirement visa, examined their motivational factors to selecting the city. The main purpose of this study was to clarify their motivational drivers to migrate Bangkok in order to figure out their future needs. The motivation factors were formed to the assessment. The research composed of quantitative survey and qualitative interviews for total 103 respondents and 7 interviewees respectively. The findings showed their main reasons selecting the city were warm climate, hospitality of nation and good environment for outdoor activities. The paper concluded their ultimate purpose to migrate to Bangkok as to seek the well-being of their life in a more comfortable environment. The study also aimed to examine the future needs of Japanese retirees in Bangkok as the city keeps competitiveness as the long stay travel destination for the Japanese retirees.

A study was done by Aswin Sangpikul (2007) with title 'Travel motivations of Japanese senior travelers to Thailand'. This study applied the conceptual framework of push and pull motivations to investigate travel motivations of Japanese senior travelers to Thailand. Using factor analysis, three push and four pull factor dimensions were identified. The three push factors were labeled 'novelty and knowledge-seeking', 'rest and relaxation' and 'ego-enhancement', while the four pull factors were 'cultural and historical attractions', 'travel arrangements and facilities', 'shopping and leisure activities' and 'safety and cleanliness'. Among them, 'novelty and knowledge-seeking' and 'cultural and historical attractions' were regarded as the most important push and pull factors respectively. The results of multiple regression analysis indicate that psychological well-being (i.e. positive affect) and education were the two factors influencing travel motivations of Japanese senior travelers to Thailand.

A study was also done by Yuan Tang & Tara Rava Zolnikov (2021) with title 'Examining Opportunities, Challenges and Quality of Life in International Retirement Migration' aimed to provide more insight into the opportunities and challenges that international retired migrants have encountered while retiring abroad. Through the lens of humanistic theory, this research employed a systematic review of research literature, the majority of which were peer-reviewed studies published within the last five years. The reviewed studies (n = 22) conducted spanned four out of seven continents, with heavy emphasis on Europe, the Americas, and Asia.

Research results indicated that many of the international retired migrants took advantage of the opportunities of pleasant weather, lower cost of living, and various amenities offered by their host countries to enhance their quality of life by engaging in an active and meaningful lifestyle. However, language barriers, lack of social support, rising healthcare costs, increases in the cost of living, uncertain political climate, and different healthcare practices in their host countries, presented considerable challenges to many international retirees.

'Cross-border movement of older patients: A descriptive study on health service use of Japanese retirees in Thailand' is a title of research study made by Yumiko Miyashita, Chutima Akaleephan, Nima Asgari-Jirhandeh & Channarong Sungyuth in 2015. Thailand's policy to promote long-stay tourism encourages Japanese retirees to relocate to Thailand but one concern of such an influx is the impact of these elderly foreign residents on the Thai health system. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the current use of and needs for health services among Japanese retirees residing in various locations in Thailand. In collaboration with nine Japanese self-help clubs in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, and Phuket, questionnaire surveys of Japanese long-stay retirees were conducted from January to March 2015. The inclusion criteria were being ≥ 50 years of age and staying in Thailand for ≥ 30 days in the previous 12 months while the main exclusion criteria included relocation by company, relocation due to marriage, or working migrants. Of the 143 who had health check-ups in the previous 12 months, 48.3% did so in Thailand. The top 3 diseases treated either in Thailand or Japan in the previous 12 months were dental diseases (50 patients), hypertension (44 patients), and musculoskeletal disorders (41 patients), with the rate of treatment in Thailand standing at 46.0, 47.7, and 65.9%, respectively. Of the 106 who saw a doctor in Thailand in the same period, 70.8% did so less than once a month. Only 23.2% of the participants preferred to receive medical treatment for serious conditions in Thailand. However, this number rose to 32.9% for long-term care (LTC) use. As a conclusion, the usage of Thai health services among Japanese long-stay retirees was currently limited as they preferred going back to Japan for health screenings and treatment of chronic or serious diseases. However, the number of Japanese residents requiring health services including LTC and end-of-life care was expected to increase. The potential impact of promoting long-stay tourism on the Thai public health should be acknowledged and investigated by the Thai government, including the tourism authority.

The last research being reviewed here is research made by Sutpratana Duangkaew, from Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand with title 'Cross Cultural Interaction of Japanese Retirees through Clubs in Thailand' in 2019. According to the study, expat living is an increasing phenomenon in the 21st century. This involves not only people from developing countries moving to developed countries for economic or life security reasons,

but also, conversely, some retirees from developed countries decide to live in a less developed country as a second home. This paper explored the mobility of Japanese retirees in Chiang Mai and explained the situation of cross-cultural interaction between the retirees and the locals through Japanese clubs, based on the social capital conception. The data was collected by interviews from 2013 to 2015 and 2019.

In conclusion, three kinds of social capital stimulated the exchange of Japanese clubs and the locals. For the act of bonding social capital, they shared and interacted within their group, comprised of the people who have the same nationality and hobbies. For bridging social capital, there were connections among Japanese clubs and organizations from Japan. Lastly, for linking social capital, being a club member privileges them to participate in the club's recreation and volunteering activities, which becomes a channel for them to get to know the local people. Through these cultural exchange activities, the Japanese can gain a better understanding of Thai culture by promoting co-existence.

2.3 THEORIES

Generally, all the motivations of travelling could be divided into push and pull factors motivation theory.

2.3.1 Migration Theory: Lee's Push-Pull Theory

Understanding of the theory is very important as the theory will guide the research the next logical step in how to further the expansion of the research. Theory is also usually used to help design a research question, guide the selection of relevant data, interpret the data, and propose explanations of the underlying causes or influences of observed phenomena. Good understanding of the theory helps in better understanding of the study in question while at the same time putting forth a justification for the current study.

This research proposes Lee's Push-Pull Theory which is relevant to the research study. Below, shows a diagram to understand about this theory more clearly.

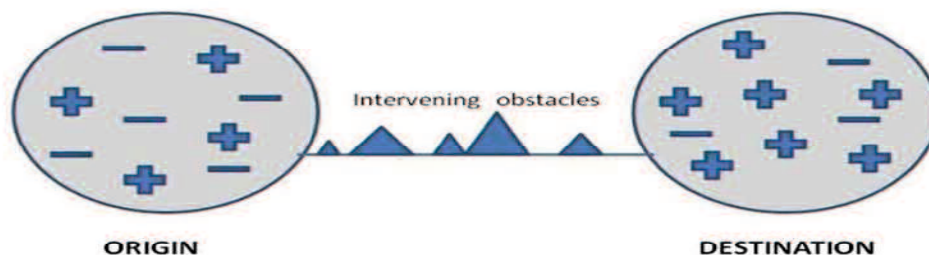


Figure 2.1: Lee's Push-Pull Theory (E. S. Lee, 1966, pp. 50)

Everett Lee proposed a comprehensive theory of migration in 1966 to study floating population and immigrants. The theory holds that the reasons for migration and immigration are because people can improve their living conditions through migration. He begins his formulations with certain factors, which lead to spatial mobility of population to different areas that is generally evident in the motives to leave their country of origin. Lee states that each place possesses a set of positive and negative factors. While positive factors are the circumstances that act to hold people within it, or attract people from other areas, negative factors tend to repel them (E. S. Lee, 1966). In addition to these, there are factors, which remain neutral, and to which people are essentially indifferent. While some of these factors affect most of the people in the area, others tend to have differential effects.

Below are the factors for migrations according to his theory:

- (i) Factors associated with the place of origin-push factor
- (ii) Factors associated with the place of destination-pull factor

2.3.2 Push Factors

Push factors are reasons to push people to move away from their homeland. Push factors are those life situations in one's present homeland that generate dissatisfaction, such as poverty, unemployment, rapid population growth, political repression, and low social status. For example, a variety of push factors existed in England and Ireland during the early decades of the 19th century that would have motivated residents to move elsewhere. Foremost among these were economic and social stresses caused by high unemployment and expanding populations.

In England, the advent of centralization and industrialization drastically reshaped the economy, particularly impacting the artisan class in the southwestern regions. Traditional craftspeople, such as weavers, blacksmiths, and cobblers, faced severe challenges as industrial machinery replaced their manual labor. For instance, the introduction of textile mills rendered handweaving less competitive, leading to widespread job losses in rural areas. This economic upheaval was compounded during the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), when trade between Britain and continental Europe came to a halt due to France's restrictive foreign policies. The blockade led to a sharp decline in the export markets for British goods, further reducing employment opportunities for tradespeople dependent on manufacturing and export-related industries.

With limited prospects in their home regions, many families turned to emigration as a solution. Newfoundland and Labrador, for example, became a popular destination due to its thriving

salt-cod trade and growing economy. Tradesmen, such as shipbuilders and coopers, found work supporting the fishing industry, while others settled into communities where their skills could be utilized to build infrastructure and provide essential services. This migration not only offered economic relief but also allowed these families to escape the overcrowded and competitive job markets of England's industrial centers. By relocating to places like Newfoundland and Labrador, these individuals were able to rebuild their lives, contributing to the development of their new homes while alleviating economic pressures in their places of origin.

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Ireland experienced significant socio-economic challenges that deeply impacted its population, especially the working class. One of the key factors contributing to the struggles in Ireland was the collapse of the textile industry in the southeast. The textile industry had been a significant source of employment, particularly for rural families who engaged in cottage-based weaving and spinning. As this industry declined due to competition from mechanized mills in England and Scotland, thousands of people lost their livelihoods, plunging them into poverty. Additionally, agriculture, the backbone of Ireland's economy, faced severe difficulties during this period. Poor farming seasons from 1770 to 1830, characterized by bad weather and crop failures, reduced food availability. This created widespread hunger and exacerbated economic instability. For example, the failure of oat and potato crops, staples of the Irish diet left many families struggling to feed themselves.

Between 1771 and 1821, Ireland's population soared from about four million to seven million people. This rapid population growth, occurring during a time of economic decline, placed immense pressure on already limited resources, such as land, housing, and jobs. Many people lived in overcrowded, substandard housing conditions, particularly in rural areas and burgeoning towns. For instance, small tenant farmers and laborers often relied on subdivided plots of land that became increasingly smaller as families grew. This system, known as subdivision, led to unsustainable farming practices and further poverty.

Facing hunger, unemployment, and poor living conditions, tens of thousands of Irish people sought a way out by emigrating. Between 30,000 and 35,000 individuals left Ireland for Newfoundland and Labrador in the early decades of the 19th century. These emigrants were primarily motivated by the pull factors like the promise of work, land, or simply the hope of escaping dire conditions at home (Higgins, J.,2008). Many Irish emigrants worked in the Newfoundland cod fisheries, a labor-intensive industry that required a steady workforce. Others sought opportunities in agricultural settlements, where land was more readily available than in overcrowded Ireland. This wave of migration not only reshaped the demographics of

Newfoundland and Labrador but also highlighted the interconnectedness of economic hardship and population movement. The Irish emigrants carried their culture, language, and traditions with them, significantly influencing the social fabric of their new communities.

In summary, the socio-economic conditions in Ireland during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, marked by industrial decline, agricultural struggles, population growth, and limited resources created a crisis for the working class. Emigration became a survival strategy for tens of thousands, with Newfoundland and Labrador serving as key destinations for those seeking a new start.



Figure 2.2: Salt Cod Drying, St. John's pre-1892

Source: Island Musings, <https://islandmusingswithmarie.blogspot.com/2016/04/instructions-required.html>

The salt-cod fishery was mainstay of Newfoundland and Labrador's economy throughout the 1800s. Most immigrants went to Newfoundland and Labrador during the first half of the 19th century came from southwest England or southeast Ireland.

Based from Ibrahim et al. (2019), few jobs and overpopulation of developing countries contribute to push migration to developed countries. Low living standards are another factor that drives migration. Migrants make decisions to migrate to other countries in search of opportunities to improve their lives and those of their families. Migration to developed countries offers opportunities for migrants to improve their incomes and ease their market participation (Llull, 2017). The other economic factors driving migration include natural disasters such as floods that devastate the means of income and create a scarcity of food and shelter arising from the wreckage. Various social factors also drive push migration, for instance the lack of established health care systems also contributes to individuals' hopes to seek better healthcare in other countries (Urbański, 2022). Other social factors pushing migration include the lack of educational opportunities and lack of religious tolerance. Political factors also contribute to migration. For instance, aspects of unfair legal systems, war and terrorism and bad governance contribute to individuals seeking better political environments in other countries (Dustmann & Frattini, 2014).

2.3.3 Pull Factors

Pull factors are exactly the opposite of push factors, which are the positive factors that attract people move to different geographical areas and seek opportunities there (Jayaraman et al., 2010). Pull factor attract the migrants to an area such as opportunities for better employment, higher wages, better facilities, social security, better education, better standard of living, good welfare system, political and religious freedom, good working conditions and amenities. Some of the factors are those that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as it is perceived by those with the propensity to travel. They include both tangible resources, such as beaches, recreational facilities, as well as cultural attractions and travelers' perceptions and expectations, such as novelty, benefit expectation, and marketing images. For example, Newfoundland and Labrador's growing salt cod trade economy and small resident population made it more than capable of absorbing large numbers of immigrants during the early decades of the 19th century; these same factors also made it an attractive destination for migrants wishing to escape poverty and population congestion prevalent in their points of origin.

The Napoleonic and Anglo-American wars of the early 1800s brought much economic prosperity to Newfoundland and Labrador and helped turn its inshore fishery into a resident rather than migratory industry. As French and American fisheries declined between 1804 and 1815, Newfoundland and Labrador cod became more valuable on the international market and the colony's fish exports almost doubled from 625,519 quintals to approximately 1.2 million during the same time period (1 quintal = 50.8 kilograms). European fish merchants established premises on the island and expanded into the supply trade to make groceries, equipment, clothes, and other goods available year-round to the rising number of resident families (Higgins, 2008).



Figure 2.3: Preparing Cod, Cape Rouge, Newfoundland, 1857-1859

Source: Newfoundland Heritage, <https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/society/push-pull-factors.php>

The Napoleonic and Anglo-American wars of the early 1800s gave the colony a virtual monopoly of the salt cod trade and prompted European fish merchants to establish premises

on the island. The 'push-pull' theory considers population movement to be the result of two forces acting in different directions. One is the power to promote population movements, whereas the other is the power of impeding population flows. On the whole, 'push' power tends to be more dominant compared to 'pull power (Lee, 1966). According to this study, due to the push-pull factors, in the late 2000s, South East Asia began to become a popular destination for Japanese retirees that encourage them to leave their points of origin and settle here.

The Push-Pull factors theory helps the researcher to understand more about this study and guides the researcher to design a research question, selection the relevant data, interpret the data, and propose explanations of the underlying causes or influences of the observed phenomena. The Push-Pull Factor theory, originally conceptualized to explain the migration patterns of economically disadvantaged groups seeking better opportunities, remains relevant today but requires contextual adaptation to account for significant socio-economic shifts. In our research, the application of this theory is adjusted to consider the modern phenomenon of migration among wealthy retirees, such as Japanese individuals relocating to Southeast Asia, including Thailand.

Differences in Push Factors:

Traditionally, push factors such as poverty, unemployment, political instability, and lack of resources drove migration. For instance, during the 19th century, Irish migrants fled famine and economic hardships, while English artisans left due to industrialization and job losses.

In contrast, for wealthy retirees today, push factors are more nuanced. These individuals are not fleeing economic hardship but are often motivated by lifestyle-related factors such as high living costs, crowded urban environments, or a desire for a slower pace of life. For example, retirees in Japan may be pushed by the rising cost of living, limited pension resources, or a lack of opportunities to enjoy an active retirement due to urbanization and societal expectations.

Differences in Pull Factors:

Historically, pull factors included better economic opportunities, such as jobs in growing industries (e.g., the salt-cod trade in Newfoundland and Labrador) or access to essential resources like food and land. For example, Newfoundland's booming fishery in the early 1800s attracted many European migrants due to its economic stability and ample employment opportunities.

In the modern context, retirees are drawn by different pull factors, such as the affordable cost of living, warm climate, high-quality healthcare, and a welcoming community. Southeast Asia,

and Thailand in particular, offers retirees attractive benefits such as access to affordable healthcare services, cultural richness, and an active expatriate community that facilitates social integration. These factors cater to the retirees' desire for comfort, security, and leisure rather than mere economic survival.

Adapting the Push-Pull Framework:

While the core premise of the Push-Pull Factor theory remains applicable, the changing nature of migration necessitates a broader interpretation. The "push" and "pull" forces for wealthy retirees emphasize psychological and lifestyle factors over economic and survival needs. For example, Japanese retirees might leave their homeland due to societal pressures or a lack of active aging opportunities (push) while being attracted to Thailand for its vibrant festivals, accessible healthcare, and slower pace of life (pull).

Application to the Research Design:

This adaptation of the Push-Pull Factor theory guided our study in multiple ways:

Research Questions: Questions are framed to investigate both the external (economic and societal) and internal (psychological and lifestyle) factors influencing retirees' migration decisions.

Data Selection: Data sources included economic indicators, surveys on retiree satisfaction, and cultural analyses of both Japan and Thailand.

Interpretation of Findings: By recognizing this modern push and pull factors, we could better understand how the motivations of Japanese retirees align with their destination's offerings.

Proposing Explanations: For instance, the growth of retiree migration to Southeast Asia aligns with regional efforts to attract retirees through long-term visa programs, promoting the region as a retirement haven.

Conclusion of Push-Pull Factor:

The Push-Pull Factor theory remains a valuable framework for analyzing migration, but it must be applied flexibly to capture contemporary dynamics. In our study, this theory not only illuminated the motivations of Japanese retirees but also highlighted the evolving nature of migration as influenced by global socio-economic trends and individual lifestyle preferences.

2.4 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY (SET-theory)

Social Exchange theory was developed from the works of Homans (1961), Emerson (1976), and Blau (1986) (Brida et al., 2011). The theory is used in several disciplines, such as economics, social psychology and sociology (Alex, Y., Wang, & Pfister, 2008), and has been applied broadly in the context of business and tourism (Coulson et al., 2014). The Social Exchange Theory has become a substantial theoretical perspective (Choi & Murray, 2010) and emerged as one of the most widely accepted theories in explaining locals' behavior towards tourism development (Pérez & Nadal, 2005). Social Exchange Theory is a behavioral theory (Lee & Back, 2006) that attempts to illustrate how individuals' actions are contingent upon rewarding actions from others (Emerson, 1976). At its theoretical foundation, the theory assumes that all relationships give and take (Kaynak & Marandu, 2006) and that all social life can be treated as tangible and intangible resources between individuals (Coulson et al., 2014).

From a tourism perspective, the SET-theory attempts to measure and explain the social integration and social assimilation among retirees toward the local society. The theory focuses on the interaction between residents and tourists where the goal of the exchange is to benefit both parties (Mukherjee & Bhal, 2017). The theory suggests that residents' attitudes towards tourists and level of support for the tourism industry and its development is influenced by their expected benefits or costs obtained in return for their services, therefore social exchange (Lee & Back, 2006). Residents who perceived benefit from the exchange were more likely to create positive attitudes toward it, while those who saw the exchange as a cost were more likely to view it negatively (McGehee & Andereck, 2004). Therefore, it is important that the impacts of tourism are evaluated so that the rewards exceed the costs for Thai local community. The SET-theory is characterized from both emotional evaluation and scientific evaluation, such as life satisfaction with outcome quality (emotional), well-being, trust and learning (logical). According to the theory, dedication and attitudes make the locals want to continue the tourism business and vice-verse. The SET-theory postulates that positive attitudes toward tourism are generally followed by a high level of support for the tourists and industry, whereas negative attitudes among the local community will lead to a lower level of support for the industry (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). According to the theory, residents will support the development of tourism as long as they imprint a positive balance in their relationship with tourists (Garau-Vadell et al., 2014). Furthermore, scientists have found that motivational factors can have an impact on how foreigners support tourism development. These factors can be hosting a guest, creating new relationships, gaining self-respect, working together as a community, playing a role and feeling needed (Kayat, 2002).

As a conclusion, this theory has been considered appropriate for this study as it helps the researcher to get an understanding of which factors within International Long Stay Tourists industry mediate the relationship between Japanese retirees and host community. This theory helps the researcher to analyze the problem from different perspectives, concerning wins and costs for the foreign retirees and Thai local community, opinions that retirees have towards the locals, what have the local done to attract the retirees to get closer and socialize with them to reduce the barrier between themselves. All of these factors will be taken into consideration in the researcher's study and analysis of the issue. The factors will help the researcher in getting a deeper understanding of the problem and different ways to approach it. Based on this theory, the support from local people towards retirees under international long stay program is important.

2.5 RETIREMENT MIGRATION MODEL

Schiamberg and McKinney (2003) and Wiseman (1980) considered retirement migration as a process and an event that is influenced by several factors such as personal resources and their characteristics, community and housing characteristics, and social factors and support networks. Based on the migration models by Wiseman (1980) and Cuba and Longino (1991), Haas and Serow (1993) developed their retirement migration model (Figure 2.5). They suggested that the migration decision and location selection may cluster mutually as complementary and overlapping decisions. The retirees are then expected to develop ties within the new Thai local community where they reside. Haas and Serow (1993) believed that the retirees often do not stay permanently in the same retirement location, but also decide to move elsewhere. Guided by Haas and Serow (1993), this research predicts that the retirees demonstrate transnational behavior which affects their ties with both the place of origin and the retirement location. The behavior may either enhance or reduce their overall experience in the retirement destination.

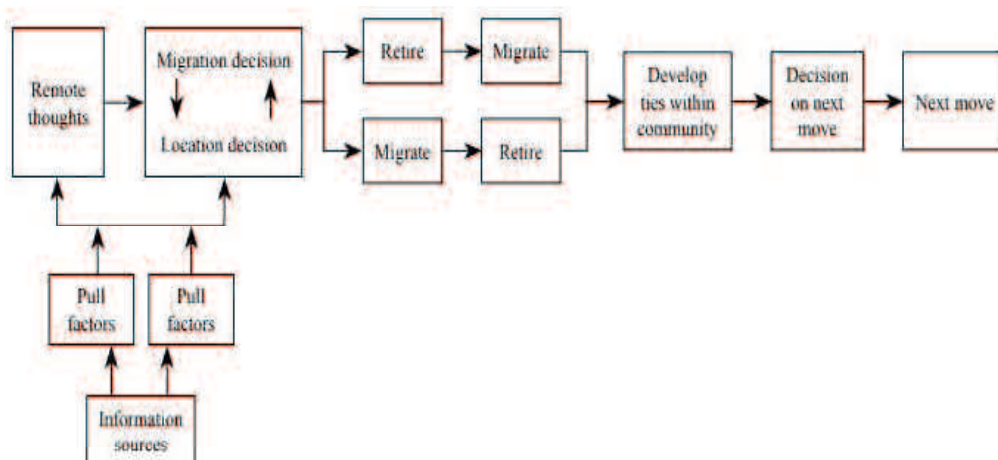


Figure 2.4: Haas and Serow's (1993) retirement migration model

Source: Haas & Serow, 1993, p.214

Haas and Serow's (1993) retirement migration model delves into the intricate decision-making process that retirees undergo when contemplating migration. It all begins with remote thoughts, where individuals start considering the idea of migrating after retirement, influenced by pull factors such as better climate, cost of living, and quality of life, as well as various sources of information. These information sources include family, friends, advertisements, and past experiences, which retirees use to evaluate potential destinations. Pull factors like climate, amenities, affordability, and proximity to family or friends make certain locations appealing, motivating retirees to consider migrating.

The process involves making two interconnected decisions: whether to migrate and, if so, where to move. These decisions are shaped by the evaluation of pull factors and the information gathered. The timing of retirement and migration can vary, with some retirees choosing to retire first and then migrate, while others might migrate before officially retiring.

Once retirees relocate, they focus on developing ties within their new community by building social connections, participating in activities, and adapting to their new environment. This integration into the community is crucial for their well-being. Retirees continuously evaluate their situation to determine if another move is necessary, influenced by factors such as health, social connections, or dissatisfaction with their current location. If they decide to move again, the process repeats, starting with evaluating pull factors and making subsequent decisions.

In summary, Haas and Serow's model highlights the dynamic and iterative nature of retirement migration. It underscores how retirees are influenced by various factors, including the attractiveness of locations, the sequence of retirement and migration, and the importance of community ties after relocation. The ultimate goal of this model is to achieve a better quality of life post-retirement.

2.6 INTERCULTURATION AND CULTURAL ASSIMILATION

2.6.1 Interculturation

Interculturation has its roots in the concept of acculturation. Originally, acculturation referred to the process of cultural exchange and adaptation, but it has since been redefined, often becoming synonymous with assimilation (Pickel-Chevalier et al., 2018). This shift has led to a perception of acculturation as a unidirectional and asymmetric process, focusing on the influence of the host culture on others. Claude Clanet defines interculturation as "all psychological, relational, group and institutional processes generated by interactions between groups identified as holding different cultures or claiming to belong to different cultural communities, in a relationship of reciprocal dialogue and with the objective that the exchanging partners preserve a relative cultural identity" (qtd.in Pickel-Chevalier et al., 2018 p. 141).

Interculturation thus refers to the relationship between societies and individuals that goes beyond binarism of two cultural entities to tend towards the creation of a third cultural entity that encompasses reality through syncretism. This process implies the presence of a meeting place that leads to the emergence of these new societal models and that is defined through a “double movement, one of transformation of the systems in presence due to their interactions on the one hand, and one of maintenance due to the desire to preserve one's identity, on the other (Clanet. C,1990). Paul Claval (1992) noted that “cultural facts concern geography because space and environment intervene in transmission processes and constitute essential information on what is transferred between people”(qtd in., Pickel-Chevalier et al., 2018 p. 145). Does Japanese migrants assimilate their cultural practices, especially those developed on the long stay program is under study.

2.6.2 Cultural Assimilation

When people migrate to a new country, they bring with them resources, habits, and experiences from their home country, including valuable productive inputs (e.g., labor, skills, other sources of human capital) that can generate substantial economic returns for the host country. Yet, they also enter this new society with potentially different cultural backgrounds, marked by distinct languages, religions, economic and social values. The immigrants bring the social values and customs of their cultural backgrounds from their birth countries. The ideal society for everyone depends upon how new immigrants are assimilated into the mainstream of the host society.

Assimilation, in anthropology and sociology, is the process whereby individuals or groups of different ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. The assimilation process is very important not only for immigrants but also for the host society. Keefe and Padilla (1987) define assimilation as the social, economic, and political integration of an ethnic minority group into mainstream society (qtd.in., Mukherji, 2005). This process involves various dimensions, including cultural assimilation, where minority groups adopt the cultural norms of the dominant group, and structural assimilation, which refers to the integration of these groups into the social and economic institutions of the mainstream society (Gordon, 1964; Alba & Nee, 2003).

Assimilation in the mainstream culture would enable immigrants to adopt environmental attitudes and behavior representative of a post-materialistic culture. Racial assimilation is a much-congested notion whereby on entering new country immigrant groups are encouraged through social and cultural practices, to adopt the culture, values, and social behaviors of the host nation in order to benefit from full citizenship status. In this view of assimilation, over time, immigrant communities shed the culture that is embedded in the language, values, rituals,

laws, and perhaps even religion of their homeland so that there is no discernible cultural difference between them and other members of the host society. This idea is in stark contrast to multiculturalism where ethnic and religious groups maintain strong links to their cultural heritage, and it is indeed understood that these differences contribute to the rich diversity of a successful society.

According to the classic view, cultural differences between natives and immigrants will gradually diminish over time, triggering assimilation processes in various domains, thereby improving the economic situation of immigrant groups and encouraging their integration into the social networks of a host society (Gordon, 1964; Alba & Nee, 2003). This perspective posits that as immigrants assimilate, they adopt the cultural norms and practices of the dominant society, leading to a reduction in cultural differences (Berry, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

In various studies on cultural assimilation, the most commonly understood form of assimilation is that of cultural assimilation. Should immigrants preserve their traditions and culture while living in the host country or should they absorb themselves into the ways and manners of their hosts is a big question that need answer through the research finding. Cultural assimilation of migrants, that is, their adoption of the host country culture. This is the process in which a minority group or culture comes to resemble a society's majority group or assume the values, behaviors.

Socio-cultural assimilation happens when immigrant communities shed the culture that is embedded in the language, values, rituals, laws, and perhaps even religion of their homeland so that there is no discernible cultural difference between them and other members of the host society. This involves ethnic groups taking on the cultural signifiers of the host nation. Minority groups are expected to adapt to the everyday practices of the dominant culture through language and appearance as well as via more significant socio-economic factors such as absorption into the local cultural and employment community. Cultural customs, traditions and religious practices can all be assimilated between two or more cultures. Often times, these groups live near one another. Influence may be derived from trade, invasion and/or intermarrying between the groups. For example, cultural assimilation often occurs with regards to how people dress. A woman from the United States or Western Europe who moves to or visits a country where its traditional for women to wear head coverings may adapt to that cultural norm for dress in setting where it would be expected or appropriate. Individuals who cross cultural boundaries face many challenges when trying to adapt to a receiving culture.

However, adaptation challenges such as learning to maneuver across societal domains may become increasingly hard when it comes to language. General migrants often experience

extensive cultural exchange and adaptation when residing in foreign countries (Alarcon, 2012; Mamattah, 2006). For instance, the Russian community in Scotland blended their cultural practices into Scottish society (Mamattah, 2006) while the Mexicans adapted their cultural structures to facilitate their migration to the United States (Alarcon, 2012). This adaptation process allows migrants to maintain elements of their cultural identity while integrating into the host society. Both examples show a certain degree of transnationalism between two cultures.

Migrants are also reported to have successfully planted their identity at the host destination. Remennick (2002, p.155) in his study of transnationalism among the Russian Jewish immigrants in Israel, stated “a senior Russian physician remains a respected specialist in the eyes of other Russians, regardless of the fact that he (or she) has failed to get a local license or is unemployed”. Pelliccia’s (2013) ‘s study also reveals the similar challenges regarding social and cultural adaptation faced by migrants, underscoring the difficulties in achieving full integration while maintaining cultural identity. Greek migrants in Italy found to be more comfortable with making friends, learning Italian language, attending cultural events in the host country while they are also exposed to other transnational behaviors such as bidirectional visits between Italy and Greece, and communicating with parents, relatives, friends using traditional and social media.

There are many dimensions of cultural assimilation, among them are language preference, country of birth, contact with homeland and attitudes about children’s friends etc. The process of cultural assimilation involves both nationalisation and renationalization and resulting in the modification of social attitudes. For example, in this study, when different cultures (Japan culture and host nation culture) come into contact, originally it is the sentiment of mutual conflict that is most prominent but they gradually assimilate elements from each other. As the case of retirees under International Retirement Migration Program, assimilation can be seen if the retirees can participate in the life around them, learn the host country language and cultural understanding which provide access to information, social networks, and the human capital required to succeed. This makes life become easy and fulfilled with happiness mixing with people around them although they are separated far from their family.

Opposite to assimilation, retirees cannot mix around and cannot integrate into the local society, and lived on its margins. Retirees who come in large numbers settle in compact colonies continue to practice their native folkways instead of participating in the life around them. Their retired status compounded their isolation, and reinforced the monocultural nature of their social networks. One of the reasons is due to the language limitations, ethnic discrimination, prejudice and fear of engaging with society. As a result, they attempt to protect themselves from crime by staying within their own communities. This behavior inhibits them

from building social networks with locals, which affects both the ethics and equity of their interactions.

According to Hiltunen (2007), the language barrier results in limitations in communication, and the desire to learn the local language can help establish closer ties with the Thai local community (qtd.in., Hall & Müller, 2018). Studies based on the identity theory suggest that isolation from the host country's culture may prevent immigrants from investing in the specific human and social capital required for success in the host labor market (Battu & Zenou, 2009).

In other cases, the existence of such communities is viewed as alien and distasteful by the residents. Huntington in his new book *Who we are* argues that the new immigrants particularly those from Mexico, show little interest in assimilating and feel more comfortable within their own culture (as quoted in *The American Dream* by Brooks 2004), thus contributing to the ongoing debate around Hispanic assimilation (Mukherji, 2005). As a result, there exists cultural pluralism which may represent incomplete assimilation. On the other hand, such a community by retaining many features of the traditional way of life enables the new comers to identify themselves with their fellowmen and adjust to the new conditions easily. According to the classic view, cultural differences between natives and immigrants will gradually diminish over time, initiating assimilation processes across various domains, thus improving the economic situation of immigrant groups and facilitating their integration into the social networks of the host society (Gordon, 1964). Kalmijn and Kraaykamp (2018), further argue that cultural assimilation is more likely to occur when there is greater social mixing, rather than simply when migrants achieve economic success. The most favorable opportunities to reduce cultural differences between groups lie in patterns of social integration in a receiving society.

Assimilation in the mainstream culture would enable immigrants to adopt environmental attitudes and behavior representative of a post-materialistic culture. In various studies on cultural assimilation, the second generation plays an important but complex role. Because norms and values are acquired through a multifaceted process of socialisation (Bronfenbrenner et al., 1986), second generation migrants have greater potential to adapt to the more liberal norms and values of the destination country compared to their parents who themselves migrated. At the same time, however, members of the second generation are exposed to competing pressures: they experience liberal values from their peers, the media, and the schools and workplaces they encounter, but they may also be socialised into conservative values by their parents and in their ethnic community. The outcome of this process with several cross-pressures is uncertain and probably also depends on various contextual-level conditions

Some authors argue that under conditions of ethnic conflict and religious tensions, the second generation is even more strongly influenced by their ethnic or religious community. Under such circumstances, members of the second generation may respond negatively to discrimination and cling to more conservative values of their ethnic group as a form of self-protection, a phenomenon known as reactive ethnicity or oppositional culture (Wimmer & Soehl, 2014). Other authors advocate a multiculturalist perspective, suggesting that the second generation often develops a dual identity, wherein some values become more liberal, while others particularly those linked to visible religious symbols such as wearing a headscarf or observing food laws, remain conservative (Verkuyten, 2005).

Most studies on cultural assimilation emphasize the importance of religion shaping traditional gender role attitudes. However, some authors have found relatively weak associations between gender role attitudes and measures of religiosity (Scheible & Fleischmann, 2013). Racial and religion barrier hinder assimilation because while one can set aside one's culture, one cannot set aside one's skin. Sometimes, religious groups often allow the social distance created by prejudice to maintain their separateness. Prejudice may be the outcome of some unpleasant experiences, fear of losing a superior status, dread of economic competition or some form of a collective phobia.

Although involvement in local associations can enrich the retiree's socialisation process by keeping them active, language difficulties also can form a barrier that limits the process. How well the retirees are able to enjoy their new lives is predicated on their ability to assimilate effectually into the local culture, which is in a way dependent on their individual outlook on and experiences in life. Research by Cheung (1989) indicates that older Chinese immigrant in the United States may not easily abandon their cultural values during their adjustment to life in this country, often demonstrating a reluctance to assimilate. Similarly, Wu (1975) found that challenges such as language barrier and cultural shock alienate elderly Chinese individuals from others and hinder their access to necessary services.

Chikako Usui, a sociologist at the University of Missouri in St Louis, says that assimilation among Japanese retirees toward the host cultures depends on a variety of factors. One of them is influenced by Japan's isolationist history to its self-perceived homogeneity that gives immigrants a rough go. She highlights the litany of unspoken rules and subtle social cues that frame Japanese society that tire even native Japanese and contribute to their unease towards outsiders. The thinking is about how could foreigners possibly understand everything from proper recycling etiquette to knowing to keep quiet on public transport or anticipating what strangers are thinking. According to her, the Japanese have more opportunities to be with people who are not like them in a way that was not conceivable even 10 years ago. Usui points

to this Japanese concept of “kuuki wo yomu”⁶, or “reading the air”, that makes Japan go round and involves near telepathic understanding of the unspoken social minutiae of daily life. Japanese people really do not think this is possible for foreigners.

A study on assimilation conducted at Ramkhamhaeng University, Thailand in 2013 aimed promote assimilation, strengthen social ties, and enhance English speaking skills through the integration of students from various countries into the same classes. This approach allowed individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultures to interact more freely. The results were significant; most Thai students became more courageous, overcoming their shyness. Many of them became outspoken and gained self-confidence in communicating their thoughts and expressing their ideas, both within the school environment and beyond.

In this study, the researcher aims to investigate the factors that attract or hinder cultural assimilation among the Japanese retirees in Thai culture and society. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for addressing the challenges and opportunities related to cultural assimilation.

2.7 SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Regarding social integration as a general sociological concept, Esser (2004) defines it as a social environment in which groups and individuals develop interdependencies. Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society. In other words, social integration can be explained as “the process of promoting the values, relations and institutions that enable all people to participate

⁶ kuuki wo yomu:(空気を読む)

- Meaning: It refers to understanding and interpreting unspoken feelings, social cues, or the overall atmosphere of a situation.
- Explanation:

It involves sensing what others are thinking or feeling without them explicitly saying it.. This concept is rooted in Japanese culture, which places high value on harmony and non-verbal communication.

People who can effectively "read the air" are considered socially adept, while those who can't are sometimes referred to as "KY" (空気読めない, kuuki yomenai), meaning "unable to read the air."

- Examples:

Workplace Scenario:

In a meeting, if everyone falls silent after a proposal is mentioned, someone who can "read the air" might sense the discomfort or disagreement and steer the conversation in a more constructive direction.

Social Gathering:

At a party, noticing that a guest looks uncomfortable, someone might change the topic of conversation or offer them a drink to help them feel more at ease.

Daily Life:

If a group of friends is quietly reflecting after a sad event, a person who "reads the air" would refrain from making jokes or acting overly cheerful.

Understanding kuuki wo yomu is crucial in Japan for navigating both personal and professional relationships effectively.

in social, economic and political life on the basis of equality of rights and opportunity, equity and dignity (Ferguson, 2008 p 125). Wolfgang Bosswick & Friedrich Heckmann (2006) state that social integration involves the inclusion and acceptance of immigrants into the core institutions, relationships, and positions of a host society. Furthermore, social integration refers to the extent to which newcomers experience cooperative social interaction with their group members, satisfaction with other group members, and attraction to the group (Wang & Kim, 2013). Social integration which is also described as newcomers developing a social sense of the organizational environment and being liked and accepted by peers, is considered one of the most critical indicators of newcomers' adjustment (Morrison, 1993). By providing access to people and networks, social integration offers a sense of control, makes the organizational environment more predictable, and thereby enables newcomers to access social-capital whenever they need information and support (Ashford & Black, 1996). By actively seeking information and feedback, as well as understanding expectations of others, newcomers can more clearly differentiate between being a member of the organization and not, thereby increasing their perceived insider status (Masterson & Stamper, 2003). Furthermore, proactively building relationships allows newcomers to interact frequently with their coworkers and helps them acquire the interpersonal skills necessary for effective cooperation (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Close interaction with group members fosters a positive impression of newcomers within the organizational environment (Wang & Kim, 2013).

Theorists posit that integration into a social group involves the establishment of a situational identity, and that those who successfully form this identity through social interactions tend to identify more strongly with the organization as a whole, thereby enhancing their commitment (Reichers, 1987; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Taking into account the past literature, the researchers propose that social integration mediate the effects of proactive socialization tactics on newcomers' commitment to the organization.

According to Bosswick and Heckman (2006), there are four dimensions of social integration: structural, cultural, interactive, and identification. Different elements are connected to each other and together they form the conditions for successful social integration into society. Structural integration means that immigrants have rights and access to position and status in the core institutions of the host society, such as the economy and labor market, the housing system, welfare state institutions, the educational system, and full political citizenship. Participation in these so-called core institutions determines a person's socioeconomic status and the resources and opportunities available to him or her. It is, however, not possible to participate in the core institutions without first attaining cultural competencies. Cultural

integration indicates that immigrants can only claim rights and assume positions in their host society if they obtain communicative competencies and knowledge about the culture and society

Even though cultural integration mainly concerns immigrants, it is a two-way process of adaptation in which the host society also has a responsibility to learn new ways to relate to immigrants and their needs. Policies that facilitate this kind of cultural integration include language training and support for immigrants' cultural activities, which can also help immigrants feel more at home. Interactive integration refers to the acceptance and inclusion of immigrants in the relationships and social networks of society. The preconditions for interactive integration are the core elements of cultural integration, as well as the ability to learn and use the language.

The fourth and final dimension, identification integration, refers to an immigrant's sense of belonging to, and identification with groups in the host society. These feelings of belonging often develop later in the integration process as a result of participation and acceptance (Bosswick & Heckmann, 2006). Although all dimensions are of great importance to integration, it is clear that structural integration largely determines how well the immigrant can really be integrated and achieve social status in society. Having a job and housing, and being able to take advantage of the welfare system in the country, is important to live and be accepted as a normal native.

2.7.1. Language Vis-a-vis Social Integration

Language functions as a key to integration. Language learning plays a particularly vital role in the process of individual and societal integration. It is a key component in everyday communication as well as a resource in the context of education and the labor market which in turn creates a sense of belonging in society. Krumm & Plutzar, (2008) further argued that it is important for immigrants to develop their national language skills in order to integrate and participate fully in society. This proficiency is critical because, by the end of the integration process, immigrant should be able to live under the same legal, social, and financial conditions as the natives of the country. As lack of language skills, particularly in the labor market, undoubtedly reduces immigrants' chances of finding employment and attaining higher positions, and is associated with significant reductions in income (Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). Although learning the language can be a valuable resource, it may also perceived as a compulsion (Lister et al., 2007).

Different regulations in different countries address language provision and requirements for immigrants to learn the host country's language. Many countries now require adult immigrants

to show that they have basic knowledge of the host country's language before being granted entry, residence, work permits, or citizenship. Obligatory language courses are often combined with tests used as tools to oblige immigrants to learn the language of the receiving country. According to the Dutch Nationality Act of 2003, an immigrant must be able to show that he or she is fittingly integrated into Dutch society and capable of speaking, reading, writing, and understanding the Dutch language fairly well. Denmark and Finland have also implemented language under 22 tests, but in Denmark immigrants also must document that they have some knowledge of Danish history, culture, and society. The UK also implements a combined language and citizenship test. The mandatory language courses, along with the tests, stem partly from the belief that immigrants may not be ready or willing to learn the language and understand the culture in the host country (Krumm & Plutzar, 2008).

On the other hand, neither empirical data nor experience supports the notion that migrants are not willing to learn the language; on the contrary, migrants are usually very enthusiastic about obtaining language skills if the courses are adapted to meet their needs (Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). Since acquiring the host country's language is the first step and a key component in an integration process, the lack of language skills likely has an overall negative effect on the four dimensions of integration, that is, immigrants' ability to interact with natives, understand the culture, gain access to position and status in the core institutions, and find a feeling of belonging in the host society. Language learning can thus be seen as a qualification for achieving social integration.

Based on this, the following hypothesis for the research study is proposed:

Hypothesis 1

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between retirees acquisition of language and social integration.

2.7.2 Social Integration Vis-a-vis Cultural Assimilation

Social integration is very important where by social integration, individuals from different groups gain equal access to resources and opportunities. It makes societies more cohesive and culturally diverse by promoting understanding and acceptance. Social integration is the process during which newcomers or minorities are incorporated into the social structure of the host society.

Social integration, together with economic integration and identity integration, are three main dimensions of newcomers' experiences in the society that is receiving them. A higher extent of social integration contributes to a closer social distance between groups and more

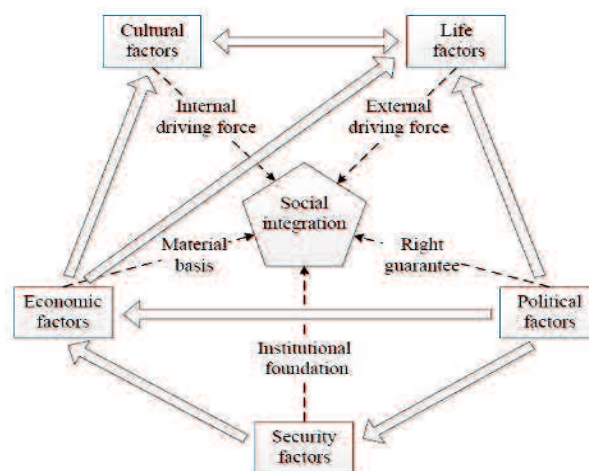
consistent values and practices. It gives access to all areas of community life and eliminates segregation. In a broader view, social integration is a dynamic and structured process in which all members participate in dialogue to achieve and maintain peaceful social relations. Social integration does not mean to force assimilation but it helps to move toward a safe, stable and just society by mending conditions of social conflict, social disintegration, social exclusion, social fragmentation, exclusion and polarization. By expanding and strengthening conditions of social integration peaceful social relations of coexistence, collaboration and cohesion occurs. In this research, it is believed that good social integration will lead to good cultural assimilation among the retirees. With this, the following hypothesis for the research study is proposed:

Hypothesis 2

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between retirees social integration and cultural assimilation.

2.7.3 Model of Social Integration

Among the models of social integration is the theoretical model below.



Source: Shangguan, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338193536/figure/fig3/AS:840719996555267@1577454675026/Theoretical-Model-of-Social-Integration_W640.jpg

Figure 2.5 Theoretical Model of Social Integration

It can be seen from Figure 2.6 that the factors affecting the social integration of migrants can be divided into five categories: political factors, economic factors, cultural factors, life factors and security factors:

Political factors:

Political factors are the important rights guarantee for social integration, involving a civil rights and obligations of migrants. The deprivation of migrants' basic rights will lead to their

dissatisfaction and resistance to the government. Migrants' limited awareness of social obligations and their inability to fulfill these social obligations can lead to social exclusion (Fennema & Tillie, 2001).

Under their rights, governance is an important concept in relation to migration and human rights. For example, states must refrain from interfering with the enjoyment of human rights, states must prevent private actors or third parties from violating human rights, and states must take positive measures to ensure the realization of human rights. International Declaration of Human Rights should promote legislation contributing to the political participation of immigrants to build a more inclusive society and should therefore prioritise protecting the rights of immigrants and preventing all forms of discrimination and racism.

ii) Economic factors

Economic factors serve as the material basis for social integration (Parsons & Smelser, 2005). Low-income levels or consumption levels that cannot keep pace with the consumption level in the resettlement area will lead to mental imbalance, also leading to limited household savings which will make them feel economically insecure. Fiscal and labor market policies should therefore be used to support the income and retraining of emigrants facing labor market difficulties. Migrants can also be given jobs to fulfill the need of labour shortage and demand needs. As many of them are professional and skillful workers in their home countries, they can stimulate innovation and development in countries of origin destination, as well as to transfer or update skills. Migrants, at all skill levels, broaden the pool of available skills, thereby improving the international flow of talented workers.

iii) Cultural factors

Cultural factors act as the internal driving force behind social integration, with cultural adjustment influencing migrants' self-satisfaction and identity (Syed & McLean, 2016). Immigrants may differ in the food they eat, the clothing they wear, the holidays they celebrate, the religion they practice, the media they read or hear, their social organizations, and the languages they speak. Therefore, the immigrants should be given the right to preserve their own culture, and at the same time adopt the new host culture.

iv) Life factors on the other hand are the external driving force of social integration. A good living environment influences the comfort of migrants in their living spaces, and a low level of living comfort can lead to the second resettlement (Shi, 2005).

In order to change their passive status in Thai local community, it is necessary for the migrants to have a good living environment which can be achieved by adapting to the host environment

and then expanding their social resources. To obtain development resources and establish social ties, individuals need to actively participate in organizational activities and attempt to cultivate contacts with other people. Group unity and group commonality can enhance the migrant population's sense of belonging and social integration.

v) Security factors are the institutional foundation for social integration, which involves basic insurance and skill training. Insufficient basic insurance can lead to a lack of enthusiasm among migrants, and a deficiency in survival skills may cause them to lose confidence in their future lives (Chen et al., 2001).

Normally, in host countries, the migrants need to take a visa and for old people is called a retirement visa. The retirement visa allows retirees to reside in the country for an extended period without the need for employment, a family ties, or enrollment in a university. One caveat to the retirement visa is that basic insurance is required which becomes the first law put into place that led to a wave across foreign countries enforcing health insurance for travelers to the country.

Political factors have a direct impact on life factors, security factors and economic factors. Security factors have a direct impact on economic factors. Economic factors have a direct impact on cultural factors and life factors. Cultural factors and life factors influence each other.

2.8 SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Subjective wellbeing is characterized as one's cognitive and affective evaluations of their life (Diener et al., 2009a) and becomes one of the important concepts of positive psychology. It is the personal perception and experience of positive and negative emotional responses and cognitive evaluations of satisfaction with life. It comprises two primary components: the emotional component (positive affect and negative affect) and the cognitive component (satisfaction with life). The emotional component refers to the presence of positive and the absence of negative emotions and moods (e.g., happy, sad, or fatigued) that individuals experience in their daily life (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). The cognitive component, on the other hand, represents an assessment of how well one's life going in general. Well-being enriches and energizes life; it also endows life with a sense of joy and meaning. All the struggles and sufferings seem worth it when we are able to drink from the fountains of happiness. It is tempting to view the meaning of life purely in terms of positive effects.

One of the most popular theories of wellbeing is the PERMA model developed by Martin Seligman, one of the "founding fathers" of positive psychology. His model is based on the idea that there are five main factors that contribute to wellbeing: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishments (Ackerman, 2018).

2.8.1 Subjective Well-Being Vis-a-vis Culture Assimilation

Study by Angelini et al. (2015) titled 'Life satisfaction of immigrants: Does Cultural Assimilation Matter?' found a direct association between subjective well-being and cultural assimilation, independent of labor market outcomes (e.g., employment status, wages), time-invariant unobserved individual characteristics, or regional controls that account for the external social conditions of immigrants. The findings show a strong association between a direct measure of immigrants' subjective well-being and assimilation with a host culture. Another study done by Howard (2008), titled "Western Retirees in Thailand: motives, experiences, well-being, assimilation and future needs" focuses on the reasons retirees migrate to Thailand, their well-being and perceived assimilation, the reasons some choose to leave, and their long-term welfare needs. They report positive well-being and feel assimilated, but most live with visa insecurity and their assimilation may be partly illusory, as many reported socialising mainly with other foreigners.

Studies examining the association between well-being and assimilation have yielded inconsistent findings. Several studies by Hashemi et al., (2019) reinforced the idea that when immigrants engage in both their heritage and host cultures, endorsing integration, they report the highest levels of well-being. However, other studies suggest that preferring one of the assimilation paths may not improve but rather hinder well-being (Shin & Lach, 2014). Previous studies have also identified other factors that influence the assimilation process and the wellbeing of immigrants. Variables such as gender, age, and length of residence in the host country are key factors influencing the acculturation process (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). Gender differences appear to be the most prominent factor affecting the assimilation and well-being of immigrants. Early research indicated that women, compared to men, are more likely to retain their heritage culture and less likely to engage in host culture (Amer & Hovey, 2007; Berry et al., 2006). In contrast, Balidemaj and Small (2018) found that Albanian women in the US assimilated more into the host culture than their counterparts and experienced greater well-being with a longer stay.

Based on this research, the following hypotheses for my research study are proposed:

Hypothesis 3

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between subjective well-being and cultural assimilation

2.8.2 Model of Well-Being

Among the models of well-being is the PERMA model was designed by Martin Seligman with five core elements of psychological well-being and happiness. Seligman believes that these

five elements can help people reach a life of fulfillment, happiness, and meaning. This model can also be applied to institutions to develop programs to help people develop new cognitive and emotional tools.

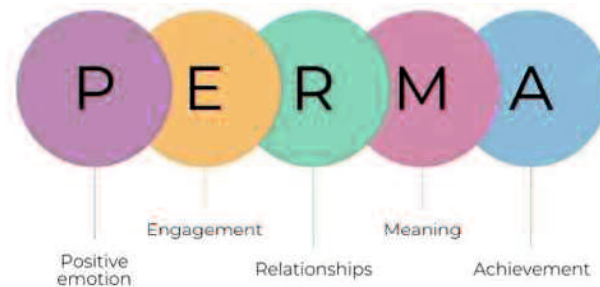


Figure 2.6 PERMA model of Well-Being

Source: uopositivepsych.org, <https://img1.wsimg.com/isteam/ip/e6fe6fdd-c227-4f0f-9d5c-5f9e557ba463/PERMA.png?rs=w:2480,h:1240,cg:true,m/cr:w:2480,h:1240>

P – Positive Emotion

This element of the model is one of the most obvious connections to happiness. Being able to focus on positive emotions is more than just smiling, it is the ability to be optimistic and view the past, present, and future from a positive perspective. This positive view of life can help people in relationships, work, and inspire them to be more creative and take more chances. In everyone's life, there are highs and lows, focusing on the lows increases the chances of developing depression, therefore, people should focus on the high and positive aspects of life. There are also many health benefits to optimism and positivity. Distinguishing between pleasure and enjoyment is important in this element of the model. Pleasure is connected to satisfying bodily needs for survival; such as thirst, hunger, and sleep. Whereas enjoyment comes from intellectual stimulation and creativity, for example when a child completes a complex Lego car that requires his concentration, he will be beaming with joy and satisfaction from his work. This type of positive emotion is needed, as when someone enjoys the tasks in their lives, they are more likely to persevere and battle challenges through creative and alternative solutions.

E – Engagement

It is important in our lives to be able to find activities that need our full engagement. Engagement in the activities in our lives is important for us to learn, grow and nurture our personal happiness. Everyone is different and we all find enjoyment in different things whether it's playing an instrument, playing a sport, dancing, working on an interesting project at work or even just a hobby. We all need something in our lives that entirely absorbs us into the present moment, creating a 'flow' of blissful immersion into the task or activity. This type of 'flow' of engagement is important to stretch our intelligence, skills, and emotional capabilities.

R – Relationships

Relationships and social connections are one of the most important aspects of life. Humans thrive on connection, love, intimacy, and strong emotional and physical interaction with other humans. Building positive relationships with parents, siblings, peers, and friends is important to spread love and joy. Having strong relationships gives us support in difficult times. There has been research that shows that pain centers in our brain become activated when we are at risk of being isolated. This is because, from an evolutionary perspective, isolation would be the worst thing we could do for survival.

M – Meaning

Having a purpose and meaning to why each of us is on this earth is important to living a life of happiness and fulfillment. Rather than the pursuit of pleasure and material wealth, there is an actual meaning to our life. Such meaning gives people a reason for their life and that there is a greater purpose to life. Understanding the greater impact of our work and why we chose to pursue that work will help us enjoy the tasks more and become more satisfied and happier.

A – Accomplishments

Having goals and ambitions in life can help us to achieve things that can give us a sense of accomplishment. We should make realistic goals that can be met and putting in the effort to achieve those goals can already give us a sense of satisfaction when we finally achieve those goals. Having accomplishments in life is important to push ourselves to thrive and flourish.

2.9 ATTITUDE

Previous research has shown that positive attitudes among foreigners who live abroad have a significant impact on culture assimilation. When individuals possess positive attitudes toward different cultures, it fosters an environment of acceptance, openness, and understanding. Positive attitudes can help to promote respect for diverse cultures. People with positive attitudes are more likely to appreciate and value the customs, traditions, and beliefs of other cultures. This respect creates an atmosphere where individuals from different backgrounds feel welcomed and included. It also encourages a willingness to learn about other cultures. When people have a positive mindset, they are more likely to engage in cross-cultural interactions, ask questions, and seek knowledge about different cultural practices. This openness enhances cultural assimilation as it facilitates the exchange of ideas and experiences.

Besides, positive attitudes help combat stereotypes and prejudices. Individuals who approach cultural differences with positivity are less likely to make sweeping generalizations or hold biased views. By challenging stereotypes, people can develop more accurate perceptions of other cultures, fostering greater integration and understanding. When people approach

cultural differences with openness and respect, they create opportunities to establish connections with individuals from diverse backgrounds. These relationships provide a platform for cultural exchange, where individuals can learn from each other and develop a sense of belonging.

In the case of Japanese retirees under the long stay program, attitudes and beliefs on the effectiveness of culture assimilation is very important. Positive attitudes also contribute to the integration and adaptation of different cultural practices. When individuals are open and accepting of new customs and traditions, it becomes easier for them to adopt aspects of the host culture while still maintaining elements of their own. This blending of cultures promotes assimilation and helps create a more inclusive society. Overall, positive attitudes play a crucial role in facilitating culture assimilation and social integration by creating an environment of acceptance, openness, respect, and understanding. They encourage individuals to embrace diversity, learn from one another, and build connections across cultures, leading to a more inclusive and harmonious society. Based on this, the following hypothesis for the research study is proposed:

Hypothesis 4

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between attitude and cultural assimilation.

2.10 EXTERNAL SOCIAL CONDITION

External social conditions refer to the contextual factors and circumstances within a society or community that influence individuals' experiences, interactions, and well-being. These conditions are external to the individual and encompass various aspects of the social environment, including cultural norms, societal values, institutional structures, support and social relationships. They can significantly shape people's attitudes and impact their behavior, opportunities, and social integration. External social conditions, such as the availability of social support networks, can influence subjective well-being, social integration and cultural assimilation. Strong social support systems provide individuals with a sense of belonging, acceptance, and emotional well-being, which in turn positively impact their subjective well-being. When individuals feel supported, they are more likely to engage in cultural assimilation and feel comfortable integrating into a new culture. When individuals have opportunities to engage with the Thai local community, participate in cultural events, and establish connections with people from different backgrounds, their subjective well-being is likely to improve. This sense of community integration fosters cultural assimilation by creating a supportive environment that encourages interaction, understanding, and acceptance of diverse cultures. In the case of Japanese retiree, this external social factor can help them to assimilate and

improve their subjective well-being. Based on this, the following hypothesis for the research study is proposed:

Hypothesis 5

(H_A): A high level of support mediates the association between attitudes and social integration.

2.11 LIFE SATISFACTION

Life satisfaction is thinking and feeling that your life is going well. It relates to the question of what leads people to evaluate their lives in positive terms and relies on the respondent's standards to determine what is a good life. Life satisfaction is defined as “a person’s cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life” (Diener et al., 2009b). Life satisfaction is one of the most important factors that affect the individual’s thoughts and feelings in situations of danger. In addition, this factor affects how the current situation and the future are evaluated if the danger continues for a long time and people’s order of life starts to deteriorate. Life satisfaction is not only more stable and long-lived than happiness, it is also broader in scope. It is our general feeling about our life and how pleased we are with how it’s going. There are many factors that contribute to life satisfaction from a number of domains, including work, romantic relationships, relationships with family and friends, personal development, health and wellness, and others.

Life satisfaction measures are generally subjective, or based on the variables that an individual finds personally important in their own life. Our life satisfaction will not be determined based on a factor that we do not actually find personally meaningful. Life satisfaction is subjective and more inherently emotional. Someone who is homeless or terminally ill may well have a higher life satisfaction than a wealthy person in good health, because they may place importance on a very different set of variables than those involved in quality of life. According to Jussi Suikkanen’s (2011) theory of life satisfaction, people are satisfied with their life when a more informed and rational hypothetical version of themselves would judge that their life fulfills their ideal life plan. This theory avoids key issues that affect simpler version of this theory which claims that a person is happy when they belief their life fulfills their ideal life plan.

Studies on the variance in life satisfaction between nations have shown that living conditions exert a strong influence over average life satisfaction. For example, economically prosperous countries tend to have a higher average life satisfaction than poorer nations. Similarly, countries with better job prospects generally report higher life satisfaction compared to those where unemployment is high (Helliwell et al., 2017). The correlation between income and life

satisfaction is higher in poorer countries compared to more affluent countries, and life satisfaction tends to be higher in egalitarian countries. In countries with higher equality, people are more able to choose lifestyles that best fit their preferences and desires, making it more likely that they will be satisfied with their lives. Education is an interesting point when studying life satisfaction; based on the variance between nations, it seems that more highly educated countries generally experience higher levels of satisfaction. However, it is interesting to note that for individuals, the effect of education on life satisfaction is stronger when few people within that individual's country have gained the individual's level of education. For example, a person with a bachelor's degree in a country with a lower average level of education is likely to experience a greater boost to life satisfaction compared to someone with a bachelor's degree in a more highly educated country (Salinas-Jiménez et al., 2011).

The importance of life satisfaction is that it makes us feel happier and simply enjoy life more, it also has a positive impact on our health and wellbeing. Research has found that life satisfaction is strongly correlated with health-related factors, including chronic illness, sleep problems, pain, obesity, smoking, anxiety, and physical activity (Strine et al., 2008). The relationship may move in both directions, but it is clear that life satisfaction and health go hand in hand, increase or enhance one, and the other will likely soon follow. Further, a recent study by researchers at Chapman University found that life satisfaction is actually related to a reduced risk of mortality. In addition, frequent fluctuations in life satisfaction have been shown to be particularly harmful to health and longevity (Boehm et al., 2015).

2.11.1 Measuring Life Satisfaction

Beginning in the 1960s, life satisfaction was originally thought to be measured objectively and externally; in the same way measuring heart rate or blood pressure can be measured objectively and externally. Since then, based on numerous studies on the subject, it has become evident that measuring life satisfaction objectively is fraught with difficulty. Although life satisfaction is correlated with variables like income, health, and relationship quality, every individual may weigh these variables differently than others. It is not unheard of that a person with low income, poor health, and few close relationships has higher life satisfaction than someone with wealth, a clean bill of health, and many friends. Further, there is no objective way to measure life satisfaction from the outside. Thus, it logically follows that to get an accurate measure of life satisfaction, it must be obtained subjectively; common techniques for measuring include, surveys, questionnaires, and interviews. Variables such as mental and physical health, energy, extroversion, and empathy have all been shown to be strongly correlated to satisfaction. Based on the research conducted by Batthyany and Russo-Netzer

(2014), higher meaning in life and hope, associated with a high level of life satisfaction, can help individuals cope with significant challenges.

A more recent study on elderly individuals in China also emphasized the importance of health as a primary determining factor of life satisfaction for older adults (Ng et al., 2017). In general, life satisfaction remains relatively high in old age. Although the normal complaints of aging (e.g., aches and pains, sleeping problems) can take away from one's enjoyment of life, the factors associated with these complaints often lose importance to older adults. Average life satisfaction may not change much with age, but the contributing factors and how much weight is placed on them certainly do. Older adults do not place as much value on things like status and money as younger people, but they tend to place more value on family relationships and long-term fulfillment from one's life. One's overall physical health can be an important predictor of life satisfaction, but it seems that mental health is likely a much bigger contributor to life satisfaction than physical health in old age. Diener (1984) stated that psychological wealth encompasses life satisfaction, the feeling that life is full of meaning, a sense of engagement in interesting activities, the pursuit of important goals, the experience of positive emotional feelings, and a sense of spirituality that connects people to things larger than themselves. From his research, individuals who have high subjective wellbeing report higher levels of satisfaction with life and positive affect and lower levels of negative affect (Diener, 1984).

2.11.1.1 Model of Life Satisfaction

The below model is a revised conceptual model for life satisfaction among the old population. It shows that life satisfaction can be divided into 6 factors. That are health satisfaction, financial satisfaction, satisfaction with family relationships, satisfaction with neighbour relationships and housing satisfaction.

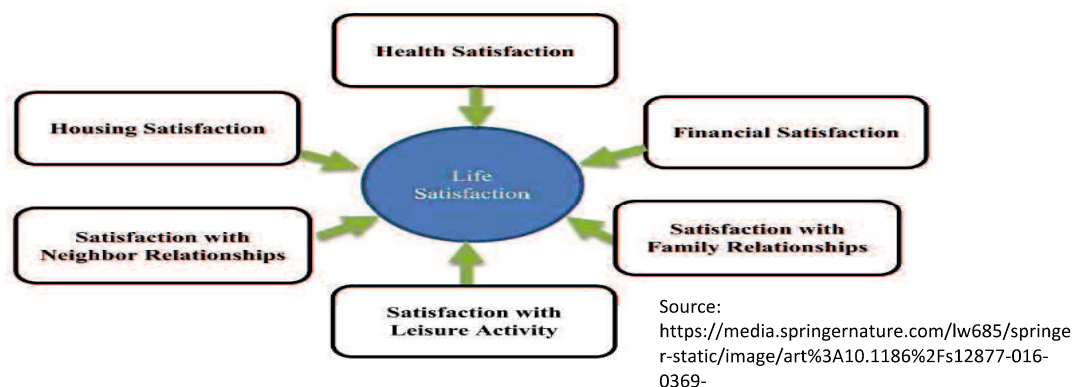


Figure 2.7 Multidimensional domains: revised conceptual model for life satisfaction in old population

Physical and mental health have been significantly associated with life satisfaction in the older population (An et al., 2008; Borg et al., 2008; Gwozdz & Sousa-Poza, 2009). Older people who

can retain their physical abilities and who can perform daily activities and living tend to have higher life satisfaction, while those who perceive their health as poor tend to have lower life satisfaction.

Marital status, family status and household composition have also been associated with life satisfaction among older people. Older adults living with their spouse, children, or in other types of cohabitation have been reported to have greater life satisfaction than those who are living alone (Kooshlar et al., 2012; Oshio, 2012). These findings of poorer life satisfaction among socially isolated older people may stem from inadequate financial and emotional support, a lack of caregivers, or negative public perceptions that lead to poor mental health.

Financial security is an essential component of life satisfaction and is significantly associated with life satisfaction in the older population. Many studies suggest that financial difficulties in older individuals are related to depression and low life satisfaction (Li et al., 2015; Yamaoka, 2008). It is plausible that older people with financial security have greater life satisfaction because they have the financial resources to mitigate life's challenges.

Social support from friends, neighbours, and family has been significantly associated with the life satisfaction of the older adults (Oshio, 2012; Victor et al., 2000). Many studies have published findings that place of residence is associated with life satisfaction among the older population. Typically, the place of residence is often considered very broadly as either urban or rural. A good living environment suits older people's well-being, which becomes a factor in aging well, partly for enabling good social engagement. Some studies show that urban residents have higher life satisfaction than rural residents among older adult (Millward & Spinney, 2013), while other studies show the opposite results (Silverstein et al., 2006).

2.12 LANGUAGE BARRIER

A language barrier can be defined as difficulty in expressing oneself, obtaining directions, explaining one's expectations, achieving satisfactory performance, and communicating effectively (Mac McIntire, 2014). A language barrier is in play when people do not communicate on the same level, such as by speaking the same language. When people do not communicate on the same plane, such as by speaking the same language, a language barrier is said to be in play. As outlined earlier, language barriers result in difficulty in expression, difficulty in obtaining directions, difficulty in explaining one's expectations, poor performance, and ineffective communication which have an impact on well-being and cultural assimilation. Barker and Haertel support this notion, stating that any occurrence of misunderstanding due to differences in communication can prevent immigrants from interacting and assimilating with locals. Consequently, understanding of the local language is

of great importance (Barker & Härtel, 2004). Based on this, the following hypothesis for the research study is proposed:

Hypothesis 6

(H_A): Language acquisition moderates the association between wellbeing (IV) and cultural assimilation (DV).

2.13 CULTURE DIFFERENCE

Culture differences refer to variations in customs, traditions, beliefs, values, norms, behaviors, and practices that exist between different groups of people. These differences can arise from factors such as geographical location, history, language, religion, socioeconomic status, and political systems. Understanding and respecting cultural differences is essential for effective communication, cooperation, and mutual respect between individuals from diverse backgrounds that can be either communication style, social norm and etiquette, values and beliefs and etc. Difficulties may arise when individuals from different cultures try to adapt to another cultures. For example, Japanese retirees people who have migrated to another country like Thailand may struggle to learn the local language or adjust to new eating habits. In this research, the impact of cultural differences towards cultural assimilation is under study.

Cultural differences can be seen as both positive and negative. On one hand, cultural differences can enrich peoples lives by exposing them to new experiences and perspectives. They can also promote mutual understanding and respect among individuals from diverse backgrounds. However, on the other hand, cultural differences can also lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, and even violence if they are not properly managed or addressed.

In many cases, cultural differences may cause tension or conflict when two cultures come into contact with each other. This is particularly true in situations where there are significant power imbalances between the cultures involved, such as in colonization or globalization. In these scenarios, cultural differences can become a tool for domination and exploitation, rather than a means of promoting mutual understanding and respect. To address cultural differences effectively, it is essential to recognize them as a natural part of human diversity and to strive for greater cross-cultural communication and cooperation. This involves developing an appreciation for the unique aspects of each culture, as well as recognizing commonalities and similarities between them. It also requires a willingness to learn from others and to seek out opportunities for dialogue and collaboration across cultural boundaries. In this research, the researcher tried to find out whether cultural differences hinder cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees that stay in Thailand.

2.14 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIABLES

The behavioral phenomena being studied in this research include language acquisition, social integration, well-being, and the attitudes of Japanese retirees. Most of these phenomena are considered independent variables as they are expected to influence the dependent variable, cultural assimilation. The independent variables are hypothesized to act as contributing factors that facilitate the assimilation of Japanese retirees into Thai culture. The relationships between these independent variables and cultural assimilation are examined through the formulation and testing of hypotheses.

Additionally, a high level of support is hypothesized to act as a mediating variable, influencing the relationship between attitude and social integration. In this context, support is expected to bridge the gap, enhancing the impact of positive attitudes on successful social integration. Meanwhile, language acquisition is proposed as a moderating variable, affecting the strength and direction of the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation. Specifically, it is anticipated that higher levels of language proficiency will enhance the positive effect of well-being on the ability of Japanese retirees to assimilate into Thai culture.

These hypotheses are as below:

(H1) There is a positive correlation between retirees acquisition of language (IV) and social integration (DV).

(H2): There is a positive correlation between retirees social integration (IV) and cultural assimilation (DV)

(H3): There is a positive correlation between subjective well-being (IV) and cultural assimilation (DV).

(H4): There is a positive correlation between attitude (IV) and cultural assimilation (DV).

(H5): A high level of support mediates the association between attitudes (IV) and social integration (DV).

(H6): Language acquisition moderates the association between well-being and cultural assimilation (DV).

These relationships are illustrated in the model framework below.

2.14 A RESEARCH MODEL FRAMEWORK

A research model framework provides an underlying structure or model to support the collective research efforts. Here is the research model framework for this research.

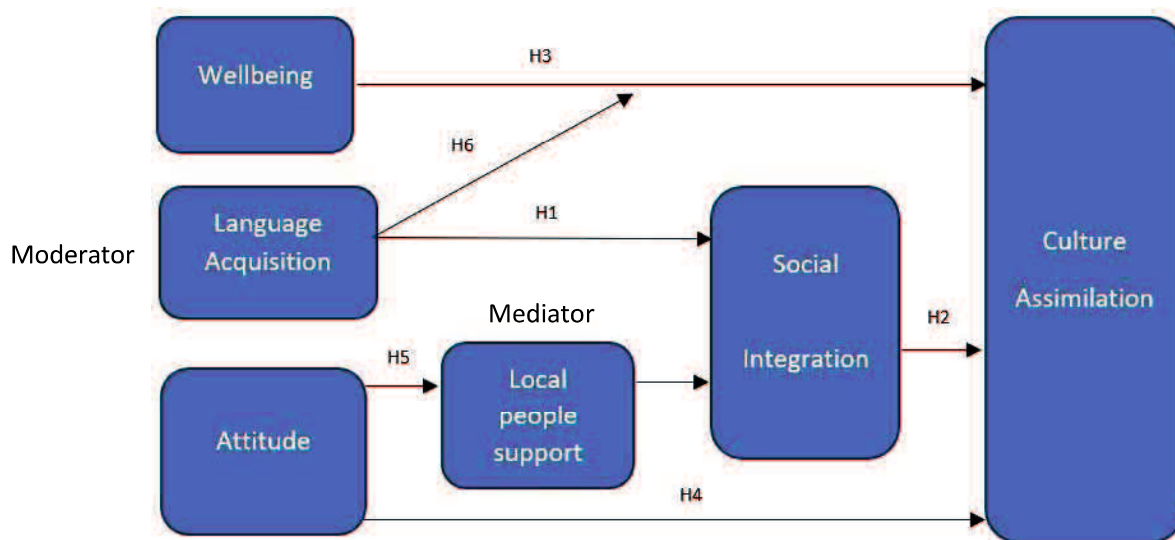


Figure 2.8 A Research Model Framework

Source: Made by author

A research model framework provides a foundational structure to guide and support collective research efforts. In this study, the conceptual framework is developed by synthesizing insights from the literature review and Lee's Push-Pull theory. The push-pull factors, such as economic, health, and social influences, are identified as significant determinants of the intention to acquire a second home in Thailand.

Behavioral phenomena, including social integration, well-being, attitude, language acquisition, and the attitudes serve as independent variables influencing the dependent variable: the cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees into Thai society. A high level of support from local residents is examined as a mediating variable (M), potentially bridging the relationship between attitudes and social integration.

Additionally, language acquisition is analyzed as a moderating variable, exploring whether it strengthens or alters the association between cultural assimilation and well-being. By examining these variables, the study aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping the cultural integration of Japanese retirees in Thailand

2.15 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 2

This chapter has provided an in-depth exploration of the key topics relevant to this study, drawing upon a wide array of scholarly resources. By reviewing books, peer-reviewed journals, and other credible publications from recognized academic and professional domains, this chapter has systematically analyzed existing literature to build a strong theoretical and empirical foundation for the research. The discussion encompassed a detailed examination of

concepts, theories, and prior studies directly related to the research objectives. This review not only offered a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge in the field but also identified critical trends, debates, and inconsistencies in the literature. These insights contribute to a nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation and reinforce the importance of addressing the research questions formulated for this study.

Additionally, the review of literature clarified the core requirements needed to achieve the study's objectives. It highlighted the theoretical frameworks and methodologies most relevant to exploring the variables and relationships under consideration. For instance, the synthesis of previous studies provided clarity on the importance of push-pull factors, behavioral phenomena, and cultural assimilation in the context of Japanese retirees in Thailand, setting the stage for subsequent chapters. Through this process, the chapter also uncovered gaps in the existing body of knowledge. These gaps underscore the significance of this research and its potential to provide new insights and contributions. For example, while prior studies have examined cultural assimilation broadly, there is limited focus on how factors such as language acquisition and local support specifically mediate or moderate the assimilation process for retirees in cross-cultural contexts. This study, therefore, seeks to fill these voids by integrating these variables into its research model.

Moreover, the discussions in this chapter emphasized the interplay between independent variables, such as attitudes, well-being, and social integration, and the dependent variable of cultural assimilation. This chapter also elaborated on the importance of mediating and moderating variables, such as local support and language acquisition, respectively. By doing so, it established the conceptual framework necessary to approach these relationships systematically in subsequent chapters.

In summary, this chapter serves as a critical step in the research process. It has synthesized relevant literature to create a strong theoretical and empirical basis for the study, clarified the objectives, and identified gaps and opportunities for contribution. The insights from this chapter lay the groundwork for the methodological approach in Chapter 3, ensuring that the study is rigorously designed to answer its research questions effectively. Ultimately, this chapter underscores the value of this research in contributing to the understanding of cultural assimilation, particularly within the unique context of Japanese retirees in Thailand.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION OF CHAPTER 3

This chapter consists of four parts: (1) Purpose of the study (2) Research design, (3) Sampling methods, (4) Research hypotheses and (5) Statistical Data analysis procedure.

Part one, the purpose of the study and research design, relates the purpose of the study and describes the research design and the variables used in this study. Part two, research instruments describe the data gathering materials, pilot study, sampling and the research procedure used in the study to analyse the data findings. Part three, Research Hypotheses that describe the statement of expectation or prediction that will be tested by the researcher in this research. Part four, is statistical data analysis procedures used to interpret the objectives.

3.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to study the 1) motivational push-pull factors for the Japanese retirees who migrate to Thailand under Long Stay Tourism. This research also wants to investigate the effect of behavioral phenomena on cultural assimilation.

For this research, variables like dependent variable, independent variable, mediating variable and moderating variable are being used. Independent variables like economic factors, health factors and social factors are seen as factors influencing the International Second Home Program in Thailand. The dependent variable in this research is the cultural assimilation of the Japanese retirees who participate in the International Long Stay Program (ILS) in Thailand. The mediating variable is the high level of support from local people. A high level of support from locals is expected to mediate the association between attitudes and social integration. Language acquisition is seen as a moderating variable. In this research, the language barrier is suggested to weaken the relationship between cultural assimilation and subjective well-being.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research will be using quantitative research methods. Creswell defines it as a research approach that emphasizes the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data in numerical form (Creswell, 2012, 2013; John W. Creswell, 2016). This definition highlights the importance of using numerical data to understand social phenomena and to derive meaning from the

collected data. The quantitative research involves a systematic and objective approach to data collection and analysis, which is critical for producing valid and reliable results.

3.2.1 Research Instrument

3.2.1.1 Detailing the Data Acquisition Process

The primary research instrument used in this study is a survey questionnaire. The design and construction of the questionnaire were informed by a review of questionnaires used in similar studies conducted by previous researchers. These existing questionnaires served as a foundation, and the questions were carefully modified and enhanced to better align with the specific research questions and objectives of this particular study. This process involved adapting the language, format, and content of the questions to ensure they are relevant and capable of effectively capturing the data needed to address the research aims.

To collect comprehensive and reliable data, the survey questionnaire was administered to respondents using two different methods: face-to-face meetings and an online platform. For the online platform, the questionnaire was created using Google Forms, which was then distributed via email and other online channels, ensuring anonymity and convenience for participants. In contrast, the face-to-face meetings allowed respondents to complete the questionnaire in person, providing an opportunity for direct interaction. This method also allowed the researcher to clarify any questions and ensure that the respondents fully understood the instructions. The online survey method was utilized to reach a larger and more geographically diverse group of participants, providing convenience and flexibility. Both methods were employed to ensure that data could be collected from a wide range of respondents, improving the representativeness of the sample.

To structure the data collection process, a cross-sectional design was employed. This design involves collecting data at a single point in time, rather than over an extended period. By using a cross-sectional design, the study was able to gather a snapshot of the respondents' views and behaviors at one specific moment, which allowed for a focused analysis of the research questions. This approach is particularly useful for studying the current state of a phenomenon and comparing different groups or variables at a particular point in time.

Overall, the combination of a well-constructed questionnaire, multiple data collection methods, and a cross-sectional design enabled the study to gather rich and diverse data, ensuring the research findings are both relevant and reliable.

3.2.1.2 Characteristics of Survey Questionnaire.

A questionnaire is the term used to describe the set of questions the researcher asks from the respondents. This includes the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data from the respondents. It is formed based on the objectives and research questions of the study conducted. In this research survey questionnaire will be delivered to the respondents via email, google search ads and face-to-face meeting. The questionnaire was self-administered, and also used the help from local people appointed as the researcher's representative with the supervisor's approval. Questionnaires were distributed during periodical meetings with the retirees and collected at the meetings or posted back. Questionnaire distribution also utilized snowball sampling, wherein research participants assist the researcher by identifying other potential subjects (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The researcher opted to use snowball sampling and a cross-sectional design to ensure a broader variation in respondents. This approach was also necessary because the researcher had no pre-existing contacts with Japanese retirees in Thailand prior to conducting the study. Additionally, the researcher stayed for a short period in Chiang Mai before returning to Japan.

In the questionnaire form, respondents need to provide their demographic profile and to rate each item using a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, and strongly agree), which was inspired by and partially developed from Marjavaara (2008) and Opačić (2009). The questionnaire is translated into both English and Japanese language. Language experts are consulted for editing and refining the translated version. Most of the questions are derived from an extensive literature review and are close-ended, focusing on the conceptualised independent and dependent variables. Respondents will select their answers from the provided alternatives using Likert scale measurements. A cross-sectional design is implemented, allowing researcher to collect data from multiple cases during a specific time period to identify patterns in the collected data later (Bryman, 2012).

Representativeness

The research focused on data related to push-pull factors for the Japanese retirees residing in Thailand, and the behavioral phenomena that lead to cultural assimilation. The sample size of 200 respondents is randomly selected among the retirees who stay in Bangkok and Chiangmai under IRM program. This approach was chosen to reflect the demographic composition of the two cities which includes diverse age groups of retirees from 60 to 75, genders, and socioeconomic status and come from the older generation (baby boomers) who were born between 1946 and 1964.

Validating Data Collection and Processing

The data was processed using statistical software. The data was processed using SPSS software (version 26) to ensure accuracy in statistical analysis. Before the data was studied or analyzed, it was carefully checked for unusual numbers (called "outliers") that didn't fit the usual pattern and for any errors or mistakes in the data. Some pieces of data were missing, but the missing parts were small (less than 5% of the total data). To fill in these missing values, the researcher used a method called "mean imputation" by replacing the missing values with the average of the numbers that were already available in the dataset. This approach was suggested by experts Little and Rubin in their 2020 study. Using the average to fill in missing values helps keep the data accurate and balanced. It reduces the chances of making the results unfair or incorrect while keeping the data as reliable as possible. This method assumes that the missing data happened randomly, with no particular pattern. However, if the missing data wasn't random, this method could slightly affect the accuracy of the results. While it filled in the gaps, it may not fully capture all the patterns in the data.

The study sample was restricted to retirees from Japan who are participants in the IRM (International Retirement Migration) program. While this focus provides valuable insights into a specific group, it also introduces a limitation: the sample may not accurately represent the broader population of retirees worldwide. Retirees from different countries or regions may have diverse preferences, challenges, or experiences that are not captured in this study. This limitation could reduce the ability to generalize the findings to other populations, as the experiences of Japanese retirees in the IRM program may not fully reflect those of retirees from other cultural, social, or economic backgrounds. The study acknowledges this constraint and emphasizes the importance of interpreting the results within the context of the selected sample.

Components of survey questionnaires

The survey questionnaire consists of seven components:

Component A: Demography

Component B: Push Factor: Economy factor, health factor and social factor.

Component C: Pull Factor: Economy factor, health factor and social factor.

Component D: Other Factors:

- Support from local people,
- External social conditions,
- Attitudes / Traits,
- Social Integration

- Subjective Well-Being
- Life Satisfaction

Component E: Level of Social Integration (Attitude & Socialization)

Component F: Level of Well Being

Component G: Level of Life Satisfaction

Component H: Level of Cultural Assimilation

Component I: Factor that hinder Cultural Assimilation (Language barrier & Cultural Clash)

The following is Table 3.1 of the questionnaire components that have been prepared for this study.

Components	Items	Number of Items
A	Demography	5
B	Push Factor: - Economy factor - Health factor - Social factor	7 4 7
C	Pull Factor: - Economy factor - Health factor - Social factor.	8 6 8
D	Other Factors: - Support from local people - External social conditions	4 4
E	Level of Social Integration (Attitude)	7
	Level of Social Integration (Socialization)	6
F	Level of Well Being	8
G	Level of Life Satisfaction	10
H	Level of Cultural Assimilation	9
I	Factor that hinder Cultural Assimilation (Language barrier)	5
	Factor that hinder Cultural Assimilation (Cultural Clash)	7
TOTAL		105

Table 3.1: Questionnaire component

PILOT STUDY

Reliability testing of the survey questionnaire was performed using pilot study. A pilot study is the initial step in the entire research protocol and is often a smaller study that assists in the planning and modification of the main study. More specifically, in large-scale clinical studies like quantitative research, the pilot or small-scale study often precedes the main trial to analyze its validity. In this research, respondents for the pilot study are chosen as similar as possible to respondents for the actual survey in terms of age, gender, education, and

socioeconomic (income) status. Approximately 20 Japanese retirees who were not part of the main research were randomly selected to participate in this pilot study.

The pilot study is important for the improvement of the quality and efficiency of the main study. In addition, it is conducted in order to assess the safety of treatment or interventions of data analysis, increase the researchers' experience with the study methods and interventions, and provide estimates for sample size calculation. The pilot study also serves as the primary trial to analyze its reliability and validity, ensuring that the results are interpreted as intended by the researcher confirming their relevance to the study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This in turn gives the researcher the opportunity to refine the items before the questionnaire is used to conduct the actual study.

In the pilot study, the reliability of the questionnaire items is assessed using the 'Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient'. Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency or reliability of a set of survey items. It quantifies the level of agreement on a standardized 0 to 1 scale. Higher values of Cronbach's alpha indicate greater agreement between items, meaning that participants' and response values for each participant across a set of questions are consistent. This consistency indicates the measurements are reliable and the items might measure the same characteristic. Analysts frequently use 0.7 as a benchmark value for Cronbach's alpha. At this level and higher, the items are considered sufficiently consistent, indicating that the measure is reliable. This reliability test is conducted using the Statistical Package for The Social Science (SPSS) version 26 software to obtain Cronbach's Alpha value.

The interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha scores is based on the book 'Psychometric Theory' by Jum C. Nunnally and Ira H. Bernstein (3rd edition, 1994) as presented in Table 3.2 below.

Alpha Cronbach Score	Reliability
0.9-1.0	Excellent reliability
0.7-0.89	Good reliability
0.6-0.69	Acceptable
<0.6	The item needs to be repaired
<0.5	Items need to be dropped

Table 3.2: Score Interpretation for Alpha-Cronbach

Source: Jum C. Nunnally and Ira H. Bernstein, pp. 248 - 292

Cronbach's Alpha measures internal consistency, showing how well test items measure the same concept. Higher Alpha values indicate greater consistency between items. Factors influencing Alpha include number of items and item homogeneity. The limitations is that while Cronbach's Alpha is useful, it doesn't test whether items are truly measuring the same underlying concept, which is why additional tests like factor analysis are often used to confirm one-dimensionality.

In this study, the researcher first employed the pilot study method to assess whether the questions posed had a high level of consistency and reliability. This reliability test is used to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire. It is performed on several Likert scale perception to determine the acceptability of the scale used. Based on the reliability analysis of the statistical instruments employing Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the following values for Cronbach's alpha are as follows.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha ^a	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items ^a	N of Items
.775	.786	8

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
PUSH	3.8931	.17359	40
PULL	4.4272	.11687	40
OTHER	4.5125	.19774	40
LEVELSOCIAL	4.4038	.12889	40
LEVELWELLBEING	4.2969	.18710	40
LEVELLIFESAT	4.5813	.32713	40
LEVELCULTURALA	4.4333	.19294	40
FACTORHINDERCA	4.5125	.52858	40

Table 3.3 Pilot Test Result

From the findings, it can be seen that the value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.775 which shows that the items are sufficiently consistent and reliable.

3.3 SAMPLING METHOD

A sampling method is the process used to select a portion of a population to represent the entire group in a research study. Since studying the entire population can be impractical or impossible due to constraints like time, cost, or accessibility, researchers use sampling methods to gather data efficiently while ensuring that the selected group (sample) provides reliable insights about the whole population. Sampling methods can be broadly categorized into probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In this research, the respondents are

selected using non-probability sampling, that is based on convenience or the researcher's judgment, and not everyone has an equal chance of being chosen. Purposive (judgmental) sampling is used where the respondents are chosen deliberately based on specific criteria relevant to the research that is Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under IRM Program. Snowball sampling is also being used where the initial participants refer other potential subjects as the respondents, creating a "snowball" effect. (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The researcher opted to use snowball sampling and a cross-sectional design to ensure a broader variation in respondents. This approach was also necessary because the researcher had no pre-existing contacts with Japanese retirees in Thailand prior to conducting the study. Additionally, the researcher stayed for a short period in Chiang Mai before returning to Japan.

Bangkok and Chiang Mai are chosen as the study area in this research. Bangkok has many Japanese populations who live in and around the city center like Sukhumvit Road area, Thong Lo, Phrompong, Sriracha, Nihonmachi and Thaniya and Sriracha. In Chiang Mai four areas under study are Sakura Senior House, Chiang Mai Health Care Resort, Sirin Chiang Mai Home and also Baan Din Ki Village situated round Nimmanhemmin zone and Changklan Road. In these cities, there is a lot of services for Japanese retirees such as translation services, real estates, rental of Japanese books, golf reservation, visa support, Thai language school, Japanese food and ingredient supermarkets. Bangkok is a popular destination for Japanese retirees due to several factors that make it an ideal place for long-term stays, particularly under international retirement programs like low cost of living, good healthcare facilities, a lot of supermarkets, restaurants, and cultural centers that cater to Japanese tastes and preferences.

Bangkok's combination of affordability, healthcare quality, cultural familiarity, and a welcoming environment for foreigners makes it a top destination for Japanese retirees looking for a comfortable and engaging place to spend their retirement. In Chiang Mai city, it has no heavy industry, but it has a rich green zone and traditional Lanna culture, therefore Japanese retirees can live a slow life but with infrastructure, such as hospitals, public utilities and department stores, InfoQ.C (Japanese ingredients and tour service) and Dentaland (dental service).

3.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

A research hypothesis is a statement of predictions about the relationship between the variables to be studied. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the hypotheses in this research are as below:

Hypothesis 1

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between language and social integration.

Hypothesis 2

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between social integration and cultural assimilation.

Hypothesis 3

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between well-being and cultural assimilation.

Hypothesis 4

(H_A): There is a positive correlation between retirees' attitudes and cultural assimilation.

Hypothesis 5

(H_A): High level of support from local people (M) mediates the relationship between attitudes(X) and social integration(X)

Hypothesis 6

(H_A): Language acquisition(M) moderates the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation.

3.5 STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS

3.5.1 Quantitative research

3.5.1.1 Descriptive analysis

The data for push-pull factors gained from questionnaires will be analysed using SPSS version 26 using descriptive analysis to obtain mean values and standard deviations for each construct being studied. The mean value level scale is based on the mean score guidelines used by Nunnally (1994) as shown in Table 3.5.

Mean Score Scale	Sentiment Level
1.0 - 1.99	Strongly Disagree
2.0 - 2.99	Disagree
3.0 - 3.99	Neutral
4.0 - 4.59	Agree
4.6 - 5.00	Strongly agree

Table 3.4: Mean Score Scale Interpretation Table

(Source: Nunnally, 1993)

3.5.1.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation Analysis also will be used to analyze the data. Before doing the correlation analysis, the normality test is done first to identify the data used to meet the assumption of normality or not. For the normality test, the values are usually seen in Skewness and Kurtosis statistics. Zero values for Skewness and Kurtosis indicate a 100% normal distribution. Data is said to be normally distributed when Skewness value is within -1 and 1 and Kurtosis value within -2 and +2. When the tested data has a normal distribution, it is suitable to be used in a relational study.

In inferential statistical testing, normally distributed data make it easier for researchers to choose bivariate analysis. Researchers can also see if the analyzed data has extreme data. From the results of the normality test, the researcher can choose the appropriate analysis method to study the relationship between the variables, which is Pearson's correlation analysis.

Pearson's coefficient is used to show the degree of linear relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Correlation coefficient symbol r , and ranges from -1.00 to 1.00. A correlation coefficient tells two things about the relationship between two variables, the direction and magnitude of the relationship. The closer the measure is to 1.00, the more it indicates a statistically significant relationship. The strength of the relationship between the variables in this study is estimated using the strength scale proposed by Davies (James A. Davis, 1971) as shown in Table 3.5.

Coefficient value	Descriptive interpretation
0.70 – 1.00	Very Strong
0.50 – 0.69	Strong
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate
0.10 – 0.29	Weak
0.01 - 0.09	Ignored

Table 3.5: Correlation Strength Based on the Davies Scale

3.5.1.3 Regression analysis

The regression analysis technique will also be used in this study to test whether the hypothesis is true or not. In addition, this method can see how the independent variables affect the dependent variables. It can show the extent of the implications of each variable in independent variables and its relationship to dependent variables. The findings of this analysis will show the strength of the relationship between the variables (see research framework, topic 2). It will also provide information that there is an influence that will change to a certain variable if there is an increase or decrease in another variable and how one variable affects another.

3.6 STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Table 3.7 shows a summary of the types of analysis and measurement tools that will be used to answer all the objectives of the study.

Research Objectives	Type of Analysis	Measurement tools
1	To study the intentions (push factor) of the retirees residing in Thailand on their inclination under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program	i.SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
2	To study the attractions (pull factors) that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program	i.SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
3	To study the other motivational factors that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under the Retirement Migration (IRM) program	i.SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
4	To identify the level of social integration of Japanese retiree's communities with the locals.	i.SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
5	To identify the level of wellbeing among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program	i.SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
6	To identify the level of life satisfaction among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program	SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
7	To identify the level of cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program	SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
8	To study the factors that hinder cultural assimilation among the Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the Retirement Migration (IRM) program.	SPSS (Descriptive analysis using questionnaire) : frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation
9	To identify the relationship between language acquisition and social integration of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.	SPSS: Inference Analysis using questionnaire) Pearson correlation analysis
10	To identify the relationship between social integration and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.	SPSS: Inference Analysis using questionnaire) Pearson correlation analysis

11	To identify the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.	SPSS: Inference Analysis using questionnaire) Pearson correlation analysis
12	To identify the relationship between retirees' attitudes and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.	SPSS: Inference Analysis using questionnaire) Pearson correlation analysis
13	To identify the most important factors that cause cultural assimilation among the retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.	SPSS: Inference Analysis using questionnaire) Multiple Regression analysis
14	To study whether a high level of support mediates the association between attitudes and social integration	SPSS: Inference Analysis using questionnaire) Linear regression analysis
15	To study whether language acquisition moderates the linkage between cultural assimilation (IV) and well-being (DV).	SPSS: Inference Analysis using questionnaire) Linear regression analysis

Table 3.6: Data Analysis Summary Table

3.7 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 3

This chapter provides a comprehensive explanation of the research method employed in this study. It outlines the research methodology and research design, which serve as the foundation for the study's approach. The research methodology explains the overall framework and systematic procedures used to gather and analyze data. It also addresses the theoretical framework, which forms the conceptual basis for the study and helps to clarify the relationships between key concepts. The primary goal of this methodology is to answer the research objectives by examining the research questions in a structured and rigorous way.

To achieve this, a variety of statistical tests are utilized. Descriptive analysis is employed to summarize and describe the data, providing a clear overview of the sample. Descriptive statistics include measures such as frequency (which shows how often specific responses occur), percentage (which represents the proportion of responses relative to the whole sample), and item and aggregate means (which calculate the average scores for individual items and the entire set of responses, respectively). These measures help in presenting the basic patterns and trends observed in the data.

For inferential analysis, which aims to draw conclusions beyond the immediate data, two key statistical techniques are applied: correlation and regression analysis. Correlation is used to

examine the strength and direction of the relationship between dependent and independent variables, providing insights into how these variables might be linked. Regression analysis goes a step further by assessing the extent to which the independent variables can predict the dependent variable. By using these techniques, the study investigates the causal relationships or the influence one variable may have on another.

In conclusion, the research methodology and design outlined in this chapter provide a solid framework for addressing the study's research objectives and exploring the relationships between key variables. By using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, the study ensures a thorough examination of the data. Descriptive analysis offers insights into the patterns and trends within the sample, while correlation and regression analyses allow for a deeper understanding of the relationships between variables. These methods collectively contribute to the robustness and validity of the findings, guiding the research toward meaningful conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION OF CHAPTER 4

The global transition to aging societies has increased international migration in the context of the elderly population, particularly in developed countries. This new phenomenon is increasing in the 21st century and is a migration for a better life abroad. Most elderly foreigners opt to migrate to destinations in developing countries with fewer amenities and smaller economies. Like in Thailand, the global transition for an aging society under an international long stay program is increasingly popular among Japanese older people, as it is encouraged by the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry, which launched the Silver Columbia Project to encourage older people to go on long-stay trips or move abroad (Fukahori et al., 2011). The term “long-stay” is a commercial term and a trademark of the Long Stay Foundation, which was registered in 1992. The Foundation defined “long-stay” as staying overseas for a relatively long time but with the expectation of returning to Japan. Therefore, it does not involve migration or permanent residence in a foreign country. Long-stayers tend to own or rent a property rather than stay in a hotel. Long-staying is voluntary and usually to make use of leisure time, and it aims to seek “life” (ordinary experience) rather than “travel” (package tours)(Ono, 2010). The source of income used to pay for it should be from Japan (for example, pension, interest from a bank account, dividends, or remittances).

Thailand has been a target destination for supporting retired elderly people from abroad since 1990, and it remains one of the top countries of interest for elderly foreigners (Williams et al., 2000). In 2019, 1,875,368 retired foreign tourists came to stay in Thailand. Of this number, 181,656 were elderly Japanese tourists aged 65 years and up (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2019). In addition, the number of elderly Japanese people holding non-immigrant visas (Code O-A) in Chiang Mai was 3,130 people, divided into 1,690 people aged 55–59 years, 692 people aged 60–69 years, 635 people aged 70–79 years, 98 people aged 80–89 years and 15 people aged 90 years and up (Nishikito, 2020). Japan has the highest ratio of elderly citizens in the world, with those aged over 60 years making up 43 million of the country’s 126.9 million-strong population or 34.0% of the total population (United Nations, n.d.) Registration data for overseas residents in Thailand from 2017 show that the number of Japanese expatriates doubled in the previous decade, reaching around 81,000 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2022).

This chapter discusses the results of data analysis and research findings about the motivational push and pull factors and behavioral phenomena towards cultural assimilation for

the case study of Japanese retirees who are involved in International Long Stay Program which is also known as International Retirement Migration program in Thailand. The data findings were gained using a questionnaire survey, through cooperation with residents and clubs for Japanese older people in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, Thailand. The analysis of the data questionnaire provides results that can be seen to answer all the objectives of the study. The analysis of the study is divided into two parts, namely descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. Under descriptive analysis, the data obtained included basic demographics and socio-economic backgrounds such as age, sex, marital status, education level; and monthly income. Under inferential analysis, the data obtained prove the predicting hypotheses under the correlation test between the predicting variables. Inferential analysis also uses regression analysis tests to prove the predicting mediating variables (dependent variables) and moderating variables (dependent variables) which correlate the two independent variables.

4.1 MATERIALS AND METHOD

4.1.1 Target population

Demography



Figure 4.1: Map of Thailand

Source: Kids World Travel Guide https://www.kids-world-travel-guide.com/images/xThailandmap_Myanmar-2.png.pagespeed.ic.B4V3IUuQIW.webp

The researcher conducted a questionnaire survey in early 2023. The target population was long-stay Japanese older people in Bangkok and Chiang Mai province, Thailand, defined as those aged at least 55 years old, retired from work in Japan with a desire to stay in Thailand, and living in Thailand for at least 3 months. Bangkok and Chiang Mai are chosen as the study area in this research as Bangkok has many Japanese populations who live in and around the city center like Sukhumvit Road, Thong Lor and Ekkamai, Silom and Sathorn, Ari, Rama 9 and

Ratchada, Nonthaburi, Phrompong, Sriracha, Nihonmachi, Thaniya and Sriracha. Among them, areas such as Sukhumvit, Thonglor, Silom, and Bang Na provide a mix of luxury living, comfort, and essential services, making them the top choices for Japanese retirees under the international long stay retirement migration program. Nihonmachi is also called “Japanese Town” where a large Japanese community lives here. There are malls, restaurants, Fuji Super, beauty salons, real estate agencies, Japanese flower shops, bakeries, cram schools, one-dollar shops, Shimako and Fuji hairdressers, second hand book stores, and all predominantly catering for Japanese customers on Sukhumvit Road in Phrom Phong. Soi Thaniya in Sala Daeng, one of Bangkok's famous nightlife districts on Silom Road also has many Japanese restaurants and hostess bars. Jin Wellbeing, one of the famous retirement homes at Phaholyothin Road in Bangkok comprises of a spa, fitness area, swimming pool and other health and rehabilitation services, a hospital, a community mall and a Japanese club. It also provides facilities for various lifestyle activities to entertain both seniors and their younger family members.

In Chiang Mai, Japanese population lives near the city center. In particular, the following four areas of Chiang Mai under study are Sakura Senior House, Chiang Mai Health Care Resort, Sirin Chiang Mai Home, Siripanna Villa Resort and also Baan Din Ki which are situated round Nimmanhemin zone and Changklan Road. Japanese older people live in condominiums and serviced apartments in Huay Kaew, Nimmanhemin, and Chang Klahan with emphasis on convenience, cleanliness, peace in residential areas, natural environments, surrounding shade, and lights on paths. Chiang Mai offers a peaceful lifestyle for anyone looking for it and also attracts retirees and expats who want a vibrant nightlife and an active social life. With a peaceful lush green environment, Siripanna Villa Resort is always chosen for its adequate Japanese retirees who live here. It has a secure and beautiful nursing home center that attracts and fulfills unforgettable memories to the retirees. It is a warm and tasteful place decorated in the typical Lanna style which enchants and welcomes all guests to a more simply fulfilled life. A massive green garden allows seniors and patients to participate in many outdoor activities such as going for a walk for fresh air and doing some light exercises. The center itself is all-inclusive and equipped with facilities like physical therapy rooms, dining rooms, activity rooms, a massive pool, etc. The Chiang Mai Longstay Life Club (CLL) has an organized system with a membership fee, position ranking, activity plan, and channel to interact with local people. CLL was established in 2002, current office is located at Hoi Kaew Road. It had 128 members in May 2019, average age is 71 years. The club's objective is to provide members with life support and enjoy life with activities like information publishing, Thai lessons, English lessons, photo club, handicrafts, hot springs and lunch meetings.



Figure 4.2: Jin Wellbeing County in Bangkok provide good facilities for Japanese retirees.

Source: Jin Wellbeing Country : Healthy and happy living (jinwellbeing.com)

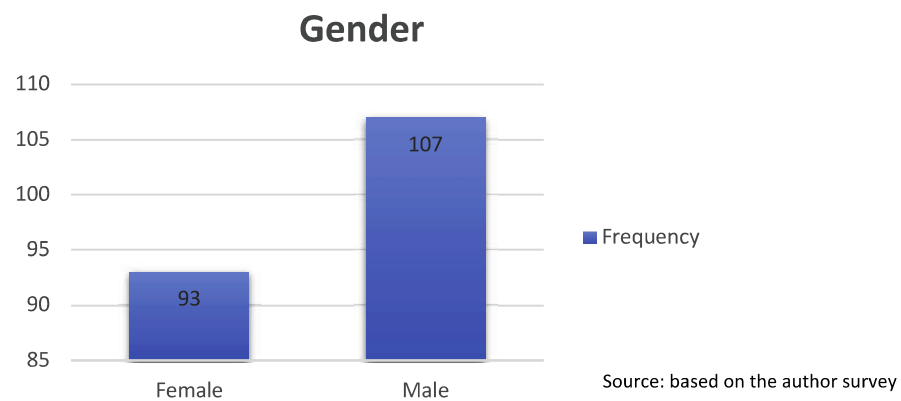
For example, Jin Wellbeing County, located in Pathum Thani, Thailand, offers facilities tailored for Japanese retirees seeking a healthy and active lifestyle. Their official website provides comprehensive information about their services, accommodations, and activities.

4.1.2 Gender (Respondents)

The below table shows the gender distribution from the survey.

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	93	46.5
Male	107	53.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 4.1 Gender of the respondents



Graph 4.1 Gender of the respondents

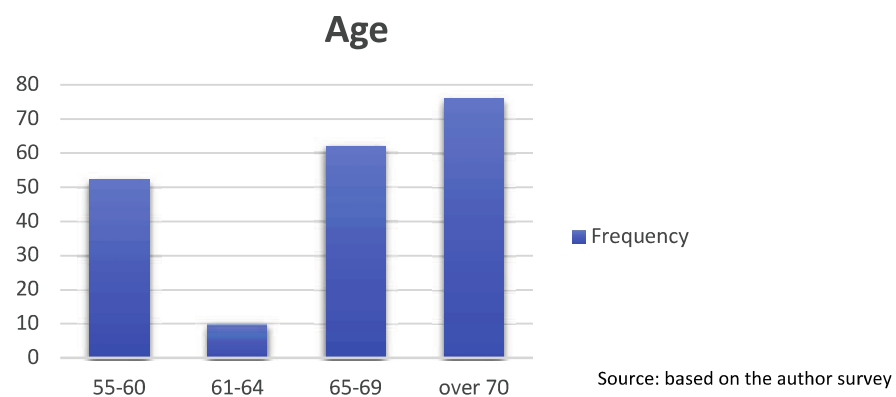
Based on the graph, there are 93 women (46.5%) and 107 men (53.5%) who become the respondents of this research.

4.1.3. Age (Respondents)

The below table shows the age distribution from the survey.

Age	Frequency	Percent
55-60	52	26.0
61-64	10	5.0
65-69	62	31.0
over 70	76	38.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 4.2 Age of the respondents



Graph 4.2. Age of the respondents

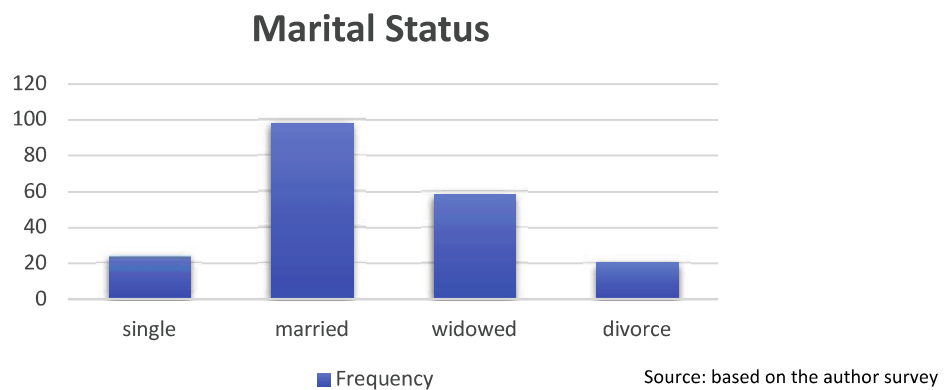
In this research, 52 (26%) respondents, aged between 55 to 60 years old, 10 (5%) respondents aged between 61 to 64 years old, 62 (31%) respondents aged between 65 to 69 years old, and the majority 76 (31%) respondents with age more than 70 years old.

4.1.4 Marital Status

The below table shows the marital distribution from the survey.

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
single	24	12.0
married	98	49.0
widowed	58	29.0
divorce	20	10.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 4.3 Marital status of the respondents



Graph 4.3 Marital status of the respondents

Among the respondents, 24(12%) are single, 98(49%) are married, 58 (29%) are widowed and 20(10%) have divorced.

4.1.5 Education Background

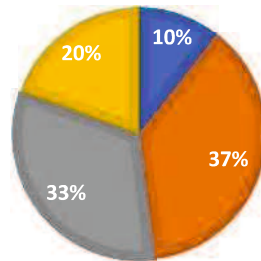
The below table shows the education background of the respondents.

Education Background	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	21	10.5
Bachelor degree	75	37.5
Master degree	65	32.5
Doctoral degree	39	19.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 4.4 Education background of the respondents

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

■ diploma ■ Bachelor degree ■ Master degree ■ Doctoral degree



Source: based on the author survey

Graph 4.4 Education background of the respondents

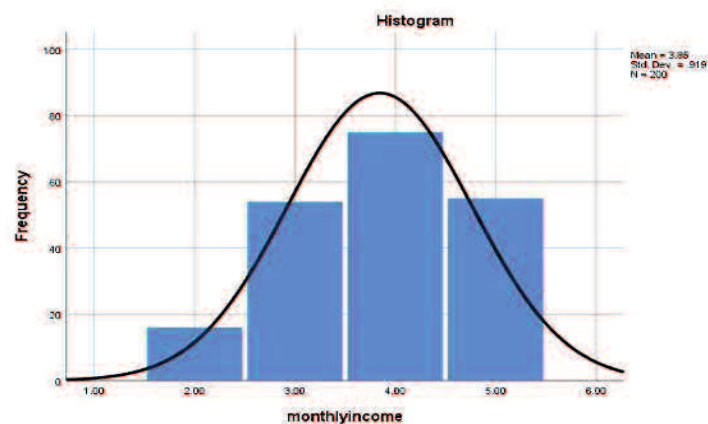
The respondent's educational background is 21(10.5%) diploma level, 75(37.5%) bachelor degree level, 65 (32.5%) master's degree level and 39(19.5%) doctoral degree level.

4.1.6 Monthly Income

The below table shows the monthly income of the respondents.

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percent
USD3500-USD4499	16	8.0
USD4500-USD5499	54	27.0
USD5500-USD6499	75	37.5
aboveUSD6500	55	27.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 4.5 Monthly income of the respondents



Graph 4.5 Monthly income of the respondents

Source: based on the author survey

The monthly income of the respondents is 6(8%) with monthly income between USD3500-USD4499, 54 (27%) respondents with monthly income between USD4500-USD5499, 75 (37.5%) with money income between USD5500-USD6499 and 55(27.5%) respondents with income above USD6500.

4.2 MEASUREMENT ANALYSIS

In collaboration with two Japanese self-help clubs in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, questionnaire surveys of Japanese retirees were conducted from January to April 2023. The inclusion criteria of the Japanese retirees chosen as the respondents where their minimum age were 55 years old, staying in Thailand for more than 30 days in the previous 12 months, and while the main exclusion criteria included relocation due to retirement.

4.2.1 Using Descriptive Statistics

In quantitative research, questionnaires are the main source (primary source) that have been analyzed to answer the research questions or research hypotheses. To answer research questions 1 to 8, descriptive statistics in the form of mean and percentage are used. To answer research questions 9 to 12 (accepting or rejecting hypotheses 1 to 4) inference statistic using a correlation test is used. To answer research question 13-15 inference statistics using regression analysis test is used.

4.2.1.1 Mean Score Scale

Based on the overall mean score for each questionnaire, the mean score was categories into five parts that are strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. This interpretation scale will be used to discuss the level of satisfaction on the questionnaire.

Mean Score Scale	Sentiment Level
1.0 - 1.99	Strongly Disagree
2.0 - 2.99	Disagree
3.0 - 3.99	Neither agree nor disagree
4.0 - 4.59	Agree
4.6 - 5.00	Strongly agree

Table 4.6 The Mean Score Scale Based On 5-Point Likert Scale.

4.2.1.2 Questionnaire design and research variables

The properties of the six research constructs (push factors, pull factors, other factors, level of social integration among retirees into society, level of cultural assimilation among the retirees,

and factors that hinder cultural assimilation among retirees) were tested using questionnaires. Correlation matrices and standard deviations were used to test the hypotheses and finally, completely standardized solutions were utilized in reporting the results. A total of 200 usable questionnaires were collected, and the rest were collected using Google Forms. rate. Missing values, outliers, and distribution of all measured variables were examined to purify the data and reduce systematic errors.

Research question 1:

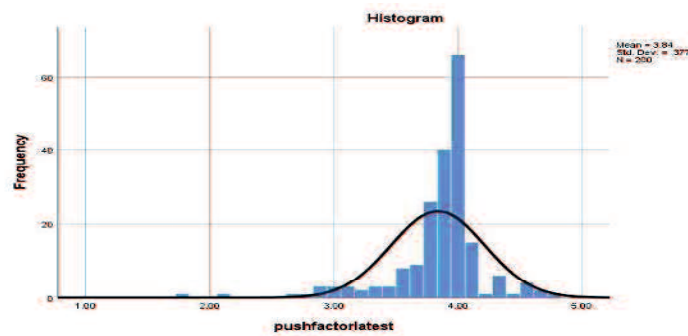
What are the intentions (push factor) of the retirees residing in the host countries on their inclination under the International Long Stay Program (ILS) program?

The below table shows each mean score and standard deviation of economic push factors, health push factors and social push factors.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
pushe1	200	3.69	0.806
pushe2	200	4.28	0.71001
pushe3	200	2.345	1.13685
pushe4	200	4.65	0.80044
pushe5	200	4.38	0.77369
pushe6	200	4.56	0.83057
pushe7	200	2.29	1.1802
pushh1	200	4.33	0.73059
pushh2	200	3.87	1.04814
pushh3	200	4.08	0.84687
pushh4	200	4.34	0.88789
pushs1	200	2.84	1.19648
pushs2	200	4	0.77004
pushs3	200	3.81	0.75946
pushs4	200	4.19	0.82297
pushs5	200	2.695	1.32694
pushs6	200	4.53	0.86768
pushs7	200	4.21	0.88306

pushe = Push Economic, pushh = Push Health, pushs = Push Social

Table 4.7 Push Factors (Mean and Standard Deviation)



Graph 4.6 Push Factors (Mean and Standard Deviation)

Push Factors		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Economy factor	1. Inadequate infrastructure (transportation system, communication networks, public facilities, internet, water, gas, electricity supplies, etc. in Japan.)	3.690	0.806
	2. High cost of living in Japan lead to unsatisfactory financial conditions.	4.280	0.71001
	3. Political repression in the Japan.	2.345	1.13685
	4. Comprehensive tax code in Japan (high Income Tax to take from your pay or pension).	4.650	0.80044
	5. High pace of lifestyle in Japan.	4.380	0.77369
	6. Poor living conditions in Japan (tiny rooms, confining spaces, overcrowding, poverty, etc.)	4.560	0.83057
	7. Job restriction in Japan.	2.290	1.18020
Health factor	1. High cost for medical service in Japan.	4.330	0.73059
	2. Unhealthy lifestyle in Japan.	3.870	1.04814
	3. Low quality of life due to poor health facilities (lack of hospitals and clinics, poor medical care, lack of spaces to exercise etc) in Japan.	4.080	0.84687
	4. Emerging infectious diseases in Japan (dengue, chikungunya, zika, ebola hemorrhagic and yellow fever, Avian influenza, respiratory infectious diseases, etc.)	4.340	0.88789
Social factor	1. Unsafe environment (lack of social support, neighborhood violence, air pollution, water contamination, etc) in Japan.	2.840	1.19648
	2. Poor social network for the elderly in Japan.	4.000	.77004
	3. Lack of social security (work-related income, health care, family support, social pensions, etc.)	3.810	.75946
	4. Extreme weather and seasonal changes in Japan	4.190	.82297
	5. Lack of entertainment and amenities eg. theme park, theatres, clubs, temples, restaurants, shopping malls, street foods, traditional performances, etc in Japan.	2.695	1.32694
	6. Ageing with a growing disaster risks like earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis and repeated floods.	4.530	.86768
	7. Poorly planned urban sprawl led to congestion, overcrowding as well as having negative effects on people's well-being.	4.210	.88306

Table 4.8 Detailed item of push factors with mean and standard deviation results.

Based on the above table, the push factors for the retirees residing in the host countries on their inclination under the IRM program are as below:

Among the economic factors that score high mean are the comprehensive tax code in Japan -high income tax to take from pension (M: 4.65), poor living conditions in Japan-tiny rooms, confining spaces, overcrowding, poverty, etc. (M:4.56), high pace of lifestyle in Japan(M:4.38) and high cost of living in Japan lead to unsatisfactory financial conditions (M:4.28). This means that these four factors are the strong economic factors that make Japanese retirees move to Thailand for long stay program.

Among the health factors are emerging infectious diseases in Japan- dengue, chikungunya, zika, Ebola hemorrhagic and yellow fever, Avian influenza, respiratory infectious diseases, etc. (M: 4.34), high cost for medical service in Japan (M: 4.33) and low quality of life due to poor health facilities -lack of hospitals and clinics, poor medical care, lack of spaces to exercise etc in Japan (M:4.08). This means that these three factors are the strong health factors that lead to the movements of Japanese retirees to Thailand under long stay tourism program.

Among the social factors are aging with a growing disasters risk like earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis and repeated floods (M: 4.530), poorly planned urban sprawl leads to congestion, overcrowding as well as having negative effects on people's well-being (4.210), extreme weather and seasonal changes in Japan (M:4.190) and poor social network for the elderly in Japan(M:4.000). This means that these four factors are the strong factors making the Japanese retirees move to Thailand under long stay program.

Summary Result: Push Factors

Economy Factor: High income tax to take from the pension, poor living conditions in Japan, the high pace of lifestyle in Japan, and high cost of living in Japan.

Health Factor: Infectious diseases in Japan, high cost of medical service, low quality of life, poor medical care, lack of spaces to exercise.

Social factors: Ageing with growing disaster risks, poorly planned urban sprawl, overcrowding, extreme weather and seasonal changes in Japan, and poor social network for the elderly.

The result is parallel with the information gained from the real incident in Japan. It was found that skilled migrants left Japan in March, 2011 after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Fukushima disasters. Their decision was largely driven by concerns about the present and future risks that became manifested after these events. Nearly 20,000 people lost their lives and 400,000 houses were destroyed (Oishi & Hamada, 2019). on 28 March, 2023, a magnitude-6.2 earthquake occurred in the Pacific Ocean east of Aomori and south of Hokkaido prefectures. The epicenter was about 131 km (81 miles) east-northeast of

Hachinohe, Aomori Prefecture. The tremor occurred at a depth of about 31 km (19 miles), and moderate-to-light shaking was probably felt in parts of Aomori, Iwate, and southern Hokkaido prefectures, as well as weak shaking throughout much of Tohoku Region and Hokkaido Prefecture.



Figure 4.3 Tsunami at Fukushima on March 2011.

Source: New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/14/world/asia/14seawalls.html>



Figure 4.4 Tsunami at Kamaishi port, on March 11, 2011.

Source: Daily Mail, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1376914/A-floody-miracle-The-brave-reporter-caught-force-tsunami-->

Poorly planned urban sprawl is also one push factor that led to the movements of Japanese retirees to Thailand. Urban sprawl is regarded as a failure of urban planning. Excessive urban sprawl became a new serious problem that arose as a direct consequence of that fast growth, posing a severe threat to the social life of the citizens of the Japanese metropolises. Phenomena such as environmental destruction and the spread of several cases of pollution contaminations in degraded urban districts, were mainly caused by both a combination of poor city planning regulations, and the evident priority given to economic growth over the citizens' welfare promoted by the central government.

By 1960 the worst cases of environmental contamination were basically due to a lack of governmental pollution standards and regulations. The presence of a high concentration of factories and industrial plants in urban areas leads to high density of population placed in the big industrial cities. Furthermore, the pace of accelerated urban growth and the fast urbanization of large rural lands generated a massive extension of disordered areas and uncontrolled urban sprawls on the outskirts of all the industrial cities. This caused two main problems: the chronic shortage of many public services and facilities faced by the growing number of their residents (such as the lack of parks and libraries, inadequate roads, sewers and water supply systems), and the awareness that the inefficient land use in the vast extensions of congested and unplanned urban areas created serious obstacles for any attempt at further improvement and urbanization according to rational plans, because of the higher

costs to be paid for the construction of the infrastructures and lack of space for effective improvement works (Sorensen, 2003).

Research Question 2:

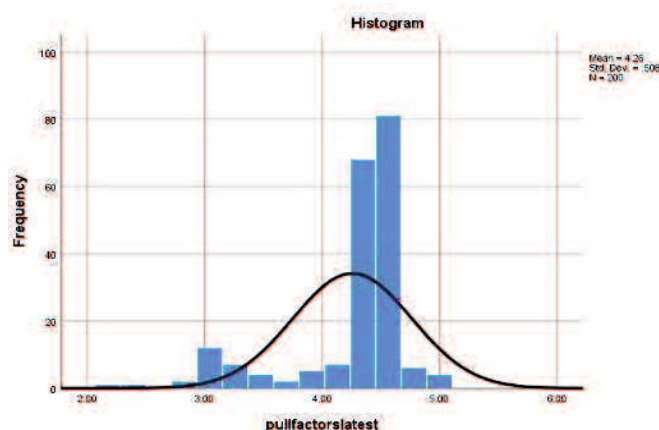
What are the attractions (pull factors) that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under the International Long Stay (ILS) program?

Below table show each mean score and standard deviation of economic pull factors, health pull factors and social pull factors.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
pullle1	200	4.01	0.70168
pullle2	200	4.205	0.78489
pullle3	200	4.27	0.81265
pullle4	200	4.45	0.84102
pullle5	200	4.42	0.76585
pullle6	200	3.965	0.74853
pullle7	200	4.355	0.73599
pullle8	200	4.28	0.84568
pulllh1	200	4.27	0.843
pulllh2	200	4.315	0.74737
pulllh3	200	4.185	0.73722
pulllh4	200	4.345	0.83031
pulllh5	200	4.385	0.76793
pulllh6	200	4.505	0.72982
pulls1	200	4.255	0.74346
pulls2	200	4.265	0.81738
pulls3	200	4.05	0.85508
pulls4	200	4.2	0.85066
pulls5	200	4.335	0.72485
pulls6	200	4.5	0.75021
pulls7	200	4.03	0.69391
pulls8	200	4.175	0.719

pushe = Pull Economic, pushh = Pull Health, pushes = Pull Social

Table 4.9 Pull Factors (Mean and Standard Deviation)



Graph 4.7 Pull Factors (Mean and Standard Deviation)

Pull Factors		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Economy factor	1. Stability of currency rate in Thailand.	4.0100	0.70168
	2. Efficient tax and visa system at Thailand.	4.2050	0.78489
	3. Excellent infrastructure and facilities in Thailand.	4.2700	0.81265
	4. Low cost of living (affordability of housing rent, food etc.) in Thailand	4.4500	0.84102
	5. Cheaper labour and service (domestic helping staff: maid, gardener, etc.) in Thailand	4.4200	0.76585
	6. Investment opportunities (real estate, farming, retail business, etc.) in Thailand	3.9650	0.74853
	7. Improving living standards in Thailand eg. spacious houses, better living, better leisure activities, better well-being etc.	4.3550	0.73599
	8. More rewarding living environment.	4.2800	0.84568
Health factor	1. Quality medical service and health care at affordable prices in Thailand	4.2700	0.84300
	2. More rejuvenating wellness retreats in Thailand.	4.3150	0.74737
	3. Good surroundings and living environment ex. clean air, less pollution and clear water while living in Thailand)	4.1850	0.73722
	4. Subtropical climate with warm weather and mild temperature for better health and well-being in Thailand.	4.3450	0.83031
	5. Availability of caretaker service for the elderly	4.3850	0.76793
	6. Good self-care (yoga, bike-rides, vacation, meditation, spa, wellness therapies) in Thailand	4.5050	0.72982
Social factor	1. Sheltered life: Feeling calm, resilient, safe, and secure in Thailand	4.2550	0.74346
	2. Good communication network in Thailand	4.2650	0.81738
	3. High English language proficiency among Thais to help in communication.	4.0500	0.85508
	4. Advanced, affordable and hassle-free transportation in Thailand.	4.2000	0.85066
	5. Available entertainment for leisure (eg. parks,	4.3350	0.72485

	theatres, clubs, temples, restaurants, shopping malls, street foods, traditional performances etc.		
	6. Satisfaction from <i>ikigai</i> (living meaningfully, pleasure and enjoyable) activities that promotes well-being and improves quality of life.	4.5000	0.75021
	7. Existence of Japanese communities and clubs to socialize with while in Thailand	4.0300	0.69391
	8. Friendly and tolerant communities who live harmoniously in Thailand.	4.1750	0.71900

Table 4.10: Detailed item of pull factors with mean and standard deviation results.

Based on the above table, the pull factors that influence the retirees residing in the host country under an international long stay program are as below:

Among the economic factors that score high mean is low cost of living (affordability of housing rent, food etc.) (M: 4.45), cheaper labour and service (domestic helping staff: maid, gardener, etc.) (M:4.42), improving living standard in Thailand eg. spacious house, better living, better leisure activities, better well-being etc (M: 4.355), excellent infrastructure and facilities (M: 4.2700) and efficient tax and visa system at Thailand (M: 4.205) This means that these five factors are the strong economic factors that make Japanese retirees move to Thailand for International Retirement Migration program.

Among the health factors that score high mean are good self-care (yoga, bike-rides, vacation, meditation, spa, wellness therapies) in Thailand (M:4.505), availability of caretaker service for the elderly in Thailand (M:4.385), subtropical climate with warm weather and mild temperature for better health and well- being in Thailand (M: 4.345), more rejuvenating wellness retreats in Thailand (M: 4.315), quality medical service and health care at affordable price in Thailand (M: 4.27) and good surrounding and living environment ex. clean air, less pollution and clear water while living in Thailand (M:4.185) This means that all factors have been chosen as the pull factors for the Japanese retirees to move to Thailand under long stay program

Among the social factors that score high mean are the existence of Japanese communities and clubs to socialize with while in Thailand (M: 4.5), satisfaction from *ikigai* (living meaningfully, pleasure and enjoyable)⁷ activities that promotes well-being and improves

⁷ *Ikigai*: (生き甲斐)

- Meaning: It is a Japanese concept that translates to "reason for being" or a purpose in life." It represents the intersection of personal passion, mission, vocation, and profession, where a person feels deeply fulfilled and motivated to live their life.
- Explanation:
The term comes from two Japanese words:
 - Iki (生き): meaning "life."
 - Gai (甲斐): meaning "worth" or "value."

quality of life (M: 4.335), good communication network in Thailand (M: 4.265), sheltered life: feeling calm, resilient, safe, and secure in Thailand (M:4.255), available entertainment for leisure (eg. parks, theatres, clubs, temples, restaurants, shopping malls, street foods, traditional performances etc (M: 4.200), advanced, affordable and hassle-free transportation in Thailand (M:4.05) and friendly and tolerant communities who live harmoniously in Thailand (M:4.03). This means that all the given factors have been chosen as the pull factors which lead to the movement of the Japanese retirees to Thailand under International Retirement Migration program.

Summary Result: Pull Factor

Economy Factor: Low cost of living, cheaper labour and service, improved living standard in Thailand, excellent infrastructure and facilities, efficient tax and visa system in Thailand.

Health Factor: Good self-care, availability of caretaker service for the elderly, subtropical climate for better health, more rejuvenating wellness retreats, quality medical service and health care at an affordable price, good surrounding and living environment.

Social factors: Existence of Japanese communities and clubs to socialize with, satisfaction from ikigai, good communication network, sheltered life available entertainment for leisure, advanced, affordable and hassle-free transportation, friendly and tolerant communities who live harmoniously in Thailand (M:4.03). This means that all the given factors have been chosen as the pull factors that lead to the movement of the Japanese retirees to Thailand under long stay program

It emphasizes finding joy and satisfaction in the small details of everyday life as well as in larger goals or aspirations. Ikigai often combines what you love, what you are good at, what the world needs, and what you can be paid for.

The Four Elements of Ikigai:

What you love (Passion): Activities that give you joy and enthusiasm.

What you are good at (Profession): Skills or talents you excel in.

What the world needs (Mission): How you can contribute to others or society. What you can be paid for (Vocation):

When these four elements overlap, they create your ikigai.

● **Example:**

A person who loves teaching, has a talent for explaining complex topics, finds joy in helping students grow, and earns a living as an educator may say their ikigai is teaching.

Cultural Perspective:

In Japan, ikigai doesn't always align with career or monetary success. It could also involve hobbies, family relationships, or a connection to nature. For example:

- A retiree who enjoys gardening may find their ikigai in cultivating beautiful flowers.
- A parent may find ikigai in raising their children and guiding them through life.

Key Takeaway:

Ikigai is deeply personal and unique to each individual. It reflects a balanced and meaningful life where one's daily activities resonate with their innermost values and aspirations.

Source: Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Joyful Life." *Government of Japan*, March 2022,
https://www.japan.go.jp/kizuna/2022/03/ikigai_japanese_secret_to_a_joyful_life.html.



Source: <https://bansabairesorts.com/ban-sabai-village-chiang-mai/contact-uus/?utm>

Figure 4.5 (a) left, (b) right, Ban Sabai Village, Chiangmai Retirement Home

For example, Ban Sabai Village is a senior residence and care resort located in Chiang Mai, Thailand. They offer a range of services, including full-time care, assisted living, and specialized care for conditions like Alzheimer's and dementia. The facility is situated approximately 5 kilometers from Chiang Mai's city center, nestled in a tropical garden setting. Amenities include a swimming pool, fitness center, spa, and restaurant serving both local and international dishes. The resort provides various accommodation options, such as standard rooms, junior suites, and villas, all decorated in the traditional Lanna style of Northern Thailand. It is a good retirement home with lots of activities organized by the club, such as the collaboration with Chiang Mai Rajabhat University to provide knowledge about 'Japan' to students at the Japanese exhibition day, which is organized by the faculty of Arts Program in Japanese. CLL members are invited to participate and there are tutorials on how to put on a kimono, how to write Japanese with a paintbrush and how to make green tea according to Japanese tradition. Club members have also formed an 'Enjoy Nature' group, which holds a short sightseeing trip once a month in Thailand or in neighbouring countries.

Chiang Mai is a nice place to live. It is not big, but it has everything and all the conveniences that the Japanese want, such as Japanese restaurants, shopping malls, and good hospitals which make it very comfortable to live.

The findings from previous research are almost the same as these research findings about the pull factors to migrate abroad. (Ono, 2008) who studied Japanese migration in Southeast Asia, especially Malaysia is almost the same as this research findings about the pull factors to migrate abroad. She found that the main reasons why retired Japanese moved to Malaysia were that the cost of living is cheaper than in Japan, a good climate and a good living environment. They are satisfied with 'Ikigai' activities or what makes life meaningful with an increased quality of life and a sustainable economy.

Nagatomo (2007) studied Japanese people moving to Australia for a new lifestyle and found that this was neither for economic nor political factors, but rather this movement was for the quality of life and experience abroad. Most were from the middle class and labor populations,

especially Japanese women who seek advancement in jobs that are equal to men. Living in Australia makes the Japanese feel they have more free time even though their income is less than in Japan.

Another study by Miyashita et al., (2017), stated that the increasing shortage of care workers and facilities for long-term care (LTC) for the elderly with difficulties in activities of daily living in Japan, is also convincing Japanese retirees to move abroad. Hence, the growing number of long-stay retirees has increased medical and long-term care demand in Thailand, and thus has an impact on the overall Thai healthcare system.

The findings from the research conducted by Howard (2008, p. 145), in the study titled *Western retirees in Thailand: motives, experiences, wellbeing, assimilation and future needs* are particularly interesting, focusing on the reasons for migrating to Thailand, the retirees' wellbeing and perceived assimilation, the reasons why some choose to leave, and their long-term welfare needs. The principal data source was an online survey of 152 current and former retirees in Thailand. The major reported motives (pull factors) were low living costs, a warm climate, to escape a disliked home nation, like the Thai lifestyle and culture, and the availability of attractive sexual partners. Most survey respondents had a Thai spouse or live-in partner. They report positive wellbeing and feel assimilated, but most live with visa insecurity and their assimilation may be partly illusory, as many reported socialising mainly with other foreigners. The major long-term concerns of Western retired men in Thailand are their health care and welfare needs, income problems, increasing negative local reactions to the influx of Westerners, and the possibility of visa cancellation that would enforce a move elsewhere.

According to research conducted by Van Kerkwijk (1992, p. 7), an estimated 30,000 sex workers are active in Bangkok, of whom 7000/10,000 are females who work specifically in the tourism sector. One half to one third of the 600 commercial sex establishments in the city are visited by foreigners. Phuket, Pattaya, Koh Samui, and Chiangmai are also well-frequented by sex tourists. Overall, a large, diverse, inexpensive, and accessible commercial sex market exists in Thailand. One may meet sex workers quasi-ubiquitously and be assured of finding someone capable of meeting one's sexual needs. With these attributes, Thailand strongly attracts tourists in search of sex. A certain degree of recklessness also prevails among those on vacation. Away from the peers and social mores of their native lands, tourists may engage in sexual activities without criticism. Likewise, Thai sex workers who cater to foreigners, especially females, enjoy more freedom and control in sexual relations than their peers who work among nationals.

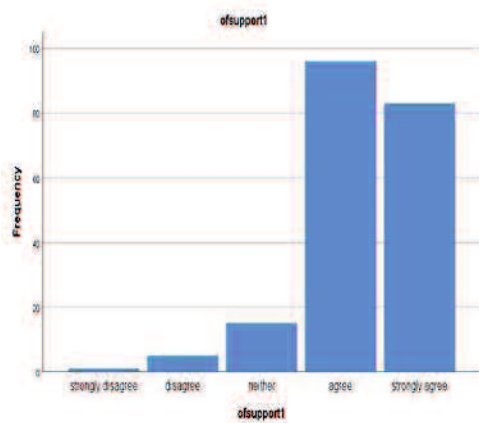
Research Question 3:

What are other motivational factors that influence retirees residing in the host countries under the International Long Stay (ILS) program?

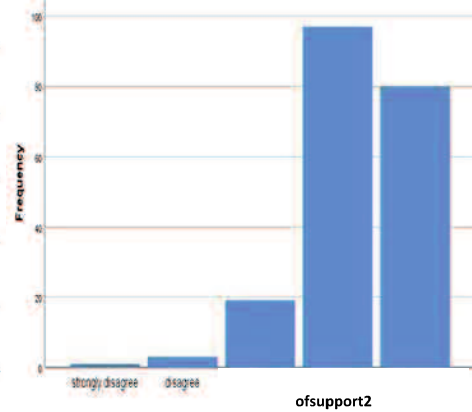
The below table shows each mean score and standard deviation of other motivational factors that are supported by local people.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
ofsupport1	200	4.2750	.74979
ofsupport2	200	4.2600	.73149
ofsupport3	200	4.3100	.77906
ofsupport4	200	4.3200	.79420

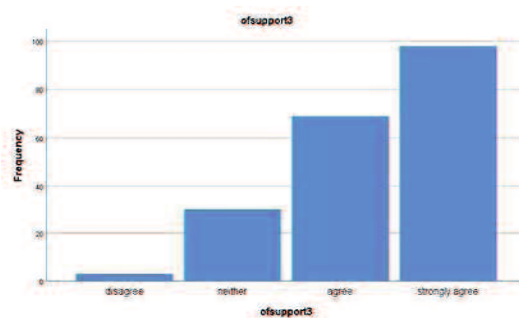
Table 4.11 Other motivational factors for retirees movement to Thailand (support from local people) ofsupport = other factor support from local people



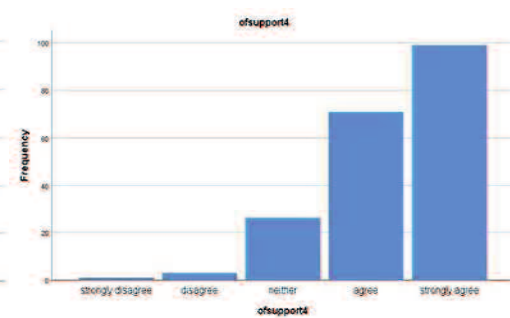
Graph 4.8(a): Helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents in Thailand.



Graph 4.8(b): Encouraging attitude from Thailand people to foreigners



Graph 4.8(c): Acknowledgment of Japanese people by the government



Graph 4.8(d): Good supply of skilled care workers (maid) with affordable price in Thailand

Graph 4.8 Other motivation factors (Frequency -Support from Local People)

Other Factors		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Support From Local People	1. Helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents in Thailand.	4.275	0.74979
	2. Encouraging attitude from Thailand people to foreigners.	4.260	0.73149
	3. Acknowledgment of Japanese people by the government: (Ex. special event held like Biennial Bon Odori Festival for Thai-Japanese relations.	4.310	0.77906
	4. Good supply of skilled care workers (maid) with affordable price in Thailand	4.320	0.7942

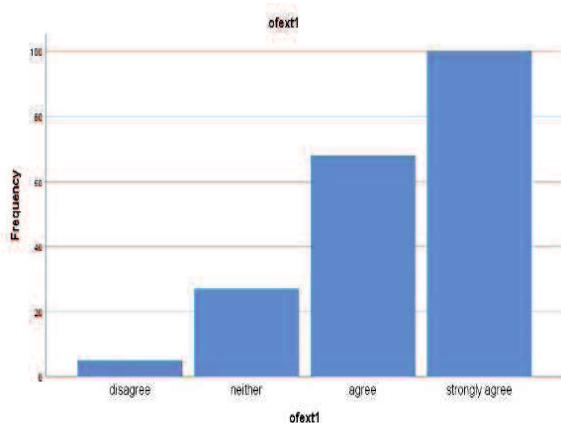
Table 4.12 Detailed Item of Other Motivational Factors for Retirees Migration (Support from Local People)

Based on the above results, other motivational factors that influence the retirees residing in Thailand under the International Retirees Migration program are support from local people and the government. Among the support from the local people are good supply of skilled care workers (maids) with affordable prices in Thailand (M:4.32), acknowledgment of Japanese people by the government, ex. special event held like Biennial Bon Odori Festival for Thai-Japanese relations (M: 4.31), helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents in Thailand (M:4.275) and encouraging attitude from Thailand people toward foreigners (M: 4.26). All the given suggestions are given a mean between 4 and 5 which shows the respondents agree with them.

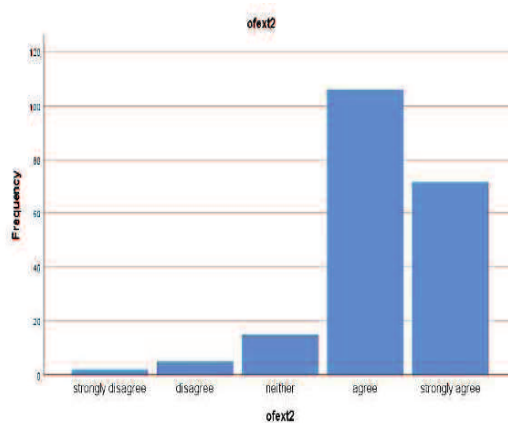
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
ofext1	200	4.3150	.79936
ofext2	200	4.2050	.76544
ofext3	200	4.3500	.74179
ofext4	200	4.2750	.75646

ofex = other factor external social condition

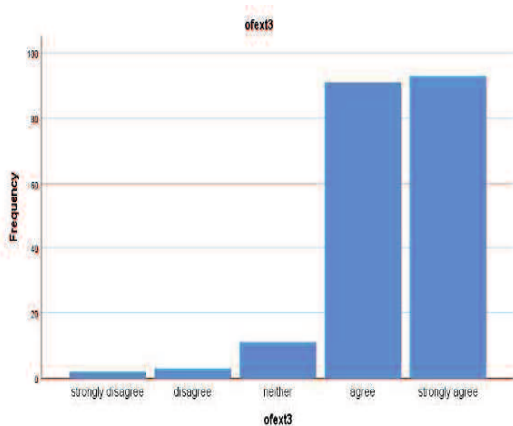
Table 4.13 Other motivational factors for retirees movement to Thailand (External Social condition)



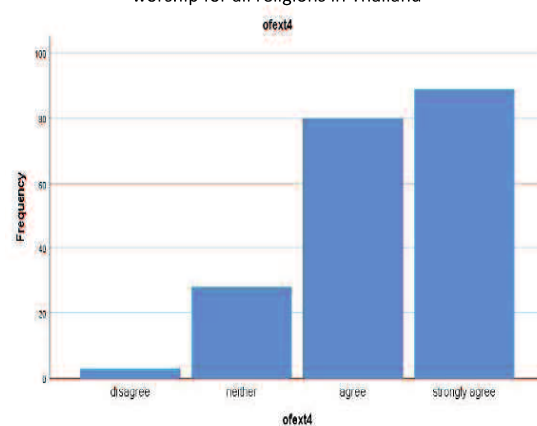
Graph 4.9(a): World class education system in Thailand



Graph 4.9(b): Full freedom of religion and place of worship for all religions in Thailand



Graph 4.9 (c): Direct flight to Japan makes it easy for families and friends to visit Thailand



Graph 4.9(d): There is no social isolation with both other retirees and local people

Graph 4.9 Other motivation factors (Frequency-External Social Condition)

Other Factors		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
External Social Conditions	1. World class education system in Thailand.	4.3150	0.79936
	2. Full freedom of religion and place of worship for all religions in Thailand.	4.2000	0.76544
	3. Direct flight to Japan makes it easy for families and friends to visit Thailand.	4.3500	0.74179
	4. There is no social isolation, as retirees enjoy good social connections with both other retirees and local people. They can easily mingle with friends and freely practice Japanese culture	4.2700	0.75646

Table 4.14: Detailed Item of Other Motivational Factors for Retirees Migration (External Social Conditions)

Based on the above results, other motivational factors that influence the retirees residing in the host countries under the International Retirement Migration program are also external social conditions. Among the external social conditions are direct flight to Japan makes it easy

for families and friends to visit Thailand (M: 4.3500), world class education system in Thailand. (M:4.315), no social isolation and good social connection among retirees and local people as retirees can mix well with friends and local people and practice Japanese cultural freely (M:4.270) and have full freedom of religion and place of worship for all religions in Thailand. (M: 4.200).

All the given options are given means between 4.000 and 5 that shows that the respondents agree with all the suggestions.

Summary Result of other motivational factors for retirees movement to Thailand

Other factors for retirees movement to Thailand are support from local people and the government, good supply of skilled care workers, acknowledgment of Japanese people by the government, helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents and encouraging attitude from Thailand people to foreigners.

Acknowledgment for Japanese people by the government like Biennial Bon Odori Festival for Thai-Japanese relations becomes one of the strong factors for the Japanese retirees to migrate to Thailand under long stay program. The Bon Odori Festival in Bangkok was first organized by the Japanese Association in Thailand in 1987, and has been held in December every other year with the objective of offering the opportunity for the Japanese people residing and holidaying in Thailand, as well as the Thai people, to enjoy a traditional Japanese celebration. The 'Odori' dance is one of Japan's age-old folk arts, with dancers wearing varied kimonos⁸ or yukatas⁹ and dancing to the rhythm of the traditional Taiko drumming performance. Visitors also had the chance to enjoy a beautiful Japanese-style fireworks

⁸ Kimono: (着物)

- Meaning:
Literally means "thing to wear" (ki = wear, mono = thing).

- Explanation:

Material: Typically made from luxurious fabrics like silk, brocade, or satin.

Formality: Worn for formal occasions such as weddings, tea ceremonies, and festivals. Some types are highly elaborate and symbolic.

Structure: Multiple layers and intricate designs. Requires undergarments, obi (wide belt), and sometimes additional accessories like obijime (decorative cord). Often worn with formal footwear like zori and tabi (split-toe socks).

Seasons: Adapted for different seasons (e.g., lined for winter, unlined for summer).

- Examples: 1) A bride wearing an elaborate white or brightly colored kimono at her wedding. 2) Tea masters donning subdued, elegant kimono during tea ceremonies.

Source: Sakura Co. Blog, <https://sakura.co/blog/kimono-your-ultimate-guide-to-the-silk-garment>.

⁹ Yukata (浴衣)

- Meaning: Means "bathing cloth." Originally used as a casual robe after bathing.

- Explanation:

Material: Made from lightweight cotton or synthetic fabric.

Formality: Informal and casual; typically worn during summer, festivals, and at ryokan (traditional inns).

Structure: Simpler than a kimono, with fewer layers. Worn with a simpler obi and casual footwear like geta (wooden sandals).

- Examples: 1) Visitors at a summer festival wearing colorful yukata while enjoying fireworks or games. 2) Guests at a ryokan relaxing in yukata provided by the inn.

Source: Japan Guide, <https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2103.html>

display, a lucky draw and shopping opportunities and Impressive Japanese and Thai folk performances like Japanese traditional Awa Dance, Thai folk dance, and 'Odori' dance circle.



Figure 4.6 Acknowledgement from the government. President of the Japan Association of Thailand, Ambassador of Japan to Thailand, Director-General of the department of East Asian Affairs at the Bon Odori Festival in Bangkok 2017.

Source: Tatnews, <https://www.tatnews.org/2017/12/biennial-bon-odori-festival-bangkok-marks-130-years-thai-japanese-relations/>



Source: Tatnews, <https://www.tatnews.org/2017/12/biennial-bon-odori-festival-bangkok-marks-130-years-thai-japanese-relations/>



Source: Tatnews, <https://www.tatnews.org/2017/12/biennial-bon-odori-festival-bangkok-marks-130-years-thai-japanese-relations/>



Source: Dreamstime, <https://www.dreamstime.com/editorial-stock-photo-bon-odori-festival-bangkok-thailand-december-december-participants-take-part-held-annually-image55164823>

Figure 4.7 (a) top, (b) left, (c) right, The Biennial Bon Odori Festival in year 2017: marked 130 years of Thai-Japanese diplomatic relations



Source: SCB, <https://www.scb.co.th/en/personal-banking/stories/long-stay-business.html>

Figure 4.8 (a) left, (b) right, Local support attracts Japanese Retirees to Thailand Long Stay Program

Helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents in Thailand are a good example of support from local people towards retirees. Besides that, skilled care workers (nursing homes) are one strong factor for Japanese retirees moving to Thailand. For example, Baan Lalisa, is one of the top nursing homes in Thailand with the highest standard of care services in Southeast Asia. For so long Thailand has been recognised as one of the world's famous destinations in hospitality. With the affordability of exceptional high-quality care and services, Thailand is known to Japanese as a perfect country for retirement and assisted living. Due to the lower cost of living in Southeast Asia compared to the West, Baan Lalisa has provided all clients' everyday life with high-quality and all-inclusive inpatient nursing care that costs less than the price of similar standard treatment centres in the west.



Source: SCB, <https://www.scb.co.th/en/personal-banking/stories/long-stay-business.html>

Figure 4.9 (a) left, (b) right, Best nursing home care-taker are given to retirees at long stay home.

According to Mohamad Najib Abdul Ghaffar (1996), the researcher can use various theories and their own formulas to produce a unique index that classifies mean value into categories beyond the traditional 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' scale. This may include classification such as 'very strong', 'strong', 'moderately strong', 'less strong' and 'not strong'.

Therefore, to answer research questions 4 to 6, the researcher has fixed the value of the level in the table below.

Mean Score Scale	Sentiment Level
1.0 - 1.99	Very Low
2.0 - 2.99	Low
3.0 - 3.99	Moderate
4.0 - 4.59	High
4.6 - 5.00	Very High

Table 4.15: Mean Score Scale with Sentiment Level

Research Question 4:

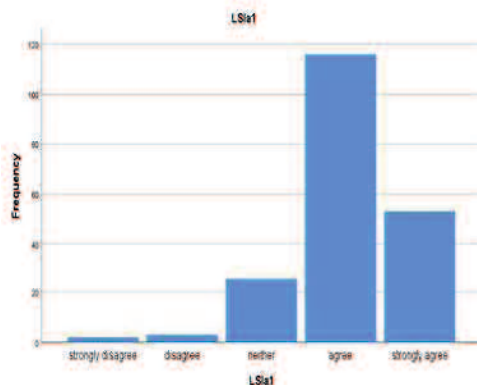
What is the level of social integration among Japanese retirees and towards the host country?

To study the level of social integration among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Long Stay (ILS) program, the researcher has divided the questionnaires into 2, attitudes and socialization.

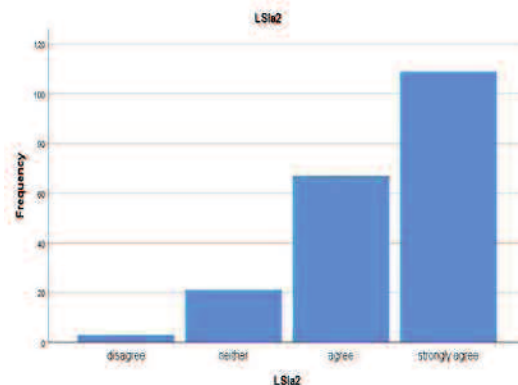
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
LSIa1	200	4.075	0.73626
LSIa2	200	4.41	0.73799
LSIa3	200	4.335	0.72485
LSIa4	200	4.525	0.74306
LSIa5	200	4.145	0.69019
LSIa6	200	3.975	0.62154
LSIa7	200	4.370	0.72507

LSIa=Level Social integration attitudes

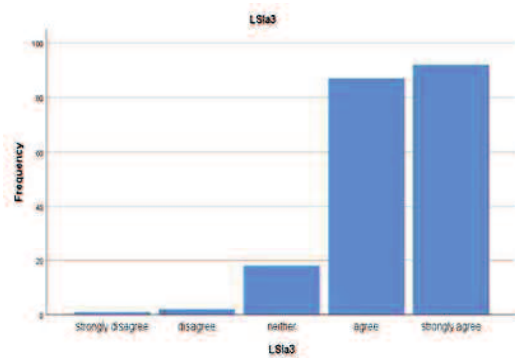
Table 4.16 Level of social integration among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Long Stay (ILS) program (Attitudes)



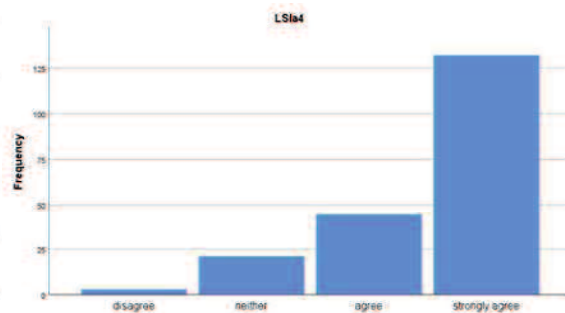
Graph 4.9 (c): Direct flight to Japan makes it easy for families and friends to visit Thailand



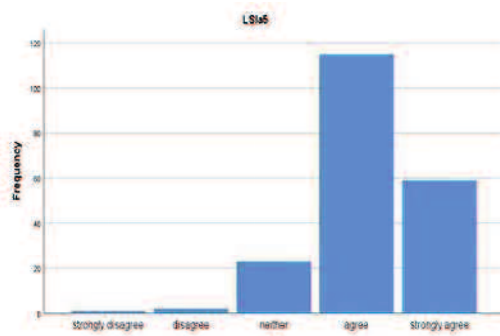
Graph 4.9(d): There is no social isolation with both other retirees and local people



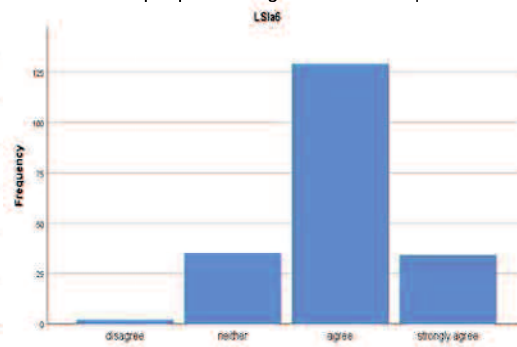
Graph 4.10(c): I feel welcome due to high level of social and emotional support from local people



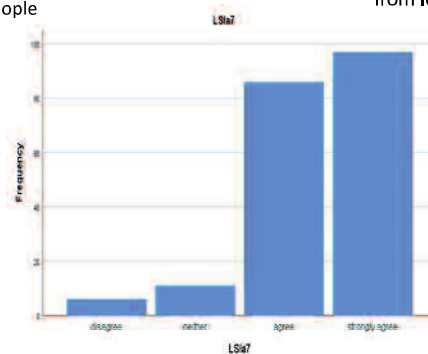
Graph 4.10(d): I am willing to socialize with local peoples through festivals and parties



Graph 4.10 (e): I build resilience and can cope with new environment due to interaction and socialization with local people



Graph 4.10(f): I have a self-realization about the importance to mix with people around well to avoid from loneliness and anxiety.



Graph 4.10(g): I am open-minded about learning new cultures and find it simpler to adapt to their new surroundings in Thailand

Graph 4.10 Level of Social Integration (Frequency) Under Attitudes Among Retirees Under International Long Stay (ILS) program

Social Integration Among Retirees and Local People		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Attitudes/Traits	1. I mix well and shares experience with Thai local community to improve social aspects.	4.075	0.73626
	2. I participate with Thailand local activities to understand the culture	4.410	0.73799
	3. I feel welcome due to high level of social and emotional support from local people.	4.335	0.72485

	4. I am willing to socialize with local peoples through festivals and parties.	4.525	0.74306
	5. I build resilience and can cope with new environment due to interaction and socialization with the local people.	4.145	0.69019
	6. I have a self-realization about the importance to mix with people around well to avoid from loneliness and anxiety.	3.975	0.62154
	7. I am open-minded about learning new cultures and find it simpler to adapt to their new surroundings in Thailand.	4.370	0.72507
WHOLE MEAN		4.262	
PERCENTAGE		$\frac{4.262}{5} \times 100 = 85.24\%$	

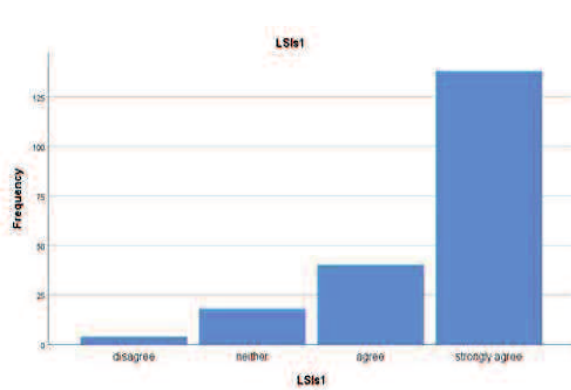
Table 4.17 Detailed item of Level of Social Integration Among Retirees and Towards Host Society (Attitude)

Under attitude, the statements that score high mean are retiree is willing to socialize with local people through festivals and parties (M:4.525), the retiree participates in Thailand's local activities to understand the culture (M: 4.41), the retiree is open-minded about learning new cultures and find it simpler to adapt to their new surroundings in Thailand (M:4.370), retiree feels welcome due to high level of social and emotional support from local people (M:4.335), retiree builds resilience and can cope with new environment due to interaction and socialization with the local people (M:4.145) and retiree mix well and shares experience with Thai local community to improve social aspects (M: 4.075). The whole mean of attitude is 4.262 which shows a high level of social integration between the retirees and local people.

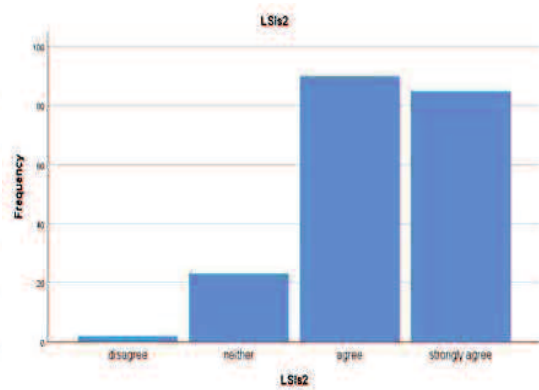
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
LSIs1	200	4.56	0.74104
LSIs2	200	4.29	0.70597
LSIs3	200	4.26	0.63594
LSIs4	200	4.18	0.64004
LSIs5	200	4.145	0.81689
LSIs6	200	4.28	0.78401

LSIs=Level Social integration Socialization

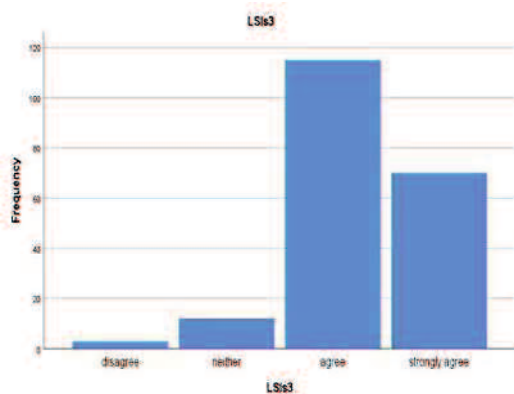
Table 4.18 Level of social integration among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Long Stay (ILS) program (Socialization)



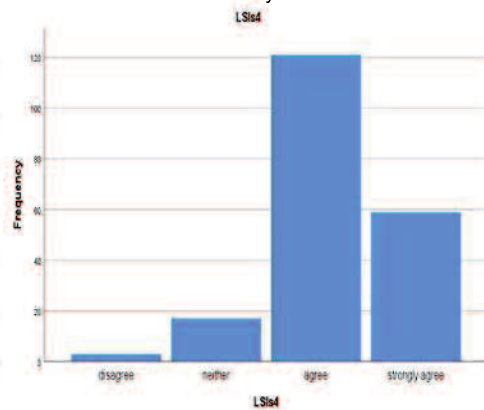
4.11(a): I have good relationship with local people and this helps me to create a good social capital



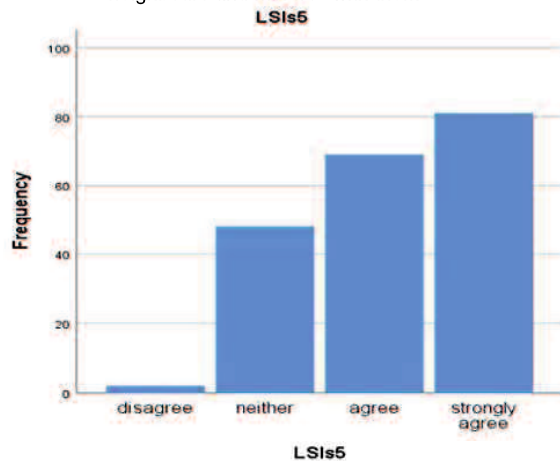
Graph 4.11(b) Good socialization with friends and the locals makes me become happy and reduce my loneliness



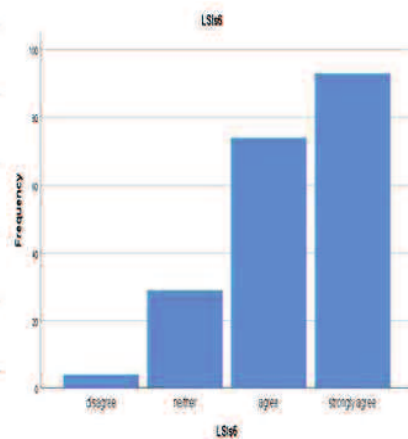
Graph 4.11(c) I respect my friends and my local neighbours and mix well with them



Graph 4.11(d) I feel more comfortable with the new culture, social lifestyle and the new surroundings and begin to feel less alien



Graph 4.11(e) I adapt myself to alien environment and culture to avoid feeling anxiety, alienation and nervousness



Graph 4.11(f) I take part in the local activity by making local friends, attending social groups, clubs and events where possible

Graph 4.11 Level of Social Integration Among Retirees Under International Long Stay program (Frequency: Socialization)

Social Integration Among Retirees and Local People		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Socialization	1. I have good relationship with local people and this helps me to create a good social capital	4.5600	0.74104
	2. Good socialization with friends and the locals makes me become happy and reduce my loneliness	4.2900	0..70597
	3. I respect my friends and my local neighbours and mix well with them.	4.2600	0.63594
	4. I feel more comfortable with the new culture, social lifestyle and the new surroundings and begin to feel less alien	4.1800	0.64004
	5. I adapt myself to alien environment and culture to avoid feeling anxiety, alienation and nervousness.	4.1450	0.81689
	6. I take part in the local activity by making local friends, attending social groups, clubs and events where possible	4.2800	0.78401
WHOLE MEAN		4.286	
PERCENTAGE		$\frac{4.286}{5} \times 100 = 85.72\%$	

Table 4.19 Detailed Item of Level of social integration among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Long Stay (ILS) program (Socialization)

Under the level of socialization, out of six suggestions, one suggestion is given strongly agree and five suggestions are given agree. Among the high means scores are good socialization with the locals ensures friendliness with local people and promotes healthy lives (M: 4.29), good socialization encourages an environment of respect where different people respect different cultures and can mix well (M: 4.26), retiree takes part in the local activity, making local friends, attending social groups, clubs and events where possible (M: 4.28), retiree gradually feels more comfortable with the new culture, social lifestyle and the new surroundings and begin to feel less alien (M:4.1800) and retiree avoids culture shock by exposing themselves to the alien environment and culture to avoid feeling anxiety, alienation and nervousness (M:4.145) The whole mean for the social integration under socialization is 4.286 that indicates a high level of social integration.

The most commonly used indicator of social integration is social network, which refers to the connection that immigrants build with others in the host society. While some researchers use the total number of immigrants' friends as a measure, others use the frequency of interaction with friends. An obvious example of social integration occurs when immigrant groups assimilate into their new country's mainstream culture.

According to Durkheim's theory of social integration, social integration includes principles that explain relationships between people and groups in larger societies and how they interact with one another. Typically, a minority group integrates with a dominant group in social integration. Therefore, we can say that the level of social integration includes the level of social interaction between the Japanese retirees among themselves and also among the local people.

Old age is a biological phenomenon that presents significant challenges in adaptation and environmental interaction (Duangkaew, 2019). Therefore, international migration by elderly Japanese people to spend the remainder of their lives in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, Thailand, a different country with sociocultural differences, is not easy as Thailand and Japan each have their own cultures. According to the study, problems during long stays by elderly Japanese people in Chiang Mai are mostly due to the absence of smooth participation in social activities due to barriers caused by cultural differences in language, and laws enforced by Thailand, values, and ideas. However, elderly Japanese people have tried finding guidelines for improving relationships with community members to gain acceptance from Thai society and residents in Chiang Mai, but this takes time as social integration are human behavior in society and a lifelong learning process for members of society.

Summary Result: Level of Social Integration Among Retirees Under International Long Stay program is 4.275 which is strong.

Research Question 5:

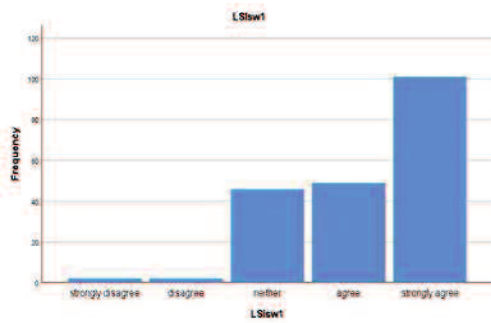
What is the level of wellbeing among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Long Stay (ILS) program?

The below table shows each mean score and standard deviation of the level of social integration and subjective well-being.

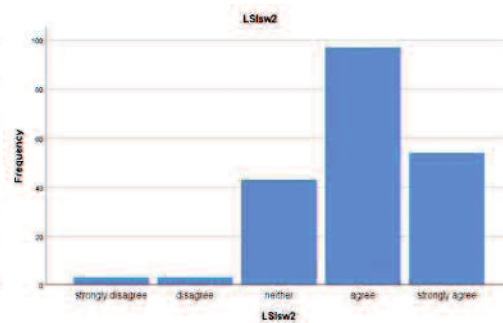
	LSIsw1	LSIsw2	LSIsw3	LSIsw4	LSIsw5	LSIsw6	LSIsw7	LSIsw8
Valid	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Mean	4.225	3.98	4.195	4	4.36	4.295	4.365	4.075
Std. Deviation	0.90469	0.82645	0.68507	0.6497	0.86843	0.67844	0.71014	0.61748

LSIsw = level social integration subjective-wellbeing

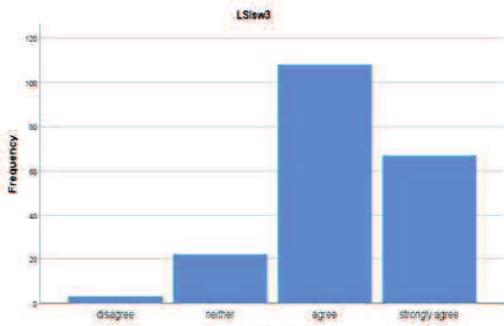
Table 4.20 Level of Subjective Well-being Among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Long Stay (ILS) program



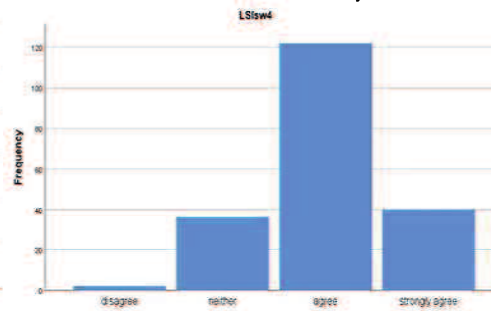
Graph 4.12(a): I feel accepted by local people which contributes to my overall happiness and health



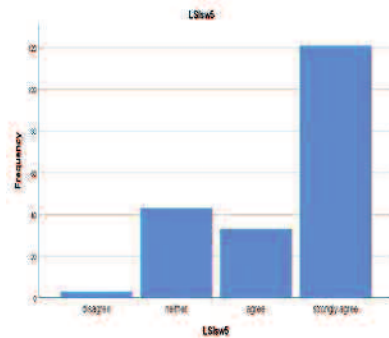
Graph 4.12(b): I maintain relationships with local people as well as contribute to society, with individual and society activities



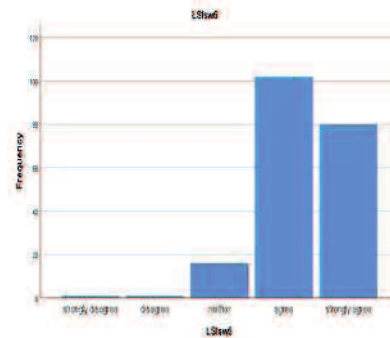
Graph 4.12(c) I experience a good quality of life with better climate, weather and surroundings



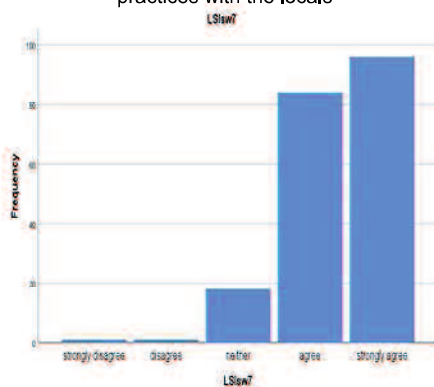
Graph 4.12(d) I enhance well-being by sticking to a healthy sleep schedule, picking nutritious meals, and taking part in stress management technique such as meditation or yoga while living abroad



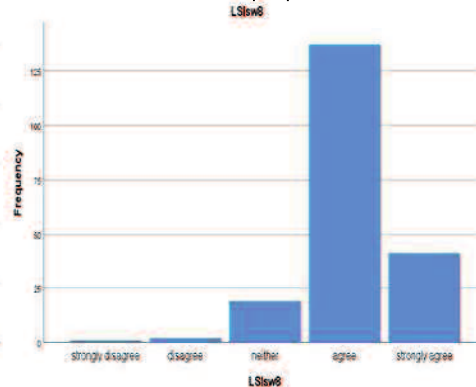
Graph 4.12 (e) With good well-being, I have more positive emotions and intend to engage in spiritual practices with the locals



Graph 4.12(f) My physical wellness improve due to the good external social conditions being given by local people



Graph 4.12(g) The impact of new environment in Thailand has improved my psychological well-being and social integration



Graph 4.12 (h) Positive well-being motivates me to become active and undergo positive ageing

Graph 4.12 Level of Subjective Well-being (Frequency) Among Retirees

Level Of Subjective Well-being Among the Respondents		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Indication of Subjective Well-Being	1. I feel accepted by local people which contributes to my overall happiness and health.	4.225	0.90469
	2. I maintain relationships with local people as well as contribute to society, with individual and society activities.	3.980	0.82645
	3. I experience a good quality of life with better climate, weather and surroundings and mixing well with the locals	4.1950	0.68507
	4. I enhance well-being by sticking to a healthy sleep schedule, picking nutritious meals, and taking part in stress management techniques such as <u>meditation</u> or <u>yoga</u> while living abroad.	4.0000	0.64970
	5. With good well-being, I have more positive emotions and intend to engage in spiritual practices with the local people.	4.3600	0.86843
	6. My physical wellness improve due to the good external social conditions being given by local people	4.2950	0.67844
	7. The impact of new environment in Thailand has improved my psychological well-being and social integration.	4.3650	0.71014
	8. Positive well-being motivates me to become active and undergo positive aging.	4.0750	0.61748
WHOLE MEAN		4.3129	
PERCENTAGE		$\frac{4.3129}{5} \times 100 = 86.25\%$	

Table 4.21: Detailed item of Level of Subjective Well-being Among the Retirees

Under the level of wellbeing, out of eight suggestions, seven suggestions are given agreed by the respondents. That are the impact of new environment in Thailand has improved retirees psychological wellbeing and social integration (M:4.3650), with good wellbeing, retirees have more positive emotions and intend to engage in spiritual practices with the local people (M:4.3600), the physical wellness of the retirees improves due to the good external social conditions being given by local people (M: 4.295), retiree feels accepted by local people and feel happier and healthier (4.2250), retiree experiences a good quality of life with better climate, weather and surroundings and mixing well with the locals (M: 4.195), positive wellbeing motivates retirees to become active and undergo positive aging (M:4.075) and retiree enhances wellbeing by sticking to a healthy sleep schedule, picking nutritious meals, and taking part in stress management techniques such as meditation or yoga while living abroad (M: 4.000). The average mean of indication of subjective wellbeing is 4.3129 which show high level of subjective wellbeing.

Mental wellbeing is about life satisfaction, optimism, self-esteem, feeling in control, having a purpose and a sense of belonging and support. Older people, including those living in care homes, often experience depression, loneliness and low levels of satisfaction and wellbeing. Taking part in meaningful activities, maintaining and developing personal identity, and getting the right help for any health conditions and sensory impairments have been identified as key to improving mental wellbeing. Each person should feel valued and be offered opportunities and support to express themselves. Therefore, pull factors earlier like helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents and good nursing home caretaker are factors to good wellbeing. In Thailand, caretaker staff provide all the support needed to help retirees maintain existing relationships and to develop new ones, to help with the activities that motivate them, learn new skills and increase independence so that they can stay well and feel satisfied with life.

Having good mental health is also one factor in wellbeing as stated earlier. Good health enables people to feel that life is enjoyable and fulfilling. Older Japanese retirees in long stay care homes may have one or more mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety, but they are often not recognised, diagnosed or treated and this is very dangerous. Good physical condition is also an important aspect of good wellbeing. Bad physical conditions can cause discomfort and affect a person's ability to undertake daily living tasks, join in with social activities and stay independent. Access to good health care is very important to Japanese retirees, therefore they must choose the right international long stay to continue their living. From previous research, many Japanese chose to go to Thailand for the international long stay program but many ended up with failure as they faced isolation, loneliness, bad health conditions and boredom.

A good international long stay home offers skillful workers with positive quality, passion and empathy to handle any good or stressful situations. People who live there have the same right to healthcare as anyone else in the community. Besides skillful workers, friends and neighbours are very important in old age, so retirees must mix among themselves and make efforts to have real relations where one can help each other and depend on each other in their time of need. At this stage, loyal friends are the loyal support for each other who aimlessly support during bad moments of life as children and adolescent are very far away and busy with their individual self-work to continue their own living.

Summary Result: Level of Well-being Among Retirees Under International Long Stay program is 4.3129 which is strong.

Research Question 6:

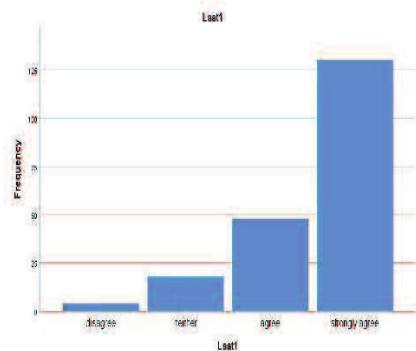
What is the level of life satisfaction among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Long Stay (ILS) program?

Below table show each mean score and standard deviation of life satisfaction.

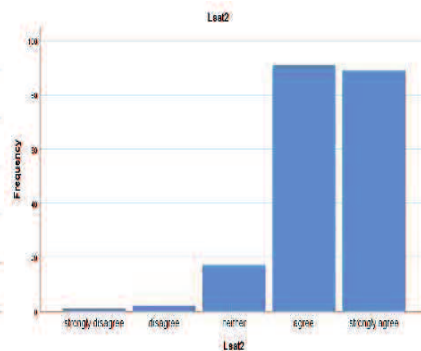
Statistics

	Lsat1	Lsat2	Lsat3	Lsat4	Lsat5	Lsat6	Lsat7	Lsat8	Lsat9	Lsat10
Mean	4.5200	4.3250	4.3150	4.5000	4.0138	4.5050	4.0600	4.5050	4.0600	4.5050
Std. Deviation	.74321	.71550	.64642	.80201	.67686	.74346	.72735	.74346	.72735	.74346

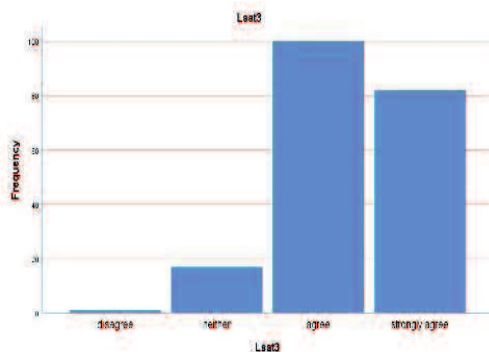
Table 4.22 Level of Life Satisfaction Among the Retiree



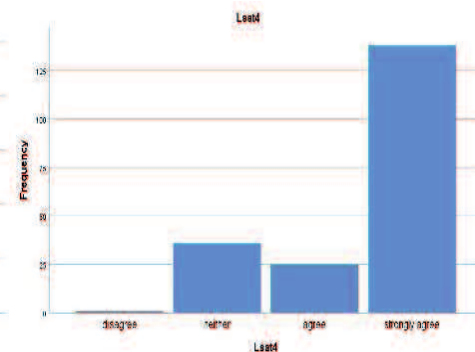
Graph 4.3 (a) I have positive and desirable experience with Thai local community and satisfied with my life



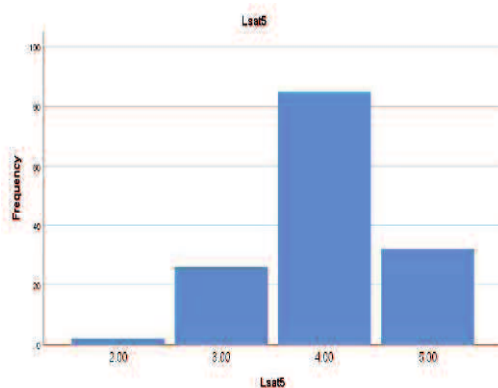
Graph 4.13(b) The impact of new environment in Thailand has improved my psychological and mental health



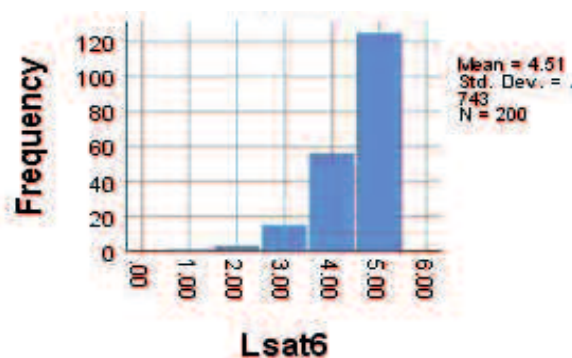
Graph 4.13(c) The impact of International Retirement Migration program has improved my physical dan subjective quality of life



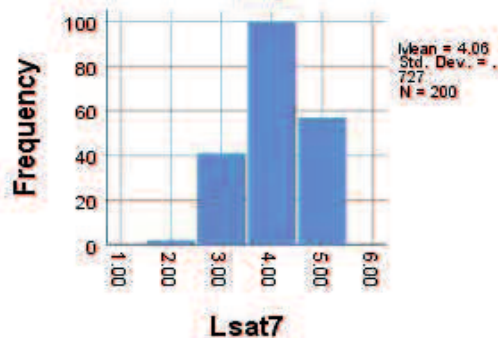
Graph 4.13(d) I often enjoy having new experiences and feel more satisfied with new life while staying abroad



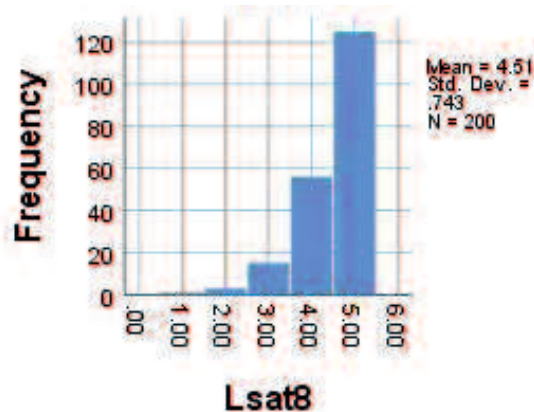
Graph 4.13 (e) Mixing with new people around has contributed to higher levels of my life satisfaction



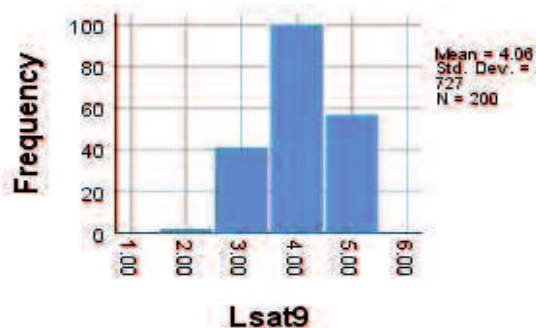
Graph 4.13(f) I can retain my physical and daily activities with good living of satisfied life



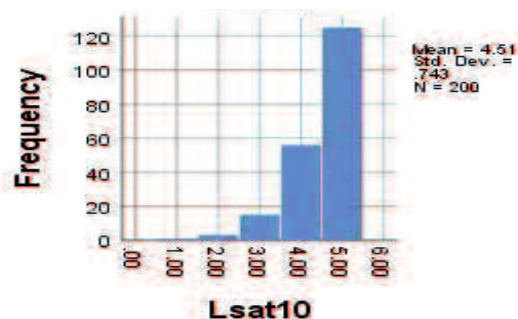
Graph 4.13(g): My financial security is good and it becomes essential component of my life satisfaction



Graph 4.13(h): I have social support from friends and neighbours, as well new friends and this make me satisfied and feeling happy with my life



Graph 4.13 (i) My place of residence here is good that make me feel calm and satisfied being here



Graph 4.13 (j) My health is good which becomes important thing to satisfy in my life

Graph 4.13 Level of Life Satisfaction Among Retiree

Level Of Life Satisfaction Among the Respondents		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Indication of Life Satisfaction	1. I have positive and desirable experience with Thai local community and satisfied with my life	4.52	0.74321
	2. The impact of new environment in Thailand has improved my psychological and mental health	4.325	0.7155
	3.The impact of International Retirement Migration program has improved my physical dan subjective quality of life.	4.315	0.64642
	4.I often enjoy having new experiences and feel more satisfied with new life while staying abroad.	4.50	0.80281
	5. Mixing with new people around has contributed to higher levels of my life satisfaction	4.0138	0.67686
	6.I can retain my physical and daily activities with good living of satisfied life.	4.505	0.74346
	7.My financial security is good and it becomes essential component of my life satisfaction.	4.06	0.72735
	8.I have social support from friends and neighbours,	4.505	0.74346

	as well as new friends and this make me satisfied and feeling happy with my life.		
	9.My place of residence here is good that make me feel calm and satisfied being here.	4.06	0.72735
	10.My health is good which becomes important thing to satisfy in my life.	4.505	0.74346
WHOLE MEAN		4.33088	
PERCENTAGE		$\frac{4.33088}{5} \times 100$ $= 86.61\%$	

Table 4.23 Detailed item of Level of Life Satisfaction Among the Retirees

Summary Result: Level of Life Satisfaction Among Retirees Under International Long Stay program is 4.3308 which is strong.

According to the research conducted by (Onishi et al., 2010), life satisfaction among Japanese elderly women attending health care and welfare service facilities is greatly affected by their mood status and share in decision making. Avoiding elderly people's depressive moods, sharing them in various daily decisions, considering their opinions, and allowing them to decide their elderly-care facility placement are crucial determinants for their life satisfaction and essential for their coping, adaptation, well-being and successful aging.

Duangkaew, (2019) found that these five main factors contributing to participants' greater satisfaction living in Chiang Mai compared to Japan were (i) freedom from the inflexible rules imposed by the Japanese. (ii) A cheaper cost of living as compared to living in Japan, resulting in more value for their money. (iii) A good atmosphere with a nice climate (iv) to assimilate with the locals who recognize Japanese products and culture (v) The ability to seek assistance from the Japanese support clubs in Chiang Mai. Research by Bocker & Guild, (2006) found that self-actualization and the creation of ikigai in the form of volunteer work among Japanese is a means to live one's retirement life with a sense of satisfaction. Based on the research made by Duangkaew, (2019), many Japanese retirees join the Japanese and also local clubs. Factors that make the Japanese join the network community or Japanese clubs are as follows; (i) needing help when facing a problem, (ii) joining the club allows participation in the in-club's activities, especially group activities, (iii) wanting to make good use of their free time, (iv) meet psychological needs, such as needing a friend, feeling anxious without a group, need a new positions or duties after retirement, and (v) create power in demanding or negotiating.

Retirees are also involved in outdoor activities, such as golf competitions and visiting hot springs, and indoor activities, such as lunch meetings, language studying, handicrafts and chores. They also were part of local events and festivals, such as the Loi Kratong parade, the Japanese festival at the university, and traditional dancing. The activities of clubs function

as intermediary support clubs, and are comprised of a group of people with the same purpose and demand. Special benefits are included, such as discounts and services. Sometimes, there is a problem such as with the rental contract of accommodation, where someone in the group who can speak Thai can draw on the group's knowledge and then help solve the problem. They can use the social networks and abilities of other members directly and indirectly to solve their problems and assist their lifestyle. Research by Yoshida (2015) examined Japanese retirement migration in Thailand from the perspective of welfare and social participation and life satisfaction. She described and categorized the elders' social participation as belonging to the four types of (i) jobs, (ii) volunteer work for Thai society, (iii) mutual aid, like volunteer work for their own Japanese community, and (iv) recreational activities containing volunteer work for themselves as a hobby. Japanese elderly people in Chiang Mai are happy with their surroundings, but most people stay in Japanese society and do not mix with the local people due to the language barrier and rarely interact with foreign societies. They speak both Thai and English poorly but intend to study both languages.

By being part of the club, Japanese retirees can find new friends more easily and, in less time, than those who are not members. This all leads to more socialization and life satisfaction even though they stay in a new alien place, especially in a foreign country like Thailand.

Social integration leads to life satisfaction. Social integration is very important as we cannot live alone and isolate ourselves. When we become older, many of us are alone more often than when we were younger, leaving us vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness that lead to health problems such as cognitive decline, depression, and heart disease. Those who retire from lifetime jobs, lose the only communities they have ever really had. If they are widowed, divorced or unmarried, they are more likely to become isolated. On the other hand, strong bonds with relatives and friends will lead to happiness and life satisfaction. According to the research, people who find themselves unexpectedly alone due to the death of a spouse or partner, separation from friends or family, retirement, loss of mobility, and lack of transportation are at particular risk. Conversely, people who engage in meaningful, productive activities with others tend to live longer, boost their mood, and have a sense of purpose. These activities seem to help maintain their well-being and may improve their cognitive function and life satisfaction.



Source: <https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTK2kAniR6TWLLpu87kL2VQfDiesMbc1lwoFuQTz5O4CJPL07Dm>

Figure 4.10 (a), (b) Japanese retirees integrate among themselves through club's meeting and also among local people.

Research question 7

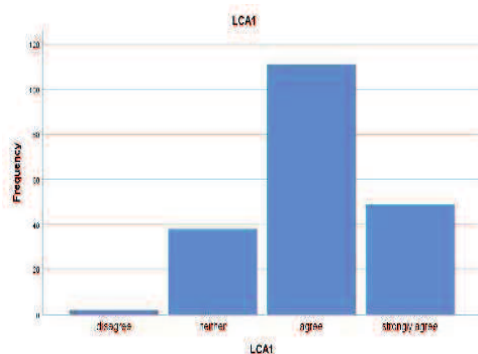
What is the level of cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

The below table shows each mean score and standard deviation of level cultural assimilation.

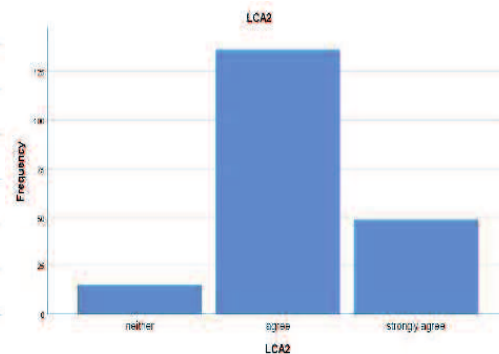
	LCA1	LCA2	LCA3	LCA4	LCA5	LCA6	LCA7	LCA8	LCA9
N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Mean	4.035	4.17	4.07	4.075	4.12	4.25	4.305	4.13	4.21
Std. Deviation	0.69004	0.54089	0.54459	0.5105	0.5978	0.4566	0.4931	0.6673	0.6915
	7	2	6	4	3	9			

LCA = Level cultural assimilation

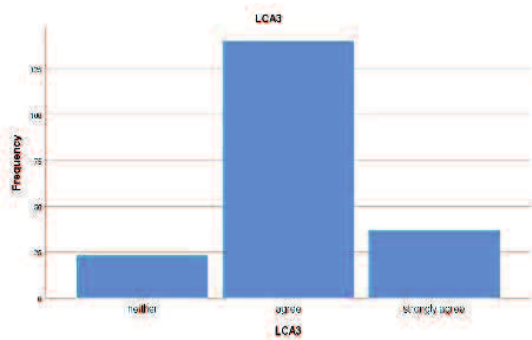
Table 4.24 Level of Cultural Assimilation Among Retirees



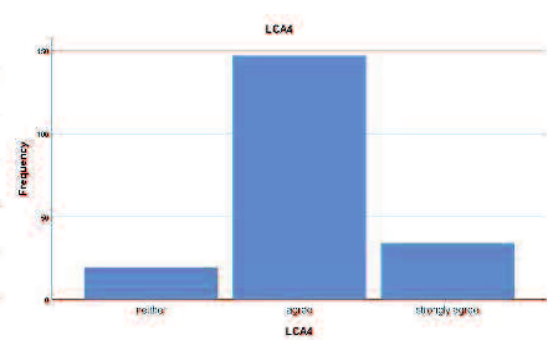
Graph 4.14(a): I tend to adapt local culture successfully



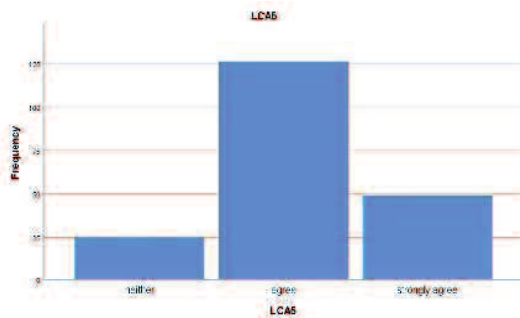
Graph 4.14(b): I am comfortable with making new friends and attending cultural events in Thailand



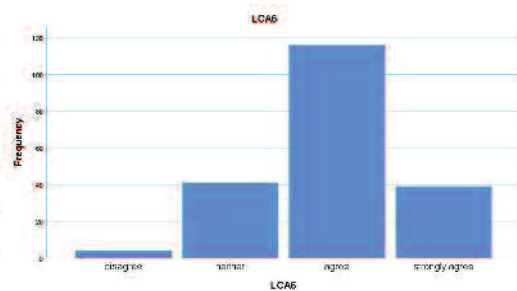
Graph 4.14(c): I participate in the Thai local community activities, and following their way of living here



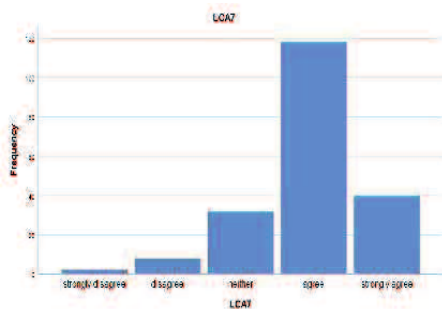
Graph 4.14(d): I enjoy a blend of lifestyles and different cultures and practiced them while staying abroad



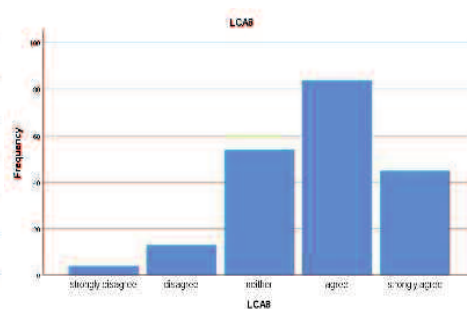
Graph 4.14 (e) Assimilating into a new society helps me to understand and appreciate those cultural trends



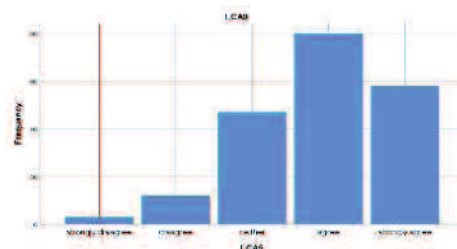
Graph 4.14(f) Assimilation experiences in Thailand lead to a higher quality of my living and better mental health



Graph 4.14(g) Assimilating into the local society helps me to appreciate culture and get over my fear or hesitation of something different



Graph 4.14 (h) To assimilate well with the local different culture, I made an effort to learn the local language and become part of the local culture



Graph 4.14(i) Conducive and efficient facilities provided by the Thailand authority has enable me to perform cultural assimilation smoothly

Graph 4.14 Level of Cultural assimilation (Frequency) among retirees

Level Of Cultural Assimilation Among the Retirees		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Indication of cultural assimilation	1. I tend to adapt local culture successfully.	4.0350	0.69004
	2. I am comfortable with making new friends and attending cultural events in Thailand.	4.170	0.54089
	3. I participate in the Thai local community activities, and following their way of living here.	4.070	0.54459
	4. I enjoy a blend of lifestyles and different cultures and practiced them while staying abroad.	4.075	0.51057
	5. Assimilating into a new society helps me to understand and appreciate those cultural trends.	4.120	0.59782
	6. Assimilation experiences in Thailand lead to a higher quality of my living and better mental health.	4.250	0.45666
	7. Assimilating into the local society helps me to appreciate culture and get over my fear or hesitation of something different.	4.305	0.49314
	8. To assimilate well with the local culture, I made an effort to learn the local language and become part of the local culture.	4.130	0.66733
	9. Conducive and efficient facilities provided by the Thailand authority has enable me to perform cultural assimilation smoothly.	4.210	0.69159
WHOLE MEAN		4.152	

Table 4.25 Detailed item of Level of Cultural Assimilation (Frequency) Among Retirees

Under the level of cultural assimilation, out of nine suggestions, all the suggestions scored a high level of cultural assimilation.

Among the indications that score high moderate mean are assimilating into the local society helps the retiree to appreciate culture and get over his fear or hesitation of something different (M:4.305), assimilation experiences in Thailand lead to a higher quality of living and better mental health among the retirees Retiree tends to adapt local culture (M: 4.250), conducive and efficient facilities provided by the Thailand authority has enabled the retirees to perform cultural assimilation smoothly (4.21), the retiree is comfortable with making new friends and attending cultural events in Thailand (M:4.17) and to assimilate well with the local culture, retiree made an effort to learn the local language and become part of the local culture (4.13).

The whole mean level of cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Long Stay (ILS) program is 4.152.

Summary Result: Level of Cultural Assimilation Among Retirees Under International Long Stay program is 4.152 which is strong.

The process of assimilation is an inevitable phenomenon in the tourist experience. Within a tourism destination, tourists require a certain motivation to participate in the cultural assimilation process in order to connect with a non-native culture (the destination culture). In the case of Japanese retirees, the social integration, the level of wellbeing and satisfaction in life are also very high, showing that they are very happy and can adapt very well to Thailand culture and these aspects become a motivation for cultural assimilation.

To enhance their assimilation into the local culture, retirees should not only interact well among themselves but also step outside their own world. Japanese lifestyle retirees tend to cluster in their own clans, shop in Japanese stores or department stores, attend Japanese restaurants, cook Japanese food, as well as spend their leisure time with their Japanese networks and associations (Hongsrnagon et al., 2015). This seems to be their 'inner society,' in their surroundings in Bangkok, Chiangmai, and Phuket, the main places of their stay in Thailand. Furthermore, as in patriarchal culture, Japanese men are breadwinners and women's space is much home-bound. By not being in public spaces, maybe due to the language barrier, Japanese women or housewives prefer to gather among their own acquaintances. This adds to the obstacles for Japanese women to socialize with the locals which demotivates the social assimilation to occur (Hongsrnagon et al., 2015).



Figure 4.11 Nihonmachi in Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok

Source: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRTcHGRet0uXG00km2Xow0SG-wvoV_zJtZleg&s



Figure 4.12 Harajuku in Bangkok

Source: https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSIQd3qMn1yKF7VuH2BqF8WYb10Re2sRalsbZ4aHRm6ZM8wX9d_



Figure 4.13 Wide range of Thai food and Japanese cuisines at Harajuku Bangkok

Source: https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRqkpUH9iwmUq2ABh76CtEUQ3SP_YL8M1PXrBgvgZQH8sYO-4d



Figure 4.14 Harajuku in Bangkok near a riverside

Source: <https://encrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcR2o7pK0ksrQ5XzUB66AN3ti5tSuUFQcC16SsyCAKDWHy1TBor5>



Figure 4.15 Visitors write their wishes onto hanging wooden plaques at spot near Harajuku market

Source: https://encrypted-tbn2.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTsefZK1YtNm_LqtNnx-1D5ZwUFziig7VoxvpJ73tZOucKIRIDD



Figure 4.17 A Harajuku Shrine on-site inspired by the famous Imado Shrine in Tokyo

Source: https://encrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSHQ9RXmq3qLQmECjIM-roD0bVgebeZdp6vlqZoO_bWmRU9GHKc



Figure 4.18 Little Osaka at Bangkok, Thailand.

Source: <https://cf.bstatic.com/xdata/images/hotel/max1024x768/484745534.jpg?k=d29349a809063f970505afa6cd9be660bb97d60fe1e0107e3a0eb7afd6189610&o=&hp=1>

A lack of meaningful interactions with the locality may be due to language barriers and culture clash. Anyway, if the retirees can meet and mix with locals more regularly, this will become a catalyst for the process of cultural assimilation to occur. In the case of Japanese retirees, cultural assimilation is more than acculturation. This is a form of assimilation in which people from a minority group accept some of the beliefs, customs, or behaviors of the dominant group, but still keep some of their own cultural traditions and customs. Cultural assimilation is good among Japanese retirees as this helps them to feel safer and accepted.

Culture mixing or cross-cultural also occurs in Thailand where the Thais adopt Japanese culture very well and vice-versa. Pinyapan Potjanalawan, (2015); Taksinapinun, (2008) point out that such popularity derives from exposure to Japaneseness presented through Japan's pop culture. The proliferation of Japanese consumer products, the sharp rise of Thai visitors to Japan, the appreciation of Japanese art and lifestyle and so forth, are evidence of how Thai people fall in love with Japan. The case of Japanese food as seen from the success of the Fuji Restaurant chain is the first detectable indicator. The restaurant was founded in 1982 but

grew rapidly by 1997 both within and outside the capital city (Thairath Online, 2012). Japanese cuisine also had a widespread reputation, slightly before or after the year 2000, with the transfer of flavor from a mixture of Thai and Japanese tastes to the original one.

In an attempt to explain the success of Japanese culture, some preliminary research has been conducted before bringing to light the large number of Thai economic actors and social influencers that have contributed to the spread of Japan's current cultural influence. Many of them are the youth and children from the late 70s who grew up with Japanese cartoons and superhero TV series such as "Ikkyu-san" and "Doraemon". They became an active section of the population who fueled the love of Japan as they had matured. This aligns with the theory of generation, which posits that the attitudes and behavior of each generation are shaped by technologies, beliefs and the overall environment in which they are raised (Ivanova & Smrikarov, 2009). The consumption of Japanese entertainment media such as cartoons and superhero TV series, has facilitated cultural relations between Thailand and Japan (Lopattananont, 2022).

The Japanese community in Thailand has grown in line with the country's economic presence. This huge community is drawing more Japanese restaurants and entertainment into the country. Indeed, Thailand has become one of the largest Japanese food markets outside Japan. Sushi¹⁰ can be found at street food stalls for as little as 5 baht, while syabu shabu (sliced meat and vegetables hot pots)¹¹ and yakiniku (grilled meat)¹² restaurants have become a must for new shopping malls.

¹⁰ Sushi:(寿司)

- Meaning: Sushi refers to a Japanese dish made of vinegared rice, often accompanied by various ingredients such as seafood, vegetables, and sometimes tropical fruits.
- Types of Sushi:
 - Nigiri: Hand-pressed sushi with a slice of raw or cooked fish or other seafood placed on top of vinegared rice.
 - Maki: Rolled sushi with rice and filling (like fish, vegetables, or other ingredients) wrapped in seaweed (nori).
 - Temaki: Hand rolls made with a cone-shaped piece of nori filled with rice and various ingredients.
- Example: A classic example of sushi is a piece of nigiri with a slice of raw tuna or salmon on top of the rice.
Source: Basic Sushi Knowledge." *Sushi University*,
<https://sushiuniversity.jp/basicknowledge/types-of-sushi>

¹¹ Shabu shabu:(しゃぶしゃぶ)

- Meaning: Shabu shabu is a Japanese hotpot dish consisting of thinly sliced meat (usually beef) and vegetables cooked in a pot of boiling water or broth.
- Preparation: The meat and vegetables are dipped into the hot broth for a brief moment and then served with dipping sauces such as sesame or ponzu sauce.
- Example: A meal might include thin slices of beef, tofu, mushrooms, and cabbage, all cooked in a communal pot and dipped into sauces for flavor.

Source: *Just One Cookbook*,
<https://www.justonecookbook.com/shabu-shabu/>.

¹² Yakiniku (焼肉)

These dishes highlight different aspects of Japanese cuisine: sushi focuses on raw or lightly prepared seafood, shabu shabu is a communal, interactive hotpot experience, and yakiniku involves grilling meats at the table for a fun and flavorful

Source: Nihon Yakiniku Association. "What is Yakiniku?" <https://www.yakiniku.or.jp>

While many serve localized Japanese cuisine, with a spicy Thai twist or a fancy photogenic touch, some are striving to make Thai-made food more authentically Japanese. Umi, a sushi restaurant in Bangkok, was founded in late 2014 by three Thai owners and a Thai chef. It was one of the first omakase restaurants in Thailand, and is one of the few sushi restaurants that directly sources fish from Japan. The founders, who had fallen in love with sushi in Japan, wanted a place to eat out in Bangkok. The menu is created by chef Banphot Boonklom, a 20-year sushi veteran who trained under a Japanese chef in Thailand. Incorporating the *edomae* (Tokyo)¹³ style, the fish imported from Japan is treated with traditional blood-removing techniques and is aged to produce the best possible umami (savory taste)¹⁴. Until then, Sushi has become part of many Thais' diets (Ono, 2020)

Research Question 8:

What are the factors that hinder cultural assimilation among the Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Long Stay (ILS) program?

-
- Meaning: Yakiniku translates to "grilled meat" and refers to a Japanese BBQ-style dish where bite-sized pieces of meat (often beef) and vegetables are grilled on a barbecue or griddle.
 - Preparation: The meat is usually grilled by the diner on a tabletop grill, and it is often served with dipping sauces or condiments like tare sauce (a sweet soy-based sauce) or salt.
 - Example: In a yakiniku meal, you might grill marinated beef short ribs, vegetables like mushrooms, and slices of garlic on a hot grill and then enjoy them with rice.

¹³ Edomae: (江戸前)

- Meaning: Edomae literally translates to "in front of Edo," referring to the area around Tokyo Bay, which was once known as Edo. In culinary terms, Edomae is most commonly associated with a style of sushi that originated in the Edo period (1603-1868).
- Explanation: Edomae sushi uses fish and seafood caught from Tokyo Bay, which was historically the primary source of fresh seafood for sushi. The fish used in Edomae sushi is often marinated, lightly cooked, or served raw, depending on the type.
- Example: A traditional Edomae sushi might feature marinated or slightly seared tuna or eel, served atop vinegared rice, representing the technique of using local, fresh ingredients with minimal processing.

Source: History of Edomae Sushi." <https://www.sushiassociation.jp>.

¹⁴ Umami:(旨味)

- Meaning: Umami is one of the five basic tastes (along with sweet, salty, sour, and bitter), often described as a savory or "pleasantly rich" flavor. The term was coined by Japanese scientist Kikunae Ikeda in 1908 when he identified glutamate as the key compound responsible for this taste.
- Explanation: Umami is typically associated with foods that are rich in amino acids and nucleotides, such as monosodium glutamate (MSG), soy sauce, miso, and foods like meat, cheese, mushrooms, and tomatoes. It enhances the depth and complexity of a dish, contributing to a more satisfying flavor profile.
- Example: A bowl of miso soup often has a strong umami taste due to the fermentation of the miso paste, which is rich in glutamates, giving the soup a savory, full-bodied flavor.

Source: Umami: A Universal Taste." *Food Reviews International*.

Summary:

- Edomae refers to a traditional style of sushi originating from Tokyo Bay and emphasizes the use of fresh, local seafood and minimal preparation.
- Umami is a fundamental taste that enhances savory flavors, often found in ingredients like soy sauce, miso, and meats, contributing to the richness of dishes.

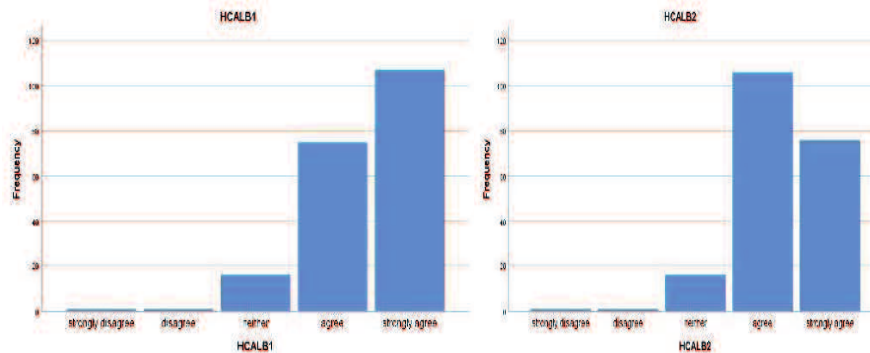
Both terms are central to Japanese cuisine, with Edomae representing a historical culinary tradition and umami enhancing the depth of flavors in modern cooking.

To study the factors that hinder cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees, the researcher has divided the questionnaires into 2, language acquisition and culture differences.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
HCALB1	200	4.43	0.7054
HCALB2	200	4.275	0.67204
HCALB3	200	4.505	0.74346
HCALB4	200	4.46	0.70061
HCALB5	200	4.15	0.74853

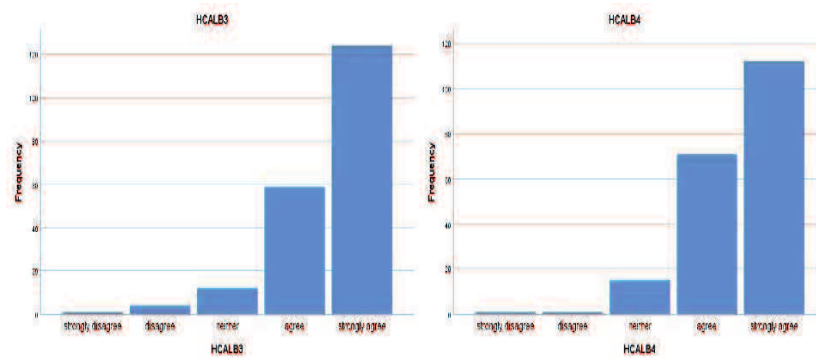
HCALB = hinder cultural assimilation language barrier

Table 4.26 Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation Language barrier



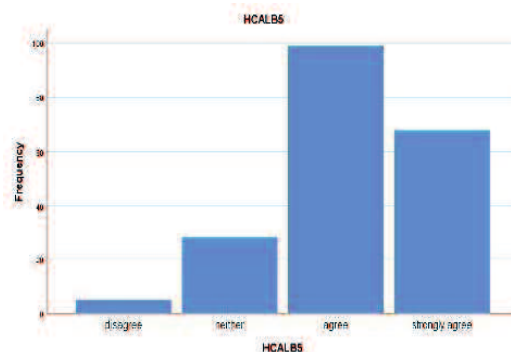
Graph 4.15(a) I experience difficulty in my efforts to integrate and communicate in Thailand local language

Graph 4.15(b) Language barriers prohibit the retirees from mixing with Thailand people efficiently



Graph 4.15 (c) I feel that Thailand native language is very hard to learn and I struggled with low confidence when trying to talk in public

Graph 4.15 (d) Inability to understand Thailand's local language limit retiree's opportunities to interact with the local people



Graph 4.15(e) Being unable to communicate with the locals makes retirees feel isolated and alienated

Graph 4.15 Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation

Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Language Barrier	1. I experience difficulty in my efforts to integrate and communicate in Thailand local language.	4.4300	0.7054
	2. Language barriers prohibit the retirees from mixing with Thailand people efficiently.	4.2750	0.67204
	3. I feel that Thailand native language is very hard to learn and I struggled with low confidence when trying to talk in public.	4.5050	0.74346
	4. Inability to understand Thailand's local language limit retiree's opportunities to interact with the local people.	4.4600	0.70061
	5. Being unable to communicate with the locals makes retirees feel isolated and alienated.	4.1500	0.74853
WHOLE MEAN		4.364	

Table 4.27 Detailed item about Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation (Language barrier)

Assimilation, as stated earlier as the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. The process of assimilating involves taking on the traits of the dominant culture to such a degree that the assimilating group becomes socially indistinguishable from other members of the society.

In language acquisition, a language barrier is difficulty in expressing oneself, difficulty in obtaining directions, difficulty in explaining one's expectations, poor performance, and ineffective communication (Mac McIntire, 2014). A language barrier is in play when people do not communicate on the same level, such as speaking the same language.

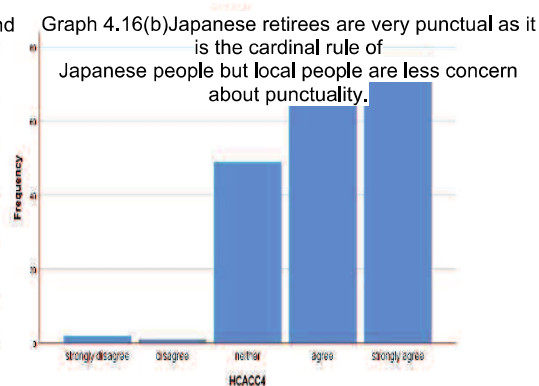
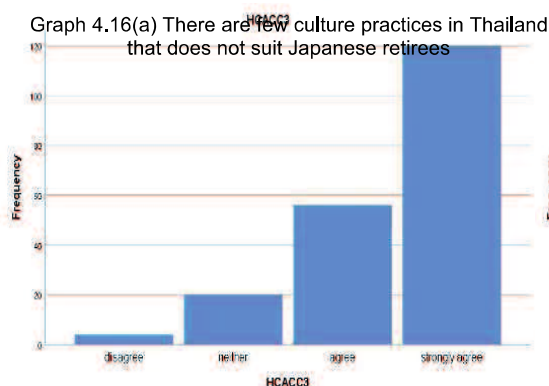
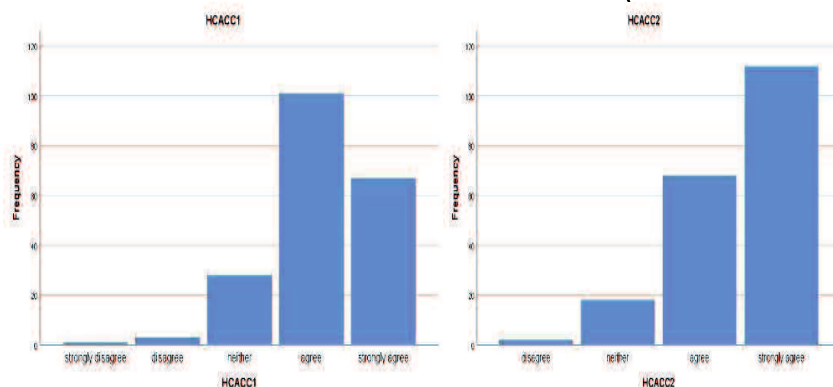
Based from the analysis above, it can be seen that language barrier is among the factors that hinder cultural assimilation.

Under language barrier, among the items that receive high scores are retirees feel that Thailand native language is very hard to learn and struggled with low confidence when trying to talk in public(M:4.505), inability to communicate in Thai language lead to the problems to assimilate in Thais culture among Japanese retirees(4.46), retirees experiences difficulty in their efforts to integrate and communicate in Thailand local language (M:4.6069), inability to understand Thailand local language limit retirees opportunities to interact with the local people(M:4.43), language barriers prohibit the retirees from mixing with Thailand people efficiently (M:4.27) and being unable to communicate with the locals makes retiree feel isolated and alienated (M: 4.15). The whole mean of factors that hinder cultural assimilation under a language barrier is 4.364 which is very high. In conclusion, the language barrier is one high factor that hinders social assimilation among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Long Stay (ILS) program.

The inability to converse in the Thai language is parallel to the research about the effect of language on cultural assimilation which was conducted at Ramkhamhaeng University in 2013. The findings came out with a few suggestions that are: promoting assimilation, strengthening relationships or social ties, and improving English speaking skills. Therefore, the researchers introduced the idea of mixing different students from different countries into the same class so that they could mix well to promote cultural assimilation.

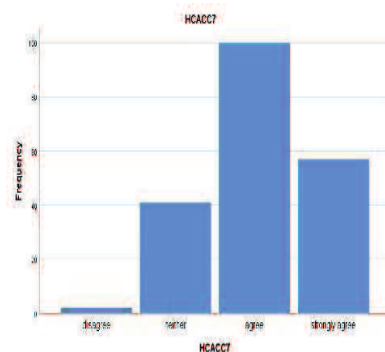
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	
HCACC1	200	4.15	0.74853	
HCACC2	200	4.45	0.69996	
HCACC3	200	4.46	0.75581	
HCACC4	200	4.1	0.85654	
HCACC5	200	3.98	0.49072	
HCACC6	200	4.505	0.74346	
HCACC7	200	4.06	0.72735	HCACC = hinder cultural assimilation cultural clash

Table 4.28: Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation (Culture Differences)



Graph 4.16(c) Masculinity: Japanese retirees used to be aggressive and competitive especially while working, but local people are very passive and less aggressive. This can cause Japanese and Thai not understanding each other.

Graph 4.16(d) Local people like to smile no matter where they are even in a serious business dealing. Japanese retirees used to have serious talk with serious facial express



Graph 4.16(e) Cultural clash hinders cultural assimilation among the retirees with local people.

Graph 4.16 Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation: Frequency - Culture Differences

Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation		Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Cultural Clash	1. There are few culture practices in Thailand that does not suit Japanese retirees.	4.1500	0.7485
	1. Japanese retirees are very punctual as it is the cardinal rule of Japanese people but local people are less concern about punctuality.	4.4500	0.69996
	2. Masculinity: Japanese retirees used to be aggressive and competitive especially while working, but local people are very passive and less aggressive. This can cause Japanese and Thai not understanding each other.	4.4600	0.7558
	3. Body languages: Local people like to smile no matter where they are even in a serious business dealing. Japanese retirees used to have serious talk with serious facial expression.	4.1000	0.85654
	4. Cultural clash hinders cultural assimilation among the retirees with local people.	4.0600	0.72735
WHOLE MEAN		4.244	

Table 4.29 Detailed item about Factors That Hinder Cultural Assimilation (Culture Differences)

Based on the analysis above, it can be seen that culture differences are among the factors that hinder cultural assimilation.

Under culture differences, among the items that receive high scores are masculinity: Japanese retirees used to be aggressive and competitive especially while working, but local people are very passive and less aggressive. This can cause Japanese and Thai not to understand each other (M: 4.46), Japanese retirees are very punctual as it is the cardinal rule of Japanese people but local people are less concerned about punctuality (M:4.45), there are few culture practices in Thailand that does not suit Japanese retirees (M: 4.15), body languages: Local

people like to smile no matter where they are even in a serious business dealing. Japanese retirees used to have serious talk with serious facial expressions. (M: 4.10)

The whole mean of factors that hinder cultural assimilation under culture differences is 4.244 which is high. In conclusion, culture difference is one high factor that hinders social assimilation among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Long Stay (ILS) program.

Difficulty living in unfamiliar cultures is caused by differences in patterns of thinking, points of view, and physical action styles. Learning to understand these different styles is one solution that may help people to live together with their differences. From previous research individualism aspect is very different between Thais and Japanese people. There is quite a big gap in individualism because Japanese people do not live as a big group like Thais. Although both countries share some similarities in terms of practices in society, Thais and Japanese people often put harmony as a group over individuals. Thais prefer to work as a group more than Japanese people. Thai people do not want to be promoted in the workplace. Thais do not like a change as they feel more comfortable with the things that they are doing, and they dislike to learn something new. Japanese people like to plan and create a path for their lives. Thai people do what they can think of at a little moment, and they love to do things as routine. Things are not changed regularly. The decision-making Thai people made, they do not forecast the result in the future as much as the Japanese.

For food preferences, Thais rely on spicy, salty, sour, bitter and sweet flavors but Japanese food culture is mostly focused on salty tastes. Japanese has rolls, while Thai has more curries. In masculinity, Japan has extremely better masculinity over than Thailand because Japan has taken their jobs seriously and the competition is higher than in Thailand. Japanese society is run by the competition. Employee are very motivated when they are competing with their competitors. On the contrary, Thais are much more flexible. They see their work not as seriously as Japanese and the competition is not driven by Thai society.

The Thai culture and its history are strongly linked to the Buddhist religion. There are many distinctive directions of Buddhism and these consist of different meanings and interpretations. Buddhism affects most of the Thai culture and lifestyle. A few examples are generally Thai people avoid saying 'no', because, according to the Buddhist faith, it is considered unpleasant. Therefore, Thai people always hesitate to refuse anything, especially if people need help. The fear of saying no also stems from the urge to avoid conflicts, or confrontation as they do not want to disappoint others, or hurt their feelings. Thais have built an admirable reputation for making life fun and easy-going, and the smile is a key ingredient in keeping cool and ironing out life's creases. Another example is that in general, Thai people consider their reputation as

a very important aspect, which also originates from the Buddhist religion. Thai culture is also characterized to a large extent by village routines that have been around for centuries. For example, part of the Buddhist teachings is patience and since Thailand is mostly a Buddhist country, people will totally appreciate just how patient Thai people are in most situations. It is part of why they are so resilient and seem to bounce back from chaotic situations like the political uprisings that happen every 6-8 years. Thais have built an admirable reputation for making life fun and easy-going, and the smile is a key ingredient in keeping cool and ironing out life's creases. Thais are very willing to help even if they do not get anything in return.

For Japanese retirees in Thailand, culture differences always happen in their daily life. Additionally, when cultures collide, they can implement acculturation. As stated earlier, acculturation is a type of assimilation in which a minority culture adopts some aspects of the majority culture but still maintains some of its unique characteristics. Culture differences are often considered a major cause for the failure of mergers and acquisitions, and for this reason it is an important consideration for corporate strategy. Culture differences have also plagued alliances and long-term market relationships. It provides a unique lens on the performance effects of corporate culture itself, and thus culture's potential to generate a competitive advantage. To avoid the effect of culture differences, retirees must probe for the cultural dimension where the resolution process should start from the parties' acknowledgment that their conflict contains a cultural dimension. The retirees must also learn about other cultures and respect them. If there is a need to apply foreign culture in their daily life, they can modify the culture according to their suitability to be used in the organizational practices and procedures.

4.2.2 Using Inferential Statistic

Before the analysis in the form of inferential statistics is made, the data obtained must undergo a normality test (normality test) to ensure whether the data is normally distributed or not. This is important because one of the conditions for inferential statistics such as correlation test statistics, t-test and the one-way and two-way ANNOVA tests is that the data collected from the sample is normally distributed.

4.2.2.1. Normality Test

In this study, the normality of the data is identified by using Skewness and Kurtosis. Skewness is a measure of symmetry, or more precisely, the lack of symmetry. A distribution, or data set, is symmetric if it looks the same to the left and right of the center point. Kurtosis is a measure of whether the data are heavy-tailed or light-tailed relative to a normal distribution. There is a positive value of skewness that indicates that the graph is positively skewed, while there is a

value of skewness with a negative value that indicates that it is negatively skewed. Kurtosis indicates the high or low shape of the distribution. There is a positive kurtosis value to show a curved shape with a high distribution (leptokurtic shape), while there is also a negative kurtosis value to show a curved shape with a low distribution (platykurtic shape).

Below are the results from the data analysis to investigate whether the data from each section is normally distributed.

Factor	Skewness	Kurtosis
pushf	.157	.554
Pullf	-.327	-.695
otherF	-.528	-.612
levelSI	-.151	-.700
levelWB	-.943	-.467
levelLifeSat	-.397	-.045
levelCA	-.285	.473
FactorHCA	-.435	.720

Pushf=push factor, pullf=pull factor, otherF=other factor, levelSI=level social integration, levelWB=level well-being, levelLifeSat=level life satisfaction, levelCA=level cultural assimilation, FactorHCA=factor hinder cultural assimilation

Table 4.30 Normality Test Using Skewness and Kurtosis

To explain the normality of data using skewness and kurtosis, we evaluate the values presented in the table against commonly accepted thresholds for normal distribution.

Skewness:

Skewness measures the asymmetry of the data distribution where a skewness of 0 indicates a perfectly symmetrical distribution. The characteristic of positive skewness is that the tail of the distribution is longer on the right side (right-skewed), while the negative skewness is that the tail of the distribution is longer on the left side (left-skewed).

Threshold for Normality:

A skewness value between -1 and +1 is typically considered acceptable for normality. Interpretation from the Table 4.30 is all factors in the table have skewness values between -1 and +1, suggesting that the data is reasonably symmetrical and meets the criteria for normality in terms of skewness.

Kurtosis

Kurtosis measures the "tailedness" or peakedness of the data distribution. A kurtosis value of 0 corresponds to a normal distribution (mesokurtic). Positive kurtosis means that distribution

has heavier tails and a sharper peak (leptokurtic). Negative kurtosis: Distribution has lighter tails and a flatter peak (platykurtic).

Threshold for Normality:

A kurtosis value between -2 and +2 is generally considered acceptable for normality.

Interpretation from the Table for normality

All kurtosis values in the table fall within the range of -2 to +2, indicating that the data's "tailedness" is within acceptable limits for a normal distribution.

Conclusion for Normality of the data

Based on the skewness and kurtosis values provided:

The data for all factors (pushf, pullf, otherF, levelISI, levelWB, levelLifeSat, levelCA, FactorHCA) satisfies the thresholds for normality.

This indicates that the data distribution for these factors can reasonably be considered normal.

4.2.3 Correlation Test

In statistical terms, as stated earlier in Chapter 3, correlation quantifies the strength of the linear relationship between the variables. In other words, it is a measure of how two variables are related. Correlation is measured by a statistic called the correlation coefficient, which represents the strength or value of the putative linear association between the variables in question. The correlation coefficient as a unit of measurement states the intensity in the linear relationship between the variables involved in a correlation analysis, with the symbol r and is usually a value located between 1 and -1. A high correlation points to a strong relationship between the two variables, while a low correlation means that the variables are weakly related. We perform a hypothesis test using "the significance of the correlation coefficient" to decide whether there exists linear relationship between two variables in the study. The correlation test will answer research questions 8-12 which is based on Table 3.31 in Chapter 3, as below.

Coefficient value	Descriptive interpretation
0.70 – 1.00	Very Strong correlation
0.50 – 0.69	Strong correlation
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate correlation
0.10 – 0.29	Weak correlation
0.01 - 0.09	Negligible correlation

Table 3.31: Correlation Strength Based on the Davies Scale

4.2.3.1 Analysis of Correlation Test Using SPSS

Below are the research hypotheses which were formed earlier for this research.

A hypothesis is an assumption that is made based on some evidence. This is the initial point of any investigation that translates the research questions into predictions. It includes components like variables, population and the relation between the variables. A research hypothesis is a hypothesis that is used to test the relationship between two or more variables. The P-value is the probability that we would have found the current result if the correlation coefficient were in fact zero (null hypothesis). If this probability is lower than the conventional 5% ($P < 0.05$) the correlation coefficient is called statistically significant. Therefore, if the P-value is smaller than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative. We conclude that the correlation is statically significant or in simple words we conclude that there is a linear relationship between x and y in the population at the α level. If a P-value is greater than 0.05 means that deviation from the null hypothesis is not statistically significant, and the null hypothesis is not rejected (accepted).

Research Questions 9, 10, 11 12.

9. Is there any correlation between language acquisition and social integration of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
10. Is there a correlation between the social integration of Japanese retirees and their cultural assimilation into Thai culture among those residing in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
11. Is there any correlation between well-being and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?
12. Is there a correlation between the attitudes of Japanese retirees and their cultural assimilation into Thai culture among those residing in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

Result of correlation between behavioral phenomena

Variables	Cultural Assimilation	Attitude	Social Integration	Wellbeing	language
Cultural Assimilation	1	0.482**	0.503**	0.338**	0.472**
Attitude	0.482**	1	0.562**	0.099	0.254**
Social Integration	0.503**	0.562**	1	0.02	0.485**
Wellbeing	0.338**	0.099	0.02	1	0.078

Language	0.472**	0.254**	0.485**	0.078	1
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**Significance at $p < .01$*

Table 4.31: Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

		AttitudeB	socialintegB	wellbeingB	LanguageB	CulAssiB
AttitudeB	Pearson Correlation	1	.562**	0.099	.254**	.482**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.165	0.000	0.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
socialintegB	Pearson Correlation	.562**	1	0.020	.485**	.503**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.777	0.000	0.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
wellbeingB	Pearson Correlation	0.099	0.020	1	0.078	.338**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.165	0.777		0.271	0.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
LanguageB	Pearson Correlation	.254**	.485**	0.078	1	.472**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.271		0.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
CulAssiB	Pearson Correlation	.482**	.503**	.338**	.472**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	200	200	200	200	200

Table 4.32: Summary Result of Correlation Test

Result of Hypotheses

Hypothesis Testing for Research Questions:

Research Question 9:

Is there any correlation between language acquisition and social integration of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

Answer:

There is a significant positive correlation between language acquisition and social integration ($r = 0.485^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that higher language acquisition is associated with greater social integration among Japanese retirees in Thailand under the IRM program.

Research Question 10:

Is there any correlation between social integration and retirees' cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

Answer:

There is a significant positive correlation between social integration and cultural assimilation ($r = 0.503^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that higher social integration is related to greater cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees in Thailand.

Research Question 11:

Is there any correlation between well-being and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

Answer:

There is a significant positive correlation between well-being and cultural assimilation ($r = 0.338^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). This shows that increased cultural assimilation is associated with improved well-being for Japanese retirees in Thailand under the IRM program.

Research Question 12:

Is there any correlation between retirees' attitude and retirees' cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

Answer:

There is a significant positive correlation between retirees' attitude and cultural assimilation ($r = 0.482^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that a more positive attitude is linked to greater cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees under the IRM program.

Conclusion of Hypothesis:

All the tested correlations in the study are statistically significant at $p < 0.01$, indicating strong relationships between the variables examined.

Based on the above answer:

Hypothesis 1

Positive statement (H_A): There is a positive correlation between retirees language acquisition and retirees' social integration.

Null hypothesis (H_o): There is no correlation between retirees language acquisition and retirees' social integration.

From the above result, there is positive significant relationship between language acquisition and social integration of Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand under International Retirement Migration (IRM) program, with Pearson Correlation, r as 0.485 (Moderate) and p value (0.000) significant as $p < 0.05$). **Hypothesis H1, H_A is accepted.**

As stated earlier, language acquisition plays its role for social integration especially with the locals. Japanese retirees need to learn local language to increase social integration with the locals.

Hypothesis 2

Positive statement (H_A): There is a positive correlation between retirees social integration and retirees' cultural assimilation

Null hypothesis (H_o): There is no correlation between retirees social integration and retirees' cultural assimilation

From the above result, there is positive significant relationship between retirees social integration and retirees' cultural assimilation with Pearson Correlation r as 0.503 (Strong) and p value (0.000) significant, as $p < 0.05$. **H2, H_A is accepted.**

From the findings earlier, it is clearly seen that social integration and cultural assimilation among the Japanese retirees is high. Good social integration with the local people will lead to a better cultural assimilation with the local culture.

Hypothesis 3

Positive statement (H_A): There is a positive correlation between retirees' well-being and retirees' cultural assimilation

Null hypothesis (H_o): There is no correlation between retirees' well-being and retirees' cultural assimilation

From the above result, there is positive significant relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees with Pearson Correlation, r as 0.338 (Moderate) and p value (0.000) significant, as $p < 0.05$. **H3, H_A is accepted.**

From the findings earlier, we can see that the retirees are very satisfied with the conditions in Thailand and their level of wellbeing is high, and this becomes the catalyst in the success of cultural assimilation.

Hypothesis 4

Positive statement (H_A): There is a positive correlation between retirees' attitude and retirees cultural assimilation.

Null hypothesis (H_o): There is no correlation between retirees' attitude and retirees cultural assimilation.

From the above result, there is positive significant relationship between retirees' attitude and retirees' cultural assimilation with Pearson Correlation 0.482(Moderate) and p value (0.000) significant, as $p < 0.05$). **H4 is accepted.**

As stated earlier, Japanese retirees need to have positive attitudes to stay alive. Positive attitudes avoid from loneliness and alienated. Loneliness has serious consequences for cognition, emotion, behavior, and bad health. Therefore, being positive in life is a must. Japanese retirees must think positive and do positive things like mixing around. By involving in Japanese club activities arranged by their long stay homes, they will not be left behind and always have friends around them to avoid from loneliness and feeling alienated.

Outdoor activities, such as golf competition, yoga, taichi, biking, camping, visiting hot springs and hiking tones the lower body and upper body to keep the retirees' heart healthy and boosts bone density as a weight-bearing exercise. Indoor activities, such as lunch meetings, language studying, playing chess, carrom, cards and table tennis help to improve their awareness and consciousness. They also keep the brain active and also maintain body coordination and train the mind to work faster and smarter. They are also activities arranged by the club as stated earlier which the retirees can join like local events and festivals, such as the Loi Kratong activities of clubs' function as intermediary support clubs, and are comprised of a group of people with the same purpose and demand.

According to *The Japan Times* (2016), Thailand is popular with Japanese retirees but many end up dying alone. There is a case of a Japanese retiree who had settled in the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai dying alone (kodokushi)¹⁵ in June, 2016. His body laid undiscovered for a week at his home. This is the case of a retiree who did not mix and socialize with his Japanese retirees and end up dying alone.

Summary of Multiple Regression:

¹⁵ Kodokushi :(孤独死)

- Meaning: Kodokushi is a Japanese term that translates to "lonely death" or "death alone."
- Explanation: The term refers to the phenomenon of individuals, often elderly, dying alone in their homes and not being discovered for a long time. This issue has become a growing concern in Japan due to its aging population, where many elderly people live alone without close family or community ties. Kodokushi is often associated with social isolation and the lack of a social support system.
- Example: An elderly person living alone in a large city, without regular contact with family or friends, may pass away and not be found for several days or even weeks, highlighting the challenge of loneliness among the elderly in modern Japanese society.

4.2.4 Analysis of Multiple Regression Data Using SPSS

In this study, linear regression analysis was performed to find out the influence between independent variables (Behavioral phenomena: Social integration, Well-being and Attitude) and dependent variables (Cultural assimilation).

Multiple regression is used to determine the changes in two or more factors (independent variables) that contribute to the changing of the dependent variable. In multiple regression, the independent variable(X) is called the predictor variable, while the dependent variable(Y) is called the criterion variable. The score for criterion variable (Y) is predicted using k predicting variables(X_1 , X_2 , ...and X_k), where $k \geq 2$. Below is the equation of multiple regression:

$$Y = b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + \dots + b_kX_k + a$$

Where,

b is the regression coefficient for every predictor variable

a is constant regression.

To ease the comparison and elaboration, the equation of multiple regression in the above raw data is changed to the form of the standard score as below.

$$Z_y = \beta_1Z_1 + \beta_2Z_2 + \beta_3Z_3 + \beta_4Z_4 + \beta_5Z_5 \dots$$

In the form of a standard score, Z_y represents the standard score of the criterion variable, and the coefficient beta β_1 , β_2 , β_3 , β_4 , β_5 represent the standard coefficient regression for predicting variables Z_1 , Z_2 , Z_3 , Z_4 , Z_5 onwards.

Research Question 13:

What is the most important factor that cause cultural assimilation among the retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program?

Regression Analysis Result

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.635 ^a	0.403	0.394	0.60623
a. Predictors: (Constant), wellbeing, social integration, Attitude				
b. Dependent Variable: Culture Assimilation				

Table 4.33: Regression Analysis (Independent Variables)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B Std.	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.173	0.287		4.079	0.000
	Attitude	0.222	0.059	0.252	3.755	0.000
	Social integration	0.321	0.060	0.355	5.321	0.000
	Wellbeing	0.245	0.045	0.306	5.508	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Culture Assimilation						

Table 4.34: Regression Analysis (Dependent Variable)

To explain the model summary for the regression analysis of independent variables in a clear and structured way, you can break it down as follows:

1. What the Model Represents:

The regression model examines the relationship between the independent variables (Well-being, Social Integration, and Attitude) and the dependent variable (Cultural Assimilation) to assess how well these predictors explain cultural assimilation among retirees in Thailand under the IRM program.

2. Explanation of the Key Metrics in the Model Summary:

- R (Correlation Coefficient):
- R = 0.635: This represents the strength of the overall relationship between the independent variables (well-being, social integration, attitude) and the dependent variable (cultural assimilation).
- A value of 0.635 indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship.
- R Square (Coefficient of Determination):
- R² = 0.403: This means that 40.3% of the variation in cultural assimilation can be explained by the independent variables (well-being, social integration, and attitude).
- The remaining 59.7% of the variation may be explained by other factors not included in the model.
- Adjusted R Square:
- Adjusted R² = 0.394: This is a slightly adjusted version of R² that accounts for the number of predictors in the model.
- It indicates that 39.4% of the variability in cultural assimilation is reliably explained after adjusting for the number of predictors.
- Standard Error of the Estimate:
- SE = 0.60623: This measures the average distance that the observed values fall from the regression line. A lower value indicates a better fit of the model.

3. Overall Interpretation:

The model shows that the independent variables (Well-being, Social Integration, and Attitude) together explain a moderate proportion (40.3%) of the variance in cultural assimilation among retirees. This suggests that these predictors are collectively important but that other factors may also influence cultural assimilation.

To determine the most important factor influencing cultural assimilation among retirees in the IRM program based on the table.

1. Look at the Standardized Coefficients (Beta):

The standardized coefficients allow us to compare the relative importance of each predictor variable, as they are measured on the same scale. Based on the table:

- Attitude: Beta = 0.252
- Social Integration: Beta = 0.355
- Well-being: Beta = 0.306

2. Identify the Most Important Factor:

- The predictor with the highest standardized beta value has the strongest influence on cultural assimilation.
- Social Integration (Beta = 0.355) is the most important factor, as it has the highest standardized coefficient compared to Well-being (0.306) and Attitude (0.252).

3. Check the Significance of Each Predictor:

- All three predictors (Attitude, Social Integration, and Well-being) are statistically significant, as their p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05. This means all contribute significantly to explaining cultural assimilation.

Conclusion of Regression Analysis:

Based on the regression analysis, social integration is the most important factor influencing cultural assimilation among retirees residing in Thailand under the IRM program. It has the highest standardized beta coefficient (Beta = 0.355) and is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

4.2.4.1 Testing Mediating Variable

Mediation is one way that a researcher can explain the process or mechanism by which one variable affects another. Mediation analyses are a statistical tool for testing the hypothesis about how the relationship between two variables may be direct or indirect via a third variable.

A mediation model proposes that the independent variable influences the mediator variable, which in turn influences the dependent variable. Thus, the mediator variable serves to clarify the nature of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Mediating variables can be tested using regression analysis. For this, mediation is a hypothesized causal chain in which one variable affects a second variable that, in turn, affects a third variable. The intervening variable, M, is the mediator. It “mediates” the relationship between a predictor, X, and an outcome.

Research Question 14:

Does a high level of support from the locals mediate the association between attitudes and social integration?

Hypothesis 5

Positive statement (H_A): High level of support from the locals(M) mediates the association between attitudes(X) and social integration(Y)

Null hypothesis (H_o): High level of support from the locals(M) does not mediate the association between attitudes(X) and social integration (Y)

Method:

Mediation models use linear regression models to split the total effect that an independent variable, ie attitudes (X) has on a dependent variable, social integration (Y) into a direct effect and an indirect effect via a third variable, support from the locals (M). The indirect effect is considered the mediating effect.

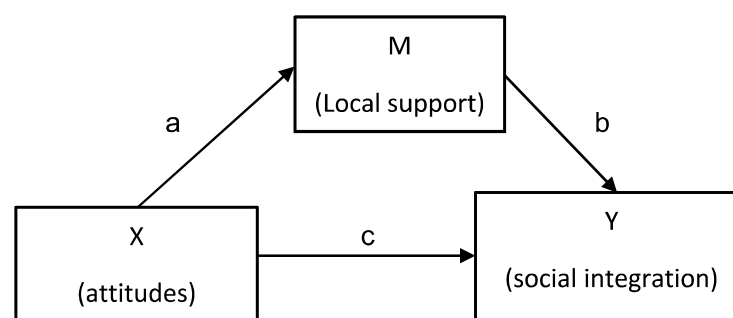


Figure 4.19 The Mediating Model

The mediation model used in these simulations. X is the independent variable, Y is the dependent variable, and M is the mediating variable. The effect of X on M is a; the effect of M on Y, independent of X, is b; and the effect of X on Y, independent of M, is c' . Not included in this figure is the total effect of X on Y, which has an effect of c.

The total effect regression model is:

$$1. Y_i = cX_i + e_i$$

where i indicates an individual's value on the dependent or independent variable.

Once the mediating variable is entered into the model, the equation becomes:

$$2. Y_i = c'X_i + bM_i + e_i$$

The parameter c, in equation 1, is the total effect that X has on Y. After including M into the model, c' is the direct effect that X has on Y after accounting for M. A third equation is used predicting the mediating variable M with the independent variable X:

$$3. M_i = aX_i + e_i$$

The indirect effect is then the difference between the total effect and the direct effect, which in turn equals the multiplication of the effects of X on M and of M on Y:

$$c - c' = ab$$

Mediation is assessed for statistical significance through testing of the ab effect. When the significance of the indirect effect is assessed through bootstrapping, the data is resampled with replacement and the models in equations 2 and 3 are fit to the resampled data and the indirect effect is calculated. From the resultant distribution of values, confidence intervals are determined to identify whether or not they include zero. A result not overlapping with zero is considered significant at the specified alpha value.

Result of Linear Regression (Mediating Variable)

Total effect of X to Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
.425	.0549	7.7350	.0000	.3166	.5333	.4817

Direct effect of X to Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
.4148	.0557	7.4698	.0000	.3053	.5243	.4702

Indirect effect of X to Y

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
SupL	.0102	.0091	-.0029	.0320

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
SupL	.0115	.0102	-.0033	.0356

Effect	Path	β	SE	95% CI		t	p
				Lower	Upper		
Total	Attitude -> Social integration	.425	.0549	.3166	.5333	7.7350	.0000
Indirect	Attitude -> support local people -> social integration	.0102	.0091	-.0029	.0320		
Direct	Attitude -> Social integration	.4148	.0557	.3053	.5243	7.4698	.0000
Complete standardized indirect effect	Attitude -> support local people -> social integration	.0115	.0102	-.0033	.0356		

Table 4.35 Regression Analysis (Mediating effect of Local support on attitude and social integration)

To answer the hypothesis based on the results, follow these steps:

Restate the Hypothesis

“High levels of support from the local population mediate the association between attitude and social integration.”

Step-by-Step Interpretation of the Results:

1. Total Effect ($X \rightarrow Y$):
 - The total effect of attitude (X) on social integration (Y) is significant, with:
 - Effect = 0.425, $p < 0.001$.
 - This means that attitude has a significant overall impact on social integration, whether mediated or not.
2. Direct Effect ($X \rightarrow Y$ without the mediator):
 - The direct effect of attitude on social integration is also significant:
 - Effect = 0.4148, $p < 0.001$.
 - This shows that even after accounting for the mediator (local support), attitude still significantly affect...social integration.
3. Indirect Effect ($X \rightarrow \text{Mediator} \rightarrow Y$):
 - The indirect effect of attitude (X) through local support (mediator) is 0.0102, but:
 - The BootCI (BootLLCI = -0.0029, BootULCI = 0.0320) includes zero.
 - This means the indirect effect is not statistically significant.
4. Standardized Indirect Effect:
 - The completely standardized indirect effect is 0.0115, but the confidence interval (BootLLCI = -0.0033, BootULCI = 0.0356) also includes zero, confirming that the indirect effect is not significant.

Conclusion for the Hypothesis:

The hypothesis is not supported. While attitude significantly predicts social integration (both directly and in total), the mediating role of local support is not statistically significant. This means local support does not significantly mediate the relationship between attitude and social integration.

The Hypothesized model was tested using multiple regression analysis via "PROCESS" Macro model 1. Hypothesis 5 H_A proposed that high level of support from the locals(M) mediates the association between attitudes(X) and social integration(Y). The hypothesis was tested using a percentile bootstrap estimation approach with 5000 resamples (Mackinnon et al,2004). As shown in Table 4.35, the indirect effect of support from the local on attitude and social integration was not significant (indirect effect = 0.0102, 95% CI= -0.0033, 0.0356). This is because the results of CI include 0 in between -0.0033 and 0.0356. As this result overlapping with zero, this is considered not significant at the specified alpha value. Because a 95% bootstrap confidence interval includes zero value, a high level of support from the locals does not mediate the association between attitudes and social integration. The result rejects the hypothesis 5.

Therefore, high level of support weakens the relationship between the independent variable (attitude) and the dependent variable (social integration). Its function as to reduce the direct effect of attitudes on social integration because part of the effect is carried through the mediator when the mediator takes some of the responsibilities of the relationship.

4.2.4.2 Testing Moderating Variable

Investigating moderating variable

Moderation analysis examines how the relationship between an independent variable (X) and a dependent variable (Y) changes as a function of a third variable, called the moderator (M). The moderator can either strengthen, weaken, or reverse the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

A moderator variable is a third variable used to investigate the strength of the relationship between an independent and dependent variable. In other words, a moderator describes the level of change between independent and dependent variables quantified by the linear regression coefficient of the product term.

The term moderating variable refers to a variable that can strengthen, diminish, negate, or otherwise alter the association between independent and dependent variables.

Research Question 15

Does language acquisition moderate the linkage between well-being and cultural assimilation?

Hypothesis 6

Positive statement (H_A): Language acquisition moderates the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation.

Null hypothesis (H_o): Language acquisition does not moderate the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation.

Method

In regression analysis, moderation occurs when the relationship between two variables depends on a third variable. The third variable is referred to as the moderator variable (or effect modifier) or simply the moderator (or modifier)

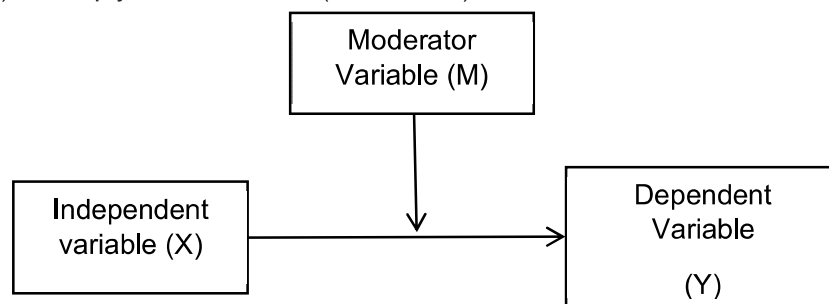


Figure 4.20 The Moderating Model

The "PROCESS" macro, model 1, (Hayes, 2013) in SPSS version 23 with bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals was used to test the significance of the indirect (i.e., mediated) effects moderated by need for cognition, i.e., conditional indirect effects. This model explicitly tests the moderating effect on the predictor to mediator path (i.e., path a). An index of moderated mediation was used to test the significance of the moderated mediation, i.e., the difference of the indirect effects across levels of need for cognition (Hayes, 2015). Significant effects are supported by the absence of zero within the confidence intervals. Then in the Results Section:

Tests of conditional indirect effects. The hypothesized moderated mediation model was tested using the PROCESS macro model number 1, which tests a model whereby need for cognition moderates the effect of path a (Figure 1; Hayes, 2013).

Result Regression Analysis (Moderating Variable)

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.5720	.3272	.4144	31.7666	3.000	196.000	.000

Model

	Coeff	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	0.7367	.7146	1.0310	.3038	-.6725	2.1459
WB (X)	0.5838	.1777	3.2851	.0012	.2333	.9343
LA (M)	0.6813	.1775	3.8378	.0002	.3312	1.0313
Int_1	-0.0873	.0439	-1.9902	.0480	-.1738	-.0008
Focal predict: WB (X)						
Mod var: LA (W)						

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

LA (M)	Effect	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
3.0163	.3205	.0612	5.2349	.000	.1998	.4413
4.0450	.2307	.0475	4.8523	.000	.1369	.3245
5.0000	.1473	.0673	2.1907	.0297	.0147	.2800

Table 4.36: Regression Analysis (Moderating effect of Language Acquisition(M) on Well-being(X) and culture assimilation(Y))

The hypothesized moderated model was tested using multiple regression analysis via PROCESS macro model number 1.

To interpret and answer the hypothesis based on the results in the table, follow these steps:

Restate the Hypothesis

The hypothesis could be:

“Language acquisition moderates the relationship between well-being (WB) and cultural assimilation, such that the effect of well-being on cultural assimilation changes at different levels of language acquisition.”

Step-by-Step Interpretation:

1. Check Interaction Term (Int_1):
 - The coefficient for the interaction term (Int_1) is -0.0873, with a p-value of 0.0480, which is less than 0.05.
 - This indicates that the interaction between well-being (WB) and language acquisition (LA) is statistically significant.
 - Therefore, moderation exists, meaning the relationship between WB and cultural assimilation changes depending on LA.
2. Direction of the Moderation Effect:

- The negative beta for the interaction term (Int_1) suggests that as language acquisition (LA) increases, the positive effect of well-being (WB) on cultural assimilation decreases.
3. Conditional Effects of Well-Being (WB):
 - At low levels of LA (3.0163): The effect of WB on cultural assimilation is significant (Effect = 0.3205, $p < 0.001$).
 - At moderate levels of LA (4.0450): The effect is still significant but weaker (Effect = 0.2307, $p < 0.001$).
 - At high levels of LA (5.0000): The effect becomes even weaker but remains significant (Effect = 0.1473, $p = 0.0297$).

This confirms that language acquisition weakens the positive relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation.

4. Confidence Intervals (LLCI and ULCI):
 - For all levels of LA, the confidence intervals (LLCI to ULCI) do not cross zero, confirming that the effects are statistically significant.

Conclusion for the Hypothesis:

The hypothesis is supported. The results show that language acquisition significantly moderates the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation. As language acquisition increases, the positive effect of well-being on cultural assimilation weakens, as evidenced by the significant interaction term and conditional effects.

4.2.4.4 Conclusion of Chapter 4

This chapter has thoroughly analyzed the findings associated with the research questions and hypotheses, employing a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Utilizing SPSS software Version 26, the study systematically examined the relationships among the variables under investigation, ensuring that the data were analyzed with precision and rigor.

For the descriptive statistical analysis, measures such as frequency, percentage, item mean, and aggregate mean were used to summarize and interpret the characteristics of the data. These techniques provided a clear overview of the responses and highlighted significant trends and patterns within the dataset. This step was crucial in forming a foundational understanding of the data before proceeding to more complex statistical tests.

For the inferential statistical analysis, correlation analysis and multiple regression techniques were employed to investigate the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. These methods enabled the study to evaluate the strength and direction of associations between variables, offering valuable insights into how different factors interact within the research model. The use of multiple regression further allowed for an in-depth examination of how various independent variables collectively influence the dependent variables, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play.

In terms of mediation analysis, the role of local support as a mediator between attitude and social integration was tested. The findings indicated that local support does not significantly mediate this relationship. This result suggests that while local support is an important contextual factor, it may not serve as a bridging mechanism to link attitude with social integration within the studied context.

Regarding moderation analysis, the study found that language acquisition plays a significant role as a moderating variable. Specifically, language acquisition was observed to moderate the relationship between well-being and cultural assimilation. This finding highlights the critical role of language proficiency in facilitating cultural integration processes, particularly in enhancing the well-being of individuals and their ability to assimilate into a new cultural environment.

In conclusion, this chapter has successfully addressed all six hypotheses of the study, utilizing robust statistical tools to provide meaningful insights into the relationships among the variables. The findings not only validate certain aspects of the proposed research framework but also offer new perspectives, such as the importance of language acquisition as a moderating factor. These results serve as a critical foundation for the subsequent discussion and interpretation of the findings in Chapter 5, where their implications will be explored in greater depth.

CHAPTER

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTION

5.0 INTRODUCTION OF CHAPTER 5

This chapter focuses on achieving the objectives of the study by combining the theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 and the research findings in Chapter 4. The achievement of research objectives is based on the fifteen research objectives presented at the beginning of this study. In addition, this chapter also presents suggestions for improvement to the Japanese government and Thailand governments and also to potential researcher subject in future.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

This study outlines fifteen objectives that are attempted to be achieved through field research in Thailand. The first objective of this research is to understand the push factor of retirees residing in Thailand under the IRM program. Push factors are those life situations in one's present homeland that generate dissatisfaction, such as poverty, unemployment, rapid population growth, political repression, and low social status. There are three main factors that researchers look into which are economic factors, health factors and social factors. In the economic factors, the four main reasons why Japanese retirees move to Thailand are the comprehensive tax code in Japan, poor living conditions in Japan, the high pace of lifestyle and the high cost of living in Japan. For the health factors, three main reasons why Japanese retirees move to Thailand are emerging infectious diseases, the high cost of medical services and the low quality of life due to poor health facilities. For the social factors, the four main reasons why retirees move to Thailand are growing disaster risks, poorly planned urban sprawl that leads to congestion, overcrowding as well as having negative effects on people's well-being and extreme weather and seasonal changes.

The second objective of this research is to understand the pull factor of retirees residing in Thailand under the IRM program. Pull factors are exactly the opposite of push factors, which are the positive factors that attract people to move to different areas and seek new opportunities. There are three main factors that the researcher looks into which are economic factors, health factors and social factors. For the economic factors, the five main reasons why Japanese retirees move to Thailand are low cost of living, cheaper labor and service, improved living standards, excellent infrastructure and facilities and efficient tax and visa system. For the health factors, the six main reasons why retirees move to Thailand are good self-care, availability of caretaker service for the elderly, subtropical climate with warm weather and mild

temperature for better health and well-being, more rejuvenating wellness retreats, quality medical service and health care at an affordable price and good surrounding and living environment. For the social factors, seven main reasons why the retiree moves to Thailand are the existence of Japanese communities and clubs to socialize, satisfaction from ikigai activities that promote well-being and improve quality of life, good communication network, sheltered life (feeling calm, resilient, safe, and secure), available entertainment for leisure (eg. parks, theatres, clubs, temples, restaurants, shopping malls, street foods, traditional performances etc.), affordable and hassle-free transportation and friendly people.

The third objective of this research is to study other motivational factors that influence the retirees residing in Thailand. In this study, the researcher found two additional factors which are support from local people and the government and external social conditions. In terms of support from local people, a good supply of skilled care workers at affordable prices, acknowledgment of Japanese people by the government, helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents and encouraging attitude from Thailand people to foreigners are the reasons why retirees choose to reside in Thailand. The external social condition like direct flight to Japan, world class education system, no social isolation and good social connection among retirees and local people and full freedom of religion and place of worship for all religions in Thailand are the reasons why the Japanese retirees choose to stay in Thailand.

The fourth objective of this research is to study the level of social integration of Japanese retiree communities among themselves and among the local people. The researcher has divided social integration into two aspects, attitudes and socialization. Under attitude, the Japanese retirees are willing to participate and get involved with the local people. Under socialization, the Japanese retirees agree that they need to socialize with local people through festivals and parties, they need to participate in Thailand local activities to understand the culture, they need to be open-minded about learning new cultures to adapt to their new surroundings in Thailand. While staying in Thailand they experience a variety of acculturation stressors as they adapt to the new culture, language, and economy of their adopted country. They love the food and the beautiful islands along the coastline where Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai in the north are very popular destinations among Japanese. Some gentlemen also love to come to play golf as golfing is one attraction in Thailand that Japanese people like besides scuba diving and snorkeling. Japanese ladies are fascinated by spa experiences in Thailand especially in Hat Yai and Krabi. Therefore, interacting with others can help build the Japanese retirees resilience in coping with new environment through interaction and socialization with the local people. The Japanese retirees also agree that socialization with the locals ensures friendliness and can, promote healthy lives, and encourages an environment of respect where different people respect different cultures and can mix well. They are also willing to take part

in the local activity, mix with local friends, attend social groups, clubs and events, and admit that they gradually feel more comfortable with the new culture, social lifestyle and the new surroundings and begin to feel less alien. The Japanese retirees also try hard to avoid culture shock by exposing themselves to an alien environment and culture and adapting to the new environment as this can avoid them from feeling anxious, alienation, lonely and nervous.

The fifth objective of this research is to study the level of well-being among Japanese retirees who reside in Thailand. The Japanese retirees agree on the good impact of a new environment in Thailand as this environment has improved their psychological well-being. With good well-being in Thailand, the Japanese retirees have more positive emotions and intend to engage in spiritual practices with the local people. The Japanese retirees also agree that their physical wellness has improved due to the good external social conditions being given by local people. They also feel welcomed by the local people and this make them feel happier, healthier and accepted. The Japanese retirees also experience a good quality of life with better climate, weather and surroundings and can mix well with the locals, and this motivates them to become active and undergo positive aging. While staying here they feel happy to mix around with old and new friends, have a good arrangement of daily activities, be cared for, and have a tight schedule of sleeping time, and taking medicine. They are served nutritious meals, and enjoy activities being prepared for them like meditation, taichi, yoga and sightseeing. All these conditions have improved the Japanese well-being which is very good.

The sixth objective of this research is to study the level of life satisfaction among Japanese retirees during their stay in Thailand. From the result of the data analysis, Japanese retirees have high life satisfaction. This is due to the good and desirable experience with the Thai local community who are known as generous and relaxed. From engaging in leisurely pursuits to exploring the rich culture and stunning landscapes, retirees in Thailand find numerous ways to stay active, healthy, and socially connected. The activities arranged by the sports club have made them engage in various activities including sports like tennis, badminton, golf and swimming. The clubs often cater to people of all ages including old age making them perfect for retirees seeking a healthy lifestyle. Many sports clubs, gyms, and community centers offer classes with professional instructors, and there are also private coaches available for hire. Japanese retirees can easily find memberships or affordable daily rates to fit their needs and preferences. Furthermore, by involving in the club activities under the long stay program, retirees have made themselves busy and active in many programs such as beautiful outdoor sports like cycling, hiking, and jogging. The country's picturesque parks, beaches, and mountain trails offer countless opportunities for retirees to stay active while appreciating the stunning scenery.

The seventh objective is to study the level of cultural assimilation of Japanese retirees. The researcher found that the level of cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees in this research is generally high. This is due to the realization that assimilation is important to make it easier for them to live abroad. Assimilating into the local society helps the Japanese retirees to appreciate different culture, live better, feel safer and more accepted by the local people. Friendship with natives, conducive and efficient facilities provided by the Thailand authority have enabled them to perform cultural assimilation smoothly. The Japanese retirees are also comfortable with making new friends and attending cultural events in Thailand and they tend to assimilate well with the local culture and make an effort to learn the local language and become part of the local culture.

The eighth objective is to study the factors that hinder cultural assimilation among Japanese retirees. Two factors that hinder the retirees' cultural assimilation in Thailand are the language barrier and culture differences. Under the language barrier, many retirees feel that Thailand's native language is very hard to learn and they struggle with low confidence when trying to talk in public. They experience difficulty in their efforts to integrate and communicate in Thailand's local language therefore most of them agree that the inability to communicate in the Thai language led to the problems of assimilating into Thai culture. The inability to talk and understand the local language prohibits them from mixing with Thailand people efficiently, making them feel isolated and alienated since they do not understand the local language. Furthermore, normalizing themselves in a completely different culture from the one they grew up in and not having fluency in the language will be fairly difficult. As a result, they usually do not develop good relationships with local citizens and prefer to stay within the confines of their own community.

As mentioned above, cultural difference is also one aspect that hinders cultural assimilation. Among the differences is local people eat using their fingers but retirees often use chopsticks, spoons and forks while eating. Masculinities also differ between the Japanese and Thais. Masculinities are behaviours, languages and practices, existing in specific cultural and organisational locations, which are commonly associated with men. Under masculinity, Thai working culture places great value on respect, harmony, and enjoyment in the workplace, with an emphasis on hierarchy and personal relationships. Thai employees value politeness and courtesy and they are extremely sensitive to avoiding embarrassment or loss of face, to themselves or others. This means that they may be hesitant to offer criticism or feedback, but when they do express themselves, especially to superiors, they will soften their opinions. However, Thai people work hard and place a big priority on their personal lives. It is common practice to take time off from work to attend family events and celebrate traditional religious holidays. Thai culture also values relationships, so building a strong relationship with Thai

coworkers is important to maintain a positive working environment. Besides that, the Thai working culture is more cooperative and mutually respectful: employees are expected to work together to achieve company goals.

Unlike Thais, being on time is a crucial aspect of Japanese work culture. Tardiness is seen as a sign of disrespect. Employees are expected to arrive on time and studiously focus on their work. Japanese employees are known to work long hours, sometimes up to 12 hours a day. This is considered an indicator of dedication and commitment to the company. Employees are often expected to work beyond scheduled business hours, even if there is no overtime compensation. Japanese working culture emphasises group harmony. Employees are expected to prioritise the needs of the group over individuals. Harmony and unity are of paramount importance, and employees are expected to work together towards a common goal. Japan's hierarchical culture is deeply ingrained in the workplace. Age, seniority, and rank play an important role in how employees interact with each other. Employees must always keep their superiors informed: Every decision, no matter how small, should go through the chain of command and get the stamp of approval from the boss. Employees should immediately report any problems to their bosses before trying to take care of them on their own.

Unlike Thai culture, employees of Japanese companies are expected to prioritise work over their personal lives. To avoid confrontation, Japanese communication is often formal, polite, and indirect. Openly expressing personal opinions or criticising others is considered disrespectful. Loyalty and respect for the organisation and its members are highly valued in the Japanese company. Employees are expected to show respect to their superiors. The Japanese workplace is more formal where most staff wear a uniform or wear gray, navy, or black suits. Japanese men used to be aggressive and competitive especially while working, but local people are very passive and less aggressive and the difference can cause Japanese and Thai not to understand each other. Punctuality is reflected throughout Japanese society. Most Japanese people continue to show this in their everyday lives: personally, and professionally. Japanese people are very punctual as it is the cardinal rule of Japanese people but Thais are less concerned about punctuality. Another culture practice in Thailand that does not suit Japanese retirees is body language. Thai people like to smile no matter where they are even in a serious business dealing. Japanese retirees used to have serious talk with serious facial expressions. These few cultural differences between Thai and Japanese may hinder cultural assimilation

The analysis of this study found a positive relationship and strong relationship between two variables and this finding has answered objective nine. Using the Pearson correlation analysis,

the researcher is able to prove that there is a positive, strong association between language acquisition and retirees' social integration. The analysis also has answered the research objective 10 where the researcher is able to prove that there is a positive, strong association between social integration and cultural assimilation. Research objective eleven also is answered using Pearson correlation analysis where the researcher is able to prove that there is a positive and strong association between well-being and retirees' cultural assimilation. For research objective twelve, the Pearson correlation analysis has proved that there exists a positive and strong association between retirees' attitudes and retirees' cultural assimilation. For research objective thirteen, using multiple regression analysis, the regression analysis has proved that social integration is the most important factors that cause cultural assimilation among the retirees who reside in Thailand under the International Retirement Migration (IRM) program.

For research objective fourteen, using multiple regression analysis, the regression analysis has proved that a high level of support does not mediate the association between attitudes and social integration. Also, for research objective fifteen using multiple regression analysis has proven that language acquisition negatively moderates the relationship between wellbeing and culture assimilation.

5.2 SUGGESTED ACTION

Access to the labour market and financial inclusion. It is suggested that the Thailand government needs to:

(I) Collect data on incoming Japanese retirees' migrant flows via mapping of skills, qualifications and language proficiency to ensure better job matching. Older persons like Japanese retirees arrive with skills and abilities, and so supplement the stock of human capital of the host country. More specifically, evidence from the United States suggests that skilled immigrants contribute to boosting research and innovation, as well as technological progress (Hunt, 2010). Therefore, they should be afforded the possibility to become actively engaged in the development process and in society so that their skills, experiences, wisdom and knowledge can be put to use for the benefit of all. Of course, although almost all of them have retired, many of them are skilled professionals who can become substitute tutors for the Japanese language in universities, researchers, freelance organizers, consultants, play music for weddings, take paid surveys, become online virtual assistants like setting up meetings, providing customer support and performing general administrative tasks. Typically, these positions are part-time and pay an hourly rate, allowing them to decide how much time they want to work. They can also perform customer support roles from home with the help of an internet-connected device and a microphone. The role usually involves

responding to customer queries and feedback via phone, email and social media. Reemploying older individuals who have retired is one obvious method of reducing labor shortages and at the same time will help the retirees to gain extra income to continue comfortable living.

(2) Set up Japanese migrant resource centres or 'one-stop shops' to provide Japanese migrants especially retirees with services on all matters related to their safe migration experience such as registration and documentation, information about employment opportunities, legal counseling, training and referral to additional external services.

(3) Provide tailored services based on education level, literacy and mother tongue including targeted language and vocational skills training.

(4) Develop online training resources for areas such as language training and interpretation services.

(5) Develop policies that access health services to reduce health and social costs, improve social cohesion and protect public health and human rights.

(6) Ensure the training of health staff to provide culturally sensitive support to Japanese retirees as well as interpretation services as appropriate.

(7) Address obstacles relating to xenophobia and discrimination to migrants' access to health services, and mainstream resilience through adequate information, education, and empowerment for self-help.

(8) Provide services for psychosocial support of Japanese retirees' migrants that address the physical and mental challenges that they may experience throughout the migration cycle. Services should include building and training of local health professionals and educators, and must be guided by a flexible and multidisciplinary approach to mental health.

(9) Explore pathways to guarantee legal identity to migrants in countries of destination as appropriate. In cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, national and local governments and other stakeholders, introduce universal civil registration and identification systems to grant migrants access to services and monetary transactions, with attention to protecting personal information.

(10) Actively contribute to the engagement of migrants with national and local authorities to ensure the presence of migrants in decision-making processes at the national, regional and local levels.

(11) Establish consultation mechanisms such as focus groups and town hall meetings to build rapport with migrant communities and offer pathways to streamline migrants' political participation and meetings.

(12) Provide civic education through greater engagement with local authorities, linguistic and cross-cultural mediators and migrant organizations.

(13) Facilitate family reunification by establishing realistic and feasible requirements of income, language and fees and eliminate unnecessary obstacles such as excessive delays in visa processing.

(14) Implement innovative tools such as storytelling platforms, artistic and cultural activities and social media campaigns to disseminate messages about the positive contributions of Japanese migrants.

(15) Ensure budget allocation to facilitate migrants' participation in artistic and cultural activities.

(16) Devise, reform, and implement, as necessary, legislation on countering discrimination against migrants, in line with international standards. This may require modifying legal, policy, and institutional frameworks to remove legal, administrative, and practical barriers that inhibit migrants from accessing information, resources, and services.

(17)) Ensure that Japanese retiree migrants are provided with comprehensive information relating to their rights and access to recourse as perceived or actual victims of discrimination, and implement mechanisms to enable reporting abuse and access to justice.

5.3 FURTHER STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher would like to suggest a few improvements to this study that address gaps in the current research, explore new perspectives, or enhance the applicability of the previous findings which are:

1. Comparative Studies of IRM Across Different Destinations

Elaboration:

- Conduct cross-cultural comparative studies on IRM programs for Japanese retirees in various countries (e.g., Thailand, Malaysia, Australia).
- Examine how push-pull factors vary across regions and how local cultures influence the assimilation process.

- Investigate which destination-specific policies (e.g., visa frameworks, healthcare services) are most effective in facilitating successful retirement migration.

Significance:

- Offers a broader understanding of IRM dynamics and highlights best practices that could inform policymakers in Japan and host countries.
- Helps retirees make informed decisions about their migration destinations.

2. Longitudinal Studies on Behavioral Adaptation

Elaboration:

- Conduct longitudinal research to observe how Japanese retirees' cultural assimilation evolves over time.
- Explore whether initial motivations (e.g., affordability, climate) remain relevant or change after several years abroad.
- Analyze the long-term psychological, social, and economic impacts of cultural assimilation.

Significance:

- Provides insights into how host countries can better support retirees in maintaining their well-being.
- Identifies challenges that arise over time, enabling targeted interventions for smoother cultural integration.

3. Examination of Digital and Technological Aids in IRM

Elaboration:

- Investigate the role of technology in facilitating cultural assimilation (e.g., language-learning apps, social networking platforms for expatriates).
- Study how digital tools can address common barriers, such as communication difficulties and maintaining connections with Japan.

Significance:

- Reveals how technology enhances the retirement migration experience, potentially influencing future IRM programs.
- Supports innovation in creating digital resources tailored to retirees' needs.

4. Focus on Community Dynamics and Social Networks

Elaboration:

- Examine the role of local and expatriate communities in aiding cultural assimilation.
- Study the formation and impact of social networks (e.g., Japanese expatriate groups) in host countries.
- Assess whether stronger community ties improve retirees' quality of life and satisfaction.

Significance:

- Encourages host countries to foster inclusive communities that promote integration.
- Identifies effective community-building practices for improving retirees' experiences abroad.

5. Policies for Sustainable IRM Programs

Elaboration:

- Research the sustainability of IRM programs from economic, environmental, and cultural perspectives.
- Explore how host countries can balance the benefits of hosting retirees with challenges such as resource allocation and cultural preservation.
- Investigate potential policies to attract younger retirees and encourage their long-term contributions to the local economy.

Significance:

- Provides actionable recommendations for host governments to create resilient and mutually beneficial IRM frameworks.
- Ensures the longevity of IRM programs while minimizing potential conflicts with local populations.

6. Psychological and Health-Related Impacts of IRM

Elaboration:

- Study the psychological effects of retiring abroad, such as homesickness, loneliness, or anxiety related to cultural differences.
- Analyze the accessibility and quality of healthcare services in host countries, with a focus on retirees' specific needs.

Significance:

- Enhances understanding of the health-related challenges faced by retirees, prompting better healthcare solutions.
- Helps retirees prepare for the psychological adjustments required when transitioning to a new culture.

7. Generational and Gender Differences in IRM**Elaboration:**

- Investigate whether motivational factors and assimilation experiences differ by gender or generation (e.g., younger vs. older retirees).
- Study how societal roles and expectations influence these differences.

Significance:

- Provides a nuanced understanding of diverse retiree profiles, enabling more personalized IRM strategies.
- Informs host countries about demographic-specific needs and preferences.

8. Impact of Climate Change and Geopolitical Shifts on IRM**Elaboration:**

- Examine how environmental factors (e.g., climate change, natural disasters) influence Japanese retirees' choice of destination.
- Study how geopolitical changes (e.g., visa regulations, regional stability) shape migration trends and retirees' experiences.

Significance:

- Prepares IRM programs for future challenges and uncertainties.
- Helps retirees and host countries adapt to evolving global conditions.

The phenomenon of International Retirement Migration (IRM) represents a significant socio-economic trend in the context of an aging global population, particularly for Japanese retirees seeking fulfilling post-retirement lifestyles abroad. While this study sheds light on the motivational push-pull factors and behavioral phenomena influencing cultural assimilation, further research is essential to build on the foundational insights presented. By exploring comparative studies across diverse destinations, researchers can uncover the unique dynamics of IRM in various cultural and economic contexts. Such comparisons will provide valuable lessons for both retirees and host countries, enabling them to identify best practices

and adapt policies accordingly. Additionally, longitudinal studies examining retirees' adaptation over time can offer deeper insights into how motivations, behaviors, and assimilation challenges evolve, contributing to more targeted and long-term support mechanisms for migrants.

The role of digital tools and technology in IRM also warrants further exploration. With the growing reliance on digital resources, understanding how technology aids retirees in overcoming cultural barriers, fostering social connections, and accessing services can help design innovative, technology-driven solutions that enhance the overall experience of IRM. This is particularly relevant in an increasingly interconnected world, where digital platforms are bridging cultural and geographical divides. Another critical area for future research is the examination of community dynamics and social networks. Retirees' well-being is often closely tied to their ability to form meaningful connections within local and expatriate communities. Understanding the factors that contribute to successful community integration can guide host countries in fostering inclusive environments that promote harmony and mutual understanding.

Further, studies on sustainable IRM policies will address broader concerns, such as balancing economic benefits with resource management and cultural preservation. Investigating ways to attract younger retirees and encouraging their active participation in host economies can lead to more resilient and mutually beneficial IRM programs. These findings will be crucial for host countries aiming to ensure the longevity and success of their retirement migration initiatives. Psychological and health-related impacts of IRM are equally important. While migration offers retirees opportunities for new experiences and personal growth, it may also pose challenges, such as homesickness, loneliness, and access to healthcare. Addressing these issues through research can inform the development of support systems tailored to retirees' unique needs, improving their quality of life and integration experiences.

Finally, analyzing generational and gender differences, along with the influence of global factors like climate change and geopolitical shifts, will provide a comprehensive understanding of the future trajectory of IRM. These considerations are essential to prepare both retirees and host nations for evolving conditions that may reshape migration trends and assimilation processes.

5.4 CONCLUSION:

The study of International Retirement Migration (IRM) Program for Japanese Retirees: Motivational Push-Pull Factors and Behavioral Phenomena Towards Cultural Assimilation provides valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of retirement migration. With Japan's

aging population and the global mobility of retirees on the rise, understanding the motivations, challenges, and assimilation processes of Japanese retirees abroad is critical for shaping effective IRM programs that benefit both retirees and host countries.

The analysis of push-pull factors has revealed the diverse motivations driving Japanese retirees to seek opportunities overseas. Push factors, such as high living costs, limited post-retirement opportunities, and societal pressures in Japan, compel individuals to consider migration. In contrast, pull factors like affordable living, favorable climates, and welcoming environments in host countries attract retirees to destinations such as Thailand, Malaysia, and other culturally vibrant locations. These findings highlight the importance of tailored policies and support structures in host countries to address retirees' needs while leveraging their economic and social contributions.

The exploration of behavioral phenomena towards cultural assimilation underscores the complexities retirees face as they navigate new cultural landscapes. Factors such as language barriers, social integration, and psychological adaptation play pivotal roles in their ability to establish a fulfilling life abroad. Successful assimilation depends on both individual efforts, such as engaging with local customs and building social networks, and structural support, including accessible healthcare, language programs, and community-building initiatives provided by host countries.

This research emphasizes that IRM is not merely an economic phenomenon but a deeply personal journey shaped by emotional, cultural, and practical considerations. Host countries stand to benefit significantly from the presence of Japanese retirees, who bring economic resources, cultural diversity, and a demand for services that stimulate local economies. However, ensuring mutual benefits requires sustainable, inclusive, and forward-thinking policies that address retirees' evolving needs over time. Looking forward, several areas warrant further investigation to enhance the understanding and implementation of IRM programs. Comparative studies across destinations, longitudinal analyses of retirees' adaptation, the role of digital technologies, and the impact of community dynamics are just some of the avenues that can deepen insights into this growing trend. Additionally, the examination of psychological well-being, gender and generational differences, and the implications of global challenges such as climate change will provide a holistic perspective on the future of IRM.

In conclusion, IRM represents a significant opportunity for Japanese retirees to achieve a meaningful and enriched post-retirement life while contributing positively to host nations. This

study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the interplay between motivations, behaviors, and assimilation processes. The findings call for collaborative efforts between governments, policymakers, and communities to create supportive environments that foster cultural exchange, economic growth, and personal fulfillment. As IRM continues to expand globally, such initiatives will not only benefit retirees but also strengthen the bonds between nations, paving the way for a more interconnected and inclusive world.

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Appendix 1 Questionner Form

アンケート QUESTIONNAIRES

A. 人口統計(N= 200) Demography (N= 200)

1. 性別 : 男性 ☐ 女性 ☐
Gender Male Female
2. 年 : 55 – 60 ☐ 61 - 64 ☐ 65 - 69 ☐ 70 歳以上 ☐
Age 55 – 60 61 - 64 65 - 69 70 and above
3. 配偶者の有無 : 独身 ☐ 既婚 ☐ 未亡人 ☐ 離婚 ☐
Marital status Single Married Widowed Divorce
4. 最終学歴 : ディプロマ ☐ 学士号 ☐ 修士号 ☐ 博士号 ☐
Education : Diploma Bachelor degree Master degree Doctoral degree
5. 月々の世帯収入（1 ドル 120 円換算で）
Monthly household income (1 US Dollar as 120 Yen)
USD 3,500 – USD 4,499 ☐ USD 4,500 - USD 5,499 ☐ USD 5,500 - USD 6,499 ☐ USD 6,500 以上 ☐
USD 3,500 - USD 4,499 USD 4,500 - USD 5,499 USD 5,500 - USD 6,499 Above USD 6,500

B. プッシュ要因 PUSH FACTORS

以下のリッカート尺度スコアにチェックしてください
Please Check on the Following Likert Scale Points

1. 強く同意しない
Strongly disagree
2. 同意しない
Disagree
3. どちらでもない
Neither disagree nor agree
4. 同意
Agree
5. 強く同意
Strongly agree

経済的要因 Economy factor						
番号 No	項目 Items	リッカート尺度 5 点 Likert Scale 5 Points				
		1	2	3	4	5

1	インフラ（交通網、通信網、公共施設、インターネット、水道、ガス、電力供給など日本国内）の不備。 Inadequate infrastructure (transportation system, communication networks, public facilities, internet, water, gas, electricity supplies, etc. in Japan.)					
2	日本での物価が高く、経済的な不満がある High cost of living in Japan lead to unsatisfactory financial conditions.					
3	日本における政治的弾圧 Political repression in the Japan					
4	日本の総合的な税制（給与や年金から徴収される所得税が高い。） Comprehensive tax code in Japan (high Income Tax to take from your pay or pension.)					
5	日本のペースの速いライフスタイル High pace of lifestyle in Japan					
6	日本の劣悪な生活環境（狭い部屋、閉塞感、過密、貧困など）。 Poor living conditions in Japan (tiny rooms, confining spaces, overcrowding, poverty, etc.).					
7	日本における雇用の制限。 Job restriction in Japan.					
<p style="text-align: center;">健康的要因 Health factor</p>						
1	日本の高額な医療費 High cost for medical service in Japan.					
2	日本における不健康な生活習慣。 Unhealthy lifestyle in Japan.					
3	日本の健康施設の貧弱さ（病院や診療所の不足、医療の貧弱さ、運動するスペースの不足など）による生活の質の低さ。 Low quality of life due to poor health facilities (lack of hospitals and clinics, poor medical care, lack of spaces to exercise etc) in Japan.					

4	<p>日本における新興感染症（デング熱、チクングニア、ジカ熱、エボラ出血熱・黄熱、鳥インフルエンザ、呼吸器感染症、他）</p> <p>Emerging infectious diseases in Japan (dengue, chikungunya, zika, ebola hemorrhagic and yellow fever, Avian influenza, respiratory infectious diseases, etc.)</p>					
<p style="text-align: center;">社会的要因</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Social Factor</p>						
1	<p>日本における安全でない環境（社会的支援の欠如、近隣の暴力、大気汚染、水質汚染など）。</p> <p>Unsafe environment (lack of social support, neighborhood violence, air pollution, water contamination, etc) in Japan</p>					
2	<p>日本における高齢者の社会的ネットワークの貧弱さ。</p> <p>Poor social network for the elderly in Japan.</p>					
3	<p>社会保障の欠如（労働関連収入、医療、家族支援、社会年金など）。</p> <p>Lack of social security (work-related income, health care, family support, social pensions, etc.)</p>					
4	<p>日本における異常気象と季節変動</p> <p>Extreme weather and seasonal changes in Japan.</p>					
5	<p>テーマパーク、劇場、クラブ、寺院、レストラン、ショッピングモール、屋台料理、伝統芸能など、日本には娯楽やアメニティが欠けていること。</p> <p>Lack of entertainment and amenities eg. theme park, theatres, clubs, temples, restaurants, shopping malls, street foods, traditional performances, etc in Japan.</p>					
6	<p>地震、ハリケーン、津波、度重なる洪水など、災害リスクが高まる中での高齢化。</p> <p>Ageing with a growing disaster risks like earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis and repeated floods.</p>					
7	<p>渋滞や過密を引き起こし、人々の幸福にも悪影響を及ぼした、計画性のない都市のスプロール化。</p> <p>Poorly planned urban sprawl led to congestion, overcrowding as well as having negative effects on people's well-being.</p>					

C. プル要因
Pull Factors

以下のリッカート尺度スコアにチェックしてください
Please Check on the Following Likert Scale Points

1. 強く同意しない
Strongly disagree
2. 同意しない
Disagree
3. どちらでもない
Neither disagree nor agree
4. 同意
Agree
5. 強く同意
Strongly agree

経済的要因						
Economy factor						
番号 No	項目 Items	リッカート尺度 5 点 Likert Scale 5 Points				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	タイの通貨レートの安定性。 Stability of currency rate in Thailand.					
2	タイでの効率的な税制とビザ制度。 Efficient tax and visa system at Thailand.					
3	タイの優れたインフラと施設。 Excellent infrastructure and facilities in Thailand.					
4	タイの生活コストの低さ（住宅家賃、食費などの値ごろ感）。 Low cost of living (affordability of housing rent, food etc.) in Thailand					
5	タイでの労働・サービス（家事手伝いスタッフ：メイド、庭師など）が安い。 Cheaper labour and service (domestic helping staff: maid, gardener, etc.) in Thailand.					
6	タイでの投資機会（不動産、農業、小売業など）について					

	Investment opportunity (real estate, farming, retail business, etc.) in Thailand.					
7	タイでの生活水準の向上 例：広い家、より良い生活、より良いレジャー活動、より良い幸福感など。 Improving living standard in Thailand eg. spacious house, better living, better leisure activities, better well-being etc.					
8	よりやりがいのある生活環境。 More rewarding living environment.					
<p style="text-align: center;">健康要因</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Health Factor</p>						
1	タイで質の高い医療サービスやヘルスケアを手頃な価格で提供 Quality medical service and health care at affordable price in Thailand.					
2	タイで若返りのウェルネスリトリートを増やす。 More rejuvenating wellness retreats in Thailand.					
3	周辺環境・生活環境の良さ（例：タイでの生活で空気がきれい、汚染が少ない、水がきれい）。 Good surrounding and living environment ex. clean air, less pollution and clear water while living in Thailand).					
4	タイは亜熱帯気候で、温暖な気候のため、健康で過ごしやすい。 Subtropical climate with warm weather and mild temperature for better health and well-being in Thailand.					
5	高齢者向けケアテーカーサービスの有無 Availability of care taker service for the elderly.					
6	タイでの良いセルフケア（ヨガ、サイクリング、休暇、瞑想、スパ、ウェルネスセラピー）。 Good self-care (yoga, bike-rides, vacation, meditate, spa, wellness therapies) in Thailand.					
<p style="text-align: center;">社会的要因</p>						

Social Factor					
1	シェルタード・ライフ： タイで穏やかさ、回復力、安全、安心を感じる Sheltered life: Feeling calm, resilient, safe, and secure in Thailand.				
2	タイでの通信網が充実している Good communication network in Thailand.				
3	タイ人の英語力が高く、コミュニケーションに役立つ。 High English language proficiency among Thais to help in communication.				
4	タイでの高度な、手頃な、手間のかからない交通手段。 Advanced, affordable and hassle-free transportation in Thailand.				
5	レジャーに使える娯楽（例：公園、劇場、クラブ、寺院、レストラン、ショッピングモール、屋台料理、伝統芸能など） Available entertainment for leisure (eg. parks, theatres, clubs, temples, restaurants, shopping malls, street foods, traditional performances etc.				
6	幸福感を高め、生活の質を向上させる「生きがい活動」による満足感。 Satisfaction from ikigai (living meaningfully, pleasure and enjoyable) activities that promotes well-being and improves quality of life.				
7	タイ滞在中に交流できる日本人コミュニティやサークルの存在 Existence of Japanese communities and clubs to socialize with while in Thailand.				
8	タイで仲良く暮らす、友好的で寛容なコミュニティ。 Friendly and tolerant communities who live harmoniously in Thailand.				

D. その他の要因
Other factors

以下のリッカート尺度スコアにチェックしてください
Please Check on the Following Likert Scale Points

1. 強く同意しない
Strongly disagree
2. 同意しない
Disagree
3. どちらでもない
Neither disagree nor agree
4. 同意
Agree
5. 強く同意
Strongly agree

<p style="text-align: center;">地元の方々からの支持</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Support from local people</p>						
番号 No	項目 Items	リッカート尺度 5 点 Likert Scale 5 Points				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	<p>タイの住民の方々の助け、サポート、共感。</p> <p>Helpful, supportive, and empathetic residents in Thailand.</p>					
2	<p>タイ人から外国人への励ましの姿勢</p> <p>Encouraging attitude from Thailand people to foreigners.</p>					
3	<p>政府による日本人の認知：（例：日タイ交流のためのビエンナーレ盆踊り大会のような特別イベントの開催。</p> <p>Acknowledgment of Japanese people by the government: (Ex. special event held like Biennial Bon Odori Festival for Thai-Japanese relations.</p>					
4	<p>タイで手頃な価格の熟練介護福祉士（メイド）の供給が充実していること</p> <p>Good supply of skilled care workers (maid) with affordable price in Thailand.</p>					
<p style="text-align: center;">外部社会条件</p> <p style="text-align: center;">External social conditions</p>						
1	<p>世界に誇るタイの教育システム</p> <p>World class education system in Thailand.</p>					

2	タイにおけるすべての宗教の信教と礼拝所の完全な自由。 Full freedom of religion and place of worship for all religions in Thailand.					
3	日本への直行便があるため、ご家族やご友人のタイ訪問が容易。 Direct flight to Japan makes it easy for families and friends to visit Thailand.					
4	退職者が友人と交流し、日本文化を自由に実践できるため、退職者と地域の人々の間に社会的孤立感がなく、良好な社会的つながりがある。 No social isolation with good social connection among retirees and local people as retirees can mix well with friends and practise Japanese cultural freely.					
<p style="text-align: center;">態度/特徴 Attitudes / Traits</p>						
1	退職者は、タイの地域社会とうまく交わり、経験を共有し、社会的側面を向上させる。 I mix well and shares experience with Thai local community to improve social aspects.					
2	退職者がタイの現地活動に参加し文化理解を深める I participate with Thailand local activities to understand the culture.					
3	退職者は、地域の人々による社会的・精神的サポートが高いため、歓迎されていると感じる。 I feel welcome due to high level of social and emotional support from local people.					
4	退職者は、祭りやパーティーなどを通じて、地域の人々と交流することを望んでいる。 I am willing to socialize with local people through festivals and parties.					
5	退職者は、地域の人々との交流や社会化により、レジリエンスを高め、新しい環境に対応できるようになる。 I build resilience and can cope with new environment due to interaction and socialization with the local people.					

6	<p>定年退職後、孤独や不安から逃れるために、周囲の人とうまく付き合うことの大切さを実感している。</p> <p>I have a self-realization about the importance to mix with people around well to avoid from loneliness and anxiety.</p>					
7	<p>退職者は新しい文化を学ぶことに寛容であり、タイでの新しい環境に適応することが容易であると考ええる。</p> <p>I am open-minded about learning new cultures and find it simpler to adapt to their new surroundings in Thailand</p>					
<p style="text-align: center;">社会的統合</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Social Integration Among Retirees and Local People (Socialization)</p>						
1	<p>地域の人々との良好な交流は、退職者が社会資本を形成し、良好な精神衛生を促進するのに役立つ</p> <p>I have good relationship with local people and this helps me to create a good social capital.</p>					
2	<p>現地の人と仲良くなることで、健康的な生活を送ることができる。</p> <p>Good socialization with friends and the locals make me become happy and reduce my loneliness.</p>					
3	<p>地域の人々との良好な交流は、異なる人々が異なる文化を尊重し、うまく混ざり合うことができる環境を促す。</p> <p>I respect my friends and my local neighbours and mix well with them.</p>					
4	<p>退職者は、新しい文化、社会生活、新しい環境に徐々に慣れていき、疎外感を感じなくなり始める</p> <p>I feel more comfortable with the new culture, social lifestyle and the new surroundings and begin to feel less alien.</p>					
5	<p>退職者は、不安や疎外感、緊張を感じないように、異質な環境や文化に身を置くことで「カルチャーショック」を回避している。</p> <p>I adapt myself to alien environment and culture to avoid feeling anxiety, alienation and nervousness.</p>					

6	<p>退職者は、地元の友人を作り、可能な限り社交グループ、クラブ、イベントに参加することで、地域の活動に参加する。</p> <p>I take part in the local activity by making local friends, attending social groups, clubs and events where possible.</p>					
<p style="text-align: center;">主観的な幸福</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Subjective Well-Being Among The Respondents</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Indication of Subjective Well-Being)</p>						
1	<p>退職者は地域の人々に受け入れられていると感じ、より幸せで健康的であると感じる。</p> <p>I feel accepted by local people which contributes to my overall happiness and health.</p>					
2	<p>退職者は、地域の人々との関係を保ちながら、個人と社会で活動し、社会に貢献する。</p> <p>I maintain relationships with local people as well as contribute to society, with individual and society activities.</p>					
3	<p>退職者は、気候、天候、環境が良くなり、地元の人々とうまく交わることで、質の高い生活を体験することができる。</p> <p>I experience a good quality of life with better climate, weather and surroundings and mixing well with the locals.</p>					
4	<p>健康的な睡眠時間の確保、栄養価の高い食事、瞑想やヨガなどのストレス管理など、海外生活で健康増進を図る。</p> <p>I enhances well-being by sticking to a healthy sleep schedule, picking nutritious meals, and taking part in stress management techniques such as meditation or yoga while living abroad.</p>					
5	<p>幸福度が高いため、退職者はよりポジティブな感情を持ち、地域の人々と精神的な修行をするつもりである。</p>					

	With good well-being, I have more positive emotions and intend to engage in spiritual practices with the local people.					
6	地域の人々から与えられる良好な外部社会条件により、退職者の身体的健康が改善される。 My physical wellness improves due to the good external social conditions being given by local people					
7	タイの新しい環境の影響は、退職者の心理的幸福と社会的統合を向上させた。 The impact of new environment in Thailand has improved retirees' psychological well-being and social integration.					
8	ポジティブな幸福感は、退職者が活動的になり、ポジティブ・エイジングを迎える動機となる。 Positive well-being motivates me to become active and undergo positive ageing.					
<p style="text-align: center;">人生の満足度</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Life Satisfaction Among the Respondents</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Indication of Life Satisfaction)</p>						
1	退職者が地域社会と積極的かつ望ましい関係を築き、人生の満足度を高める。 I have positive and desirable experience with Thai local community that satisfied with my life.					
2	タイの新しい環境の影響により、退職者の心理的・精神的健康が改善された The impact of new environment in Thailand has improved retirees psychological and mental health.					
3	セカンドホームプログラムの影響により、退職者の主観的な生活の質が向上した The impact of International Retirement Migration program has improved my physical & subjective quality of life.					

4	退職者が海外滞在中に新しい経験をし、新しい生活に満足することが多い。 I often enjoy having new experiences and feel more satisfied with new life while staying abroad.					
5	新しい人たちとの交流は、退職者の生活満足度を高めることにつながっている。 Mixing with new people around has contributed to higher levels of my life satisfaction.					
6	充実した生活を送りながら、身体活動や日常生活を維持できる I can retain my physical and daily activities with good living of satisfied life.					
7	私の経済的安全は良好で、それは私の人生の満足度にとって不可欠な要素となっている。 My financial security is good and it becomes essential components to my life satisfaction.					
8	私には友人や近所の人、そして新しい友達からの社会的なサポートがあり、そのおかげで私は自分の人生に満足し、幸せを感じている。 I have social support from friends and neighbours as well as new friends and this make me satisfied and feeling happy with my life.					
9.	ここの私の住居は、ここにいると落ち着く満足感を与えてくれる良い場所である。 My place of residence here is good that make me feel calm and satisfied being here.					
10	私の健康は良好であり、それは私の人生において満足することが重要なことになる。 My health is good which becomes important thing to satisfy in my life.					

<p style="text-align: center;">文化的同化</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cultural Assimilation Among the Retirees</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Indication of Cultural Assimilation)</p>					
1	<p>リタイアした人は、現地の文化にうまく適応する傾向がある。</p> <p>I tend to adapt local culture successfully.</p>				
2	<p>退職者は、タイで新しい友人を作ったり、文化的なイベントに参加することに抵抗がない。</p> <p>I am comfortable with making new friends and attending cultural events in Thailand.</p>				
3	<p>退職者は、地域社会の活動に参加し、この地での生活様式を守っている。</p> <p>I participate in Thai local community activities, and following their way of living here.</p>				
4	<p>退職者は、ライフスタイルや異文化の融合を楽しみ、海外滞在中にそれを実践している。</p> <p>I enjoy a blend of lifestyles and different cultures and practiced them while staying abroad.</p>				
5	<p>新しい社会に溶け込むことで、退職者がその文化的傾向を理解し、感謝することができるようになる</p> <p>Assimilating into a new society helps me to understand and appreciate those cultural trends.</p>				
6	<p>タイでの同化体験が、退職者の生活の質の向上と精神的健康の増進につながる</p> <p>Assimilation experiences in Thailand lead to a higher quality of my living and better mental health.</p>				
7	<p>地域社会に溶け込むことで、退職者が文化を理解し、異質なものに対する恐れやためらいを克服することができる。</p> <p>Assimilating into the local society helps me to appreciate culture and get over my fear or hesitation of something different.</p>				
8	<p>現地の文化にうまく溶け込むために、現地の言葉を覚え、現地の文化に溶け込む努力をした。</p>				

	To assimilate well with the local culture, I made an effort to learn the local language and become part of the local culture.					
9	タイ当局が提供する快適で効率的な施設は、退職者がスムーズに文化的な同化を行うことを可能にしている Conducive and efficient facilities provided by the Thailand authority has enabled me to perform cultural assimilation smoothly					
<p style="text-align: center;">言葉の壁 Factors Hinder Cultural Assimilation Language Barrier</p>						
1	退職者がタイ現地語への適応やコミュニケーションに困難を感じている。 I experience difficulty in my efforts to integrate and communicate in Thailand local language.					
2	言葉の壁で、退職者がタイの人々と効率よく交流できない。 Language barriers prohibit me from mixing with Thailand people efficiently.					
3	退職者は、タイの母国語を習得するのが非常に難しく、人前で話すことに自信が持てないことに悩んでいる。 I feel that Thailand native language is very hard to learn and struggled with low confidence when trying to talk in public.					
4	タイ語が理解できないため、退職者が現地の人々と交流する機会が限られる。 Inability to understand Thailand's local language limit my opportunities to interact with the local people					
5	現地の人とコミュニケーションがとれないため、退職者は孤立感や疎外感を感じてしまう Being unable to communicate with the locals make me feel isolated and alienated.					
<p style="text-align: center;">文化衝突</p>						

Factor that Hinder Cultural Assimilation (Cultural Clash)						
1	<p>タイには日本人の退職者に合わない文化習慣がいくつかある</p> <p>There are few culture practices in Thailand that does not suit Japanese retirees</p>					
2	<p>日本人の基本的なルールとして、退職した日本人は時間を守るが、地元の人々は時間守ることにあまり関心がない</p> <p>Japanese retirees are very punctual as it is the cardinal rule of Japanese people but local people are less concern about punctuality.</p>					
3	<p>男らしさ：日本人の定年退職者は、特に仕事中は攻撃的で競争心が強かったが、現地の人々は非常に消極的で攻撃的でない。そのため、日本人とタイ人がお互いに理解しあえないことがある。</p> <p>Masculinity: Japanese retirees used to be aggressive and competitive especially while working, but local people are very passive and less aggressive. This can cause Japanese and Thai not understanding each other.</p>					
4	<p>ボディランゲージ：ボディランゲージ：現地の人々は、真剣なビジネスの場であっても、どこにいても笑顔でいることを好む。日本の定年退職者は、真面目な表情で真面目な話をすることが多い。</p> <p>Body languages: Local people like to smile no matter where they are even in a serious business dealing. Japanese retirees used to have serious talk with serious facial expression</p>					
5	<p>文化の衝突により、退職者と地元住民の文化的同化が妨げられる。</p> <p>Cultural clash hinders cultural assimilation among the retirees with local people</p>					

Appendix 2 Research Letters



August 3, 2022

To whom it may concern,

Yamaguchi University, Graduate School of East Asian Studies

Guidance teacher

Professor Munehiko Asamizu

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Munehiko Asamizu".

Request of Permission for Data Collection and Research Work

Dear Sir / Madam,

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your continued understanding and cooperation in our research and educational activities. By the way, as part of the research on the student's thesis, I would like to ask for her cooperation in the experimental survey as follows. We apologize for the inconvenience and inconvenience caused by your busy schedule. Thank you for your cooperation.

Record

Siti Hajar binti Rosli,
753-0841, 1677-1 Yoshida Yamaguchi-shi,
Yamaguchi-ken (Yamaguchidaigaku,
Yamaguchi Kokusai Kouryukaikan 1-203)

To whom it may concern,

Request Permission for Data Collection and Research Work

The Graduate School of East Asian Studies,
Yamaguchi University
1677-1, Yoshida, Yamaguchi-shi, 753-8614, Japan
Tel/Fax: +81-83-933-5507 / +81-83-933-5509



Date: 1st December 2022

Dr Kamaruddin b.Ilias,
Planning, Research and Innovation Department,
Ipoh Educational Institute,
31160, Hulu Kinta, Ipoh.

Dear Dr. Kamaruddin,

**APPOINTMENT AS A RESEARCH INSTRUMENT VALIDATION ASSESSMENT
EXPERT**

It is stated that the student as detailed below is a PhD student from the Graduate
School of East Asian Studies, Yamaguchi University.

Name: Siti Hajar binti Rosli

Faculty: Faculty of Economics

Student number: 21-8601-804-2

Thesis title: International Retirement Migration (IRM) Programmes for
Japanese Retirees: Motivational Push-Pull Factors and Behavioral Phenomena
Towards Cultural Assimilation

Your expertise and insights in this matter would be invaluable to ensure the accuracy
and effectiveness of the questionnaire. Attached are related documents for your review
and validation. Your feedback on the clarity of the questions, relevance of the content,
and overall structure would greatly contribute to the improvement of the questionnaire.

Therefore, if you have any questions, kindly contact the researcher at
b304snv@yamaguchi-u.ac.jp.

Thank you in advance for your time and support. I look forward to receiving your
feedback and validation of the questionnaire.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read '朝水 実彦' (Asamizu Munehiko).

Professor Asamizu Munehiko,
Graduate School of East Asian Studies.

The Graduate School of East Asian Studies,
Yamaguchi University
1677-1, Yoshida, Yamaguchi-shi, 763-8614, Japan
Tel/Fax: +81-83-933-5597 / +81-83-933-5509

ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM CHECKING THE QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUMENT

With this, I have reviewed the instrument that has been prepared by the researcher. I found this instrument:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agreed	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

Instructions: Please mark (/) in the relevant column.

No.	Valued items	Level of Consent			
		1	2	3	4
1.	The format of the research instrument is appropriate.				✓
2.	The language used is easy to understand.				✓
3.	The size of the writing is appropriate and easy to read.				✓
4.	The instructions given are clear.			✓	
5.	Free from spelling mistakes.			✓	
6.	The stated objectives are clear.			✓	

Other comments/suggestions about the whole instrument:

*This instrument is suitable to be used in the study
however it requires to be improved in order
to meet its validity.*

Name: DR KHAMRUDDIN BIN ZILAH

Signature: 

Position: LECTURER

Job Stamp: 

Date: 3rd January 2023

To whom it may concern,

APPOINTMENT AS A REPRESENTATIVE FOR DATA COLLECTION

I'm reaching out to formally authorize Mr. Fadell Hayeeharasah (ID no.: 3940900536167) as my designated data collection representative. Mr. Fadell has been granted the authority to collect and compile data on my behalf.

In the capacity of our representative, Mr. Fadell is expected to comply with all data collection protocols and procedures. It is his responsibility to ensure accurate and timely recording and reporting of the data gathered. I have every confidence in Mr. Fadell to fulfill his responsibilities with professionalism and uprightness.

My dissertation supervisor is Professor Munehiko Asamizu at Yamaguchi University. My dissertation subject is related to Japanese retirees who select other nation as a second home country for retirement purpose.

Should you require further details or have any inquiries, please feel free to reach out. I appreciate your attention to this authorization.

Best regards,

Siti Hajar binti Rosli
b504snv@yamaguchi-u.ac.jp


Professor Munehiko Asamizu,
masamizu@yamaguchi-u.ac.jp