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# Resort vacation activities and recovery experiences: A case of visitors to Thailand

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For the degree of Master of Science

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RESORT VACATION ACTIVITIES AND RECOVERY EXPERIENCES:  
A CASE OF VISITORS TO THAILAND

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Maneenuch Tanyatanaboon

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Science

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Purdue University

West Lafayette, Indiana

Dedicated to my parents and Tanyatanaboon family

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## ABSTRACT

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An increase of work demands during workdays and sometime on the weekends can put more stress on individuals and lead to a higher need for recovery. Vacation is a prime candidate of a longer respite that can ensure a more complete recovery process because it allows individuals to temporarily take several days or weeks off without actively engaging in their job. This study thus intends to explore which activities are done upon vacation and how can they influence an individual's recovery experiences. By reviewing the theories related to recovery, vacation activities, and recreation opportunities, the study's conceptual model was developed to observe the association between activities and the recovery process. Resort vacation in Thailand however was chosen as a case for conducting the study because Thailand has been known as a popular tourist destination, featuring various attractive resorts located in different geographical areas and offering wide ranges of activities. Data obtained from 331 resort visitors in Thailand via offline and online platforms were analyzed using descriptive statistic, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), One-way between-groups Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), Multiple Regression Analysis (MLR), Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA), and cluster



analysis. Seven activity factors (Physical & Outdoor Activities, Cultural & City Interest, Online Media & Entertainment, Social & Non-exerting, Active Nature Pursuit, Personal Care, and Time for Myself) and four dimensions of recovery experiences (Psychological Detachment, Relaxation, Control, and Mastery) were identified. The positive effects were found among the six activity factors, except Personal Care, on the particular dimensions of vacation recovery experience. Interestingly, Physical & Outdoor, Online Media & Entertainment, and Social & Non-exerting factor appeared to have negative effects on the different dimensions of vacation recovery experience as well. Personal Care activities were surprisingly found to present no significant effect on any dimension of vacation recovery experience. Such profound factors were then classified under Resource-Providing and Resource-Consuming Vacation Activities to differentiate the positive and negative effects that each activity category has on vacation recovery experience. Based on the cluster analysis, three groups of resort visitors (Activity doers, Socializers, and Relaxation seekers) were uncovered regarding to their preferred vacation activities, perceived vacation recovery experience, and demographics. Hence, the key findings bear empirical contributions to research scholars by providing a significant framework for further observation and clarification of the relationship between vacation recovery-related activities and the vacation recovery experience. This current study also offers managerial implications for practitioners in a more mindful approach when designing and developing vacation products in order to ensure an individual's optimal sense of recovery.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Work-life stress is known to threaten individuals' health and well-being because it can lead directly and indirectly to health problems and an unhealthy lifestyle, including sleep deprivation, unhealthy diet, lack of exercise, and high blood pressure (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010). To combat such stress, individuals need some time away from sources of stress such as the workplace, school, and home. Several studies in the field of occupational health and leisure science have shown that a process called "recovery," which occurs during nonwork periods, crucially prevents an individual from exposure to job stressors (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010, 2012; Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006; Sonnentag, Binnewies & Mojza, 2008). Recovery can occur during workdays on breaks and in the evenings, on weekends, and/or on vacation (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006; Plemmons, 2012; Rook & Zijlstra, 2006; Sonnentag, Binnewies & Mojza, 2008; Westman & Eden, 1997). Due to an increase in job demands on workdays or even weekends, many people complain that they do not get sufficient recovery from short respites and often seek longer nonwork periods (Dahlgren Kecklund, & Akerstedt, 2005). Vacation is a prime candidate for a longer respite because, by definition, it is a period when workers temporarily have a number of days or weeks off without actively engaging in their job (Lounsbury & Hoopes, 1986; Strauss-Blasche et al., 2005). Recovery from work can occur passively by being free of job demands, or actively, by

engaging in free time and self-chosen and pleasant activities (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010, 2012, 2013). Although passively switching off from the strains of work by taking a vacation is known to trigger recovery, being actively engaged in activities and the environment on vacation may add positive function to individuals by building creativity and coping skills (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010, 2012; Geurts and Sonnentag, 2006). This active mechanism can be explained by the Broaden -and-Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001) and the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The first theory suggests that positive experiences obtained on vacation can widen thought and behavior patterns and build enduring personal resources, for example, new skills, psychological resilience, and social support. The second theory states that the basic needs of autonomy and relatedness to others can also be fulfilled on vacation and can enhance an individual's health and well-being long after the vacation is over (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010, 2012). Based on these arguments, exploring what people do and experience on vacation that affects their psychological functions during and/or after vacation will be beneficial.

Since recovery is likely to be what people seek from outside their working hours, experience-induced recovery is the focus of this study. Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) called the mechanisms contributing to recovery "recovery experiences," comprising psychological detachment (mentally away from work), relaxation, mastery (challenges or opportunities to obtain new skills from nonwork activities), and control (capable of choosing activities to participate in and learning how to do them on vacation). These components of recovery experiences are based on two theories: The Effort-Recovery Model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998) and the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll,

1989). These two theories together explain how a process of recovery occurs (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Participating in enjoyable and preferable activities is thought to have a significant impact on human life (Jopp & Hertzog, 2010). According to the Effort-Recovery Model, the more a person engages in work-related activities, the less that person can recover, because such activities draw on similar resources to the job and result in load reactions such as fatigue and physical strain (Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011). Vacation, in contrast, provides an opportunity to become involved in freely chosen activities and realize desired experiences. Experiences involving low-effort activities (i.e., listening to music) or non-work-related activities (i.e., exercising, going to different places) are thought to reverse the effect of daily strains and restore a sense of recovery (Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Vacation activities are closely linked to recreation, including activities related to pleasure and social life which allow individuals to retrieve their positive experiences (Chang & Gibson, 2011; Simmon, 2000). Earlier research usually studied five types of vacation activities associated with recovery experiences, namely: Physical, social, passive activities, work-related, and household and caregiving activities (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012, 2013; Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). To understand how different types of vacation activities relate to different dimensions of recovery experiences, the concept of recreation opportunity production process by Brown (1984) is adopted as a framework of the current study. This concept has been studied in the field of leisure science as an approach that enhances recreation providers in managing proper activities and settings that can lead to significant recreation outputs (Pierkalla et al., 2004; Weber & Anderson, 2010). In this study, vacation activities are therefore considered to be recreation inputs, while recovery

experiences obtained from vacation are recognized as recreation outputs (Pierkalla et al., 2004).

Being physically away from daily stress is not the only function leading to positive outcomes, but engaging in pleasant activities within preferred settings is also known to induce a process of recovery. Recovery experiences perceived on vacation can be considered as psychological outputs derived from participating in recreational activities and settings (Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011). Vacation setting, a situational attribute of recreation opportunities, is also known to influence activity choices and affect recreation outcomes (Pierkalla et al., 2004). In this case, resort destinations located in Thailand were chosen as recreational settings where activities participated in either on the premises or off were assessed. Shelton (2001) defines the term “resort destinations” as resorts in locations offering “a wide range of climates, geography, cultures, activities, and experiences” (p.5). As a result, this type of resort possesses a number of characteristics that depend on its location. Different people tend to pursue their vacations in different settings, according to their preferred recreational activities and what would they like to experience. Specifically, a relaxed environment and natural scenery are reported to be important characteristics when choosing a place for recreation (Kler, 2009). Likewise, a study of the perceived restorative qualities of vacation destinations has suggested that the significant restorative properties of a destination can trigger optimal vacation experiences, allowing attention to be directed to rest and the exhausted mind to recover (Lehto, 2013). Thus, freely choosing activities in a suitable and preferred environment is assumed to bring about positive vacation outcomes.

Thailand was chosen as the place to conduct this study because it is one of the most fascinating Asian destinations and offers spectacular scenery and unique culture

(Rawlinson, 2009). The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has been promoting Thailand under the concept of “Amazing Thailand,” which attempts to portray the country as “a peaceful, hospitable country and a year-round tourism destination with high-quality, value-for-money products and services” (Andrews & Siengthai, 2009, p.299). A variety of activities, diverse landscapes, and tasty food are other factors attracting many tourists from around the world to visit Thailand (Lam, 2011). In 2012, approximately 22 million international visitors arrived in Thailand and accounted for a 16.24% increase from the previous year; the number of domestic tourists also increased by 57.8% (Department of Tourism, 2013). Since Thailand is a popular destination for vacations among people from around the world, the country now offers many recreation opportunities in terms of vacation activities and experiences. This study will help both research scholars and practitioners to understand the characteristics, needs, and behaviors of tourists who travel to resort destinations in Thailand. In addition, the study will offer a new approach to measuring experiences derived from vacation and provide guidelines for lodging and destination operators in designing and/or developing proper activities in appropriate recreational settings that can meet the tourists’ recovery needs and improve their mental health.

### 1.1 Purpose of the Study

Few studies have explored the concept of recreation opportunities and vacation together, and no empirical research has related these two concepts within resort settings in Thailand. This study, therefore, investigates the association between activities participated in and recovery experiences in terms of input-output relationship among vacation visitors at

resort destinations in Thailand. This research has significant implications for both academia and practitioners. Not only can this study be the first in the field of hospitality and tourism to apply the framework of the recreation opportunity production process to vacation context, but it also lends some insights to resort operators or destination developers in delivering the right products/ services to the right customers at the right time and in the right place.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

Research about vacation associated with recovery theories has recently been studied in the field of occupational health psychology, and several physical and psychological outcomes have been discovered. To date, no research in hospitality and tourism has yet linked these two concepts in the context of resort vacations in Thailand. Also, most studies looked at the types of vacation activities in terms of individuals' satisfaction rather than experiences. Therefore, this study intends to determine the role and patterns of vacation activities in relation to the vacation recovery experience of resort visitors in Thailand. Examining the relationship between the activities resort visitors do and their vacation experiences can explain which types of vacation activities are suitable for different groups seeking different aspects of recovery experiences and can also explain how to provide appropriate resort vacation products, particularly in Thailand. The following statements provide more detailed objectives of this study:

1. To identify specific patterns of vacation activities chosen by resort visitors in Thailand.
2. To understand the dimensions of vacation recovery experience among resort visitors in Thailand.

3. To explore the association between vacation activities and vacation recovery experience as perceived by resort visitors in Thailand.
4. To identify differences in each classification of vacation activities and each dimension of vacation recovery experience among different sociodemographics and trip characteristics of resort visitors in Thailand.
5. To classify resort visitors in Thailand into different segments based on their preferred vacation activities and their perceived vacation recovery experience.

### 1.3 Definition of the Terms

Before further discussion of the study, some terminologies need to be defined in order to enhance understanding. All terms were defined based on previous literature and the dictionary.

- Vacation: A relatively long and uninterrupted period of respite from work (Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006, p.485) and a period of time that a person spends away from home, school, or workplace usually in order to relax or travel as defined by Merriam-Webster's Dictionary (Vacation, 2014).
- Vacation activity: A form of activity associated with recreation that can be thought of as pleasurable and social that works to restore the individual by means of the experience of leisure (Simmon as cited in Brey & Lehto, 2007, p.161).
- Recovery Experiences: The mechanisms that enhance the recovery process: psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery (challenges or opportunities to pursue new skills and knowledge), and control (ability to



choose activities to engage in on vacation) (Sonntag & Fritz as cited in Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009, p.332).

- Resort Destination: Subcategorized by various qualifiers, including variations of accommodation types, self-contained business entities, the availability of specialty restaurants, and a wide variety of recreation activities (Huffidine as cited in Brey, Morrison, & Mills, 2007, p.417).

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Vacation has been defined as “a cessation of work, a time when a person is not actively participating in his or her job” (Lounsbury & Hoopes as cited in Plemmons, 2012, p.5). In other words, vacation is a period which allows a person to be away from his/her everyday work setting. It is also a part of respite from work other than days off, weekends, and/or other patterns of being absent from the work premises and its daily stresses (Chen, Lehto, & Cai, 2013; Etzion, 2003). The demand for vacation and being involving in chosen free-time activities can be traced back to ancient times. The word “vacation” has its root in the Latin word, “vacatio” meaning “being free from, being at leisure or having time for,” and the concept emerged during the Roman Empire (De Bloom et al., 2009, p.14). Although several centuries have elapsed since the concept of vacation was discovered, its effects are still being explored so that individuals may acknowledge the benefits of taking a vacation.

De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier (2012) stated that vacation is implied in any long period of uninterrupted absence that might offer an opportunity to completely recover from work. Vacation is a rest period, which can be taken for a few days or a few weeks (Strauss-Blasche, Ekmekcioglu, & Marktl, 2000). To reduce negative consequences and/or fatigue, long intervals of rest are needed so that individuals can have enough time away from their routine tasks or work (Plemmons, 2012). However, previous studies

have mostly focused on vacation outcomes and failed to examine the process to obtain such outcomes. Recently, an attempt has been made to investigate the role of vacation activities in moderating the effect of vacation. Specifically, the concept of recreation opportunity from the field of park and recreation management has been borrowed into several studies of leisure science and occupational health psychology to explore the relationship between nonwork activities and an individual's recreation experiences. For example, Korpela and Kinnunen (2011) used the concept of the recreation opportunity production process as a framework to determine the association between times spent interacting with the natural environment and recovery needs, where engaging in activities related to the outdoors and exercise was found to be one of the important factors in explaining the needs for recovery. Participating in leisure activities was also shown to contribute significantly to subjective well-being in a variety of forms of activities among different ages and genders (Brajša-Žganec, Merkaš, & Šverko, 2011). In a vacation context, De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier (2011) found that employees' health and well-being were reported to improve during vacation because they were more relaxed and were more psychologically detached. They interacted more with others, gained more pleasure derived from the vacation activities participated in, and reported fewer negative incidents during vacation; such effects could persist for a while after vacation.

Even though vacation has been proved to positively affect individual lives in the short term, understanding the underlying causes of certain vacation outcomes such as experiences and psychological benefits is still important to find a way to prolong such effects. Fritz and Sonnentag (2006) advised that since taking a break might increase performance at work, understanding what individuals did during the break or on their

vacation would benefit both employers and workers. Moreover, Lehto (2013) suggested that it would be more interesting to explore the several components and characteristics of vacation destination rather than simply treating vacation as a single activity unit. This chapter therefore attempts to answer the primary goal of this study, which is to understand the relationship between what resort visitors do and their perceived vacation experience in terms of the recreation input-output relationship. Background literature on the underlying concepts and theories related to vacation, recovery experiences, vacation activities, and recreation opportunities are provided as the adopted framework for determining the relationship between recovery experiences and vacation activities. The literatures related to Thailand and resort destinations were also reviewed, since they were chosen as the setting of the study.

## 2.1 Vacation: Leisure Time for Recovery

Leisure as defined by Csikszentmihalyi and LeFevre is “any time that is free,” is related to freely chosen activity, and is a period offering meaningfully subjective experience (as cited in Vittersø, 2011, p.294). Based on this definition, vacation is closely linked to leisure, since it is also a time when individuals are away from work and have time for recreation (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010). Vittersø (2011) suggested that leisure is associated with positive psychology, considering the significant components of a good life. Past research has also indicated that engaging in leisure activities is positively related with an individual’s mood, so it is proper to examine activities that have processes related to individual wellness (Argyle, 2001; Vittersø, 2011). Iwasaki and Schneider (2003) wrote that the role of leisure as a mechanism of coping and managing stress to

sustain health and well-being was an emerging area in the field of leisure studies. As previously mentioned, vacation also plays an important role in promoting the physical and mental health and wellness of travelers. Although leisure and vacation are similar in many ways, the vacation and home environment may be the factor that distinguishes them (Lehto, 2013). The leisure-tourism continuum proposed differentiated leisure behaviors from tourist behaviors by putting them at opposite ends of the continuum (Carr, 2002). Vacation is considered to be more on the tourism end and is characterized by tourist culture. Both vacation and leisure still provide a powerful opportunity for recovery and positive outcomes (De Bloom Geurts, & Kompier, 2010, 2012; Lehto, 2013; Vittersø, 2011).

Furthermore, Etzion (2003) conducted a study which compared the effect of annual vacation on stress and burnout in 2 groups of industrial workers (taking long vacations versus taking short vacations). The results showed that the stress level was back to the baseline level approximately 3 weeks after returning home and the burnout level dropped significantly after vacation, but the stress level of individuals taking long vacations was reported to be lower than those who took shorter vacations. Recently, the research related to vacation effects has placed more emphasis on the psychological side and outcomes such as subjective well-being and recovery experiences. For example, Sonnentag (2001) suggested that a process of recovery occurred during vacation as well as other break periods by reducing the negative effects from work. However, vacation is known to provide a better recovery opportunity than other types of leisure time because it involves long rest intervals, allowing individuals to be in a more relaxed environment;

such periods permit individuals to engage in freely chosen activities unrelated to work (De Bloom et al., 2009).

### 2.1.1 Definition of Recovery and Recovery Experiences

Recovery has been defined as the multilevel process of an individual's internal and external systems (i.e., physical, mental, and social), which involves performing action-oriented and self-determined activities (or proactive actions), can improve an individual's conditions as well as build, protect, and restore personal abilities and performances (Kellmann & Kallus, 2001, p.22). Such a definition suggests that individuals have an active role in choosing their own activities, which could induce recovery. Likewise, Meijman and Mulder referred the term "recovery" as "a process during which individual functional systems that have been called upon during a stressful experience return to their pre-stressor levels" (as cited in Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007, p.205). In other words, recovery occurs when an individual's body and mind are relieved and away from stressful situations. The reduction of bodily strains (i.e., releasing of adrenaline and cortisol and improving heart rates) could indicate recovery (Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006). Zijlstra and Sonnentag (2006) also stated that experiencing recovery enhanced psychological conditions, making people feel they have more power to keep up with their current work and/or start new tasks. In reality, however, people do not always apply strategies that stimulate their recovery (Beckmann & Kellmann, 2004). For example, a person who comes back from vacation will not necessarily have less stress than before his/her vacation, implying that recovery depends highly on the individual.

Questions arise as to which type of recovery is fit for any one individual and whether individuals realize what they need and act accordingly?

Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) introduced the attributes underlying recovery, called “recovery experiences,” which comprise psychological detachment, relaxation, mastery, and control. Psychological detachment, relaxation, and mastery were adopted from diversionary strategies which were classified as a part of mood regulation strategies (Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999). Psychological detachment and relaxation could enhance recovery by blocking further demands from work that can harm an individual’s psychophysiological systems. Mastery would promote recovery by establishing new resources such as self-efficacy (Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Moreover, control had its root in the Conservation of Resources Theory and was assumed to be important for the recovery process because it was associated with external resources, which would allow the acquisition of internal resources (Hobfoll, 1998; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Other researchers have suggested that the first two properties of recovery experiences (psychological detachment and relaxation) can be explained by the Effort-Recovery Model, while the other two (mastery and control) are derived from the Conservation of Resources Theory (Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009). These two theories are parts of active and passive mechanisms which hypothesize that the recovery process can occur if the demands originally put on the psychophysiological system of individuals are removed (Sonnentag, 2001) and are closely linked to the four attributes of recovery experiences suggested by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007).

### 2.1.2 Two Important Theories of Recovery Experiences

The Effort-Recovery (E-R) model is based on the underlying assumption that critical load reactions, which are inevitably related to effort expenditure at work (i.e., fatigue, higher heart rates) can progress into more serious conditions (e.g., insomnia, chronic fatigue) if the individual keeps encountering the workload without sufficient recovery (Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006). In the situation where an incomplete recovery process occurs, an individual's psychobiological systems have to work harder before returning to and balancing at a baseline level. While in an inadequate recovery state, individuals required more effort to compensate for lost resources and are exposed to a higher need for recovery (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010; Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006). Load reactions can be reversed, allowing mental and physical resources to return to their baseline levels when individuals are no longer confronted with similar stimuli from work demands and daily stresses (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010; Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Since vacation is a longer respite period, it may allow individuals to obtain the optimal state of recovery and protect them from adverse effects on their health and comfort (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012).

The other crucial theory is the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which explains that individuals attempt to obtain, sustain, protect, and form resources that are related to their interests. Such resources usually include external objects (i.e., financial, relationships) and internal attributes (i.e., personalities, energies) (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). When resources are threatened, strains can develop and harm an individual's psychophysiological functions.



New resources must be built to restore threatened and lost resources as well as to recover from such strains. According to the knowledge of human physiology discussed by Marks (1977), energy consumption is important in balancing energy production, especially when engaging in valued activities produces energy while consuming it. Vacation may be an appropriate period for stimulating recovery by allowing individuals to replace depleted resources and build up new ones through participating in freely self-chosen activities (e.g., interacting with family and friends) (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010).

### 2.1.3 The Four Attributes of Recovery Experiences

The four attributes of recovery experiences (psychological detachment, relaxation, mastery, and control) can be explained by the two theories: The E-R Model and the COR Theory that were previously described. To further explore each attribute, more detail is provided as follows. First, psychological detachment entails being mentally away from work throughout nonwork periods (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2011; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). It is defined as an “individual’s sense of being away from the work situation” (Etzion, Eden, & Lapidot, 1998, p. 579) and being able to psychologically free oneself from work (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Based on these definitions, this property of recovery experiences emphasizes the psychological component and implies an absence of job-related thoughts. Being physically away from the workplace during nonwork time is not sufficient to induce detachment. To obtain such quality, individuals have to stop thinking about work content or issues (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Since job-related activities (e.g., checking work e-mails, picking up work calls) can block the occurrence of psychological detachment, engaging in activities that are not

related to job tasks during nonwork periods can reverse such an effect and induce psychological detachment (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009). Psychological detachment can be explained by the E-R Model, because when individuals are mentally away from work during nonwork periods, it increases the opportunity for reducing similar demands on their psychobiological systems during work periods (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Several researchers empirically show that psychological detachment promotes the recovery process leading to a positive effect, a decrease in fatigue, and lower load reactions (Brosschot, Gerin, & Thayer, 2006; Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007; Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, 2008). In addition, Westman and Etzion (2001) suggested that vacations might bring about a sense of detachment by providing respite from normal routines, thereby aiding the recovery process. Unwinding completely from work and load reactions is important in allowing the full recovery process to take place and in maintaining the health and well-being of the individual (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010; Sonnentag & Geurts, 2009).

Second, relaxation is often related to leisure activities that are characterized by low activation. Engaging in relaxing activities may lessen stress in both the body and mind (Jacobson, 1938; Siltaloppi Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2011; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007; Stone, Kennedy-Moore, & Neale, 1995). Meijman and Mulder (1998) wrote that pressure and stress from work could increase psychophysiological activation that would remain even after getting rid of work demands. Such carry-over effects could continue for quite some time after leaving the workplace (Frankenhäuser, 1980; Meijman, Mulder, van Dormolen, & Cremer, 1992; Reinecke, 2009). Performing intentionally chosen leisure activities that help relax the mind and body (e.g., meditation and progressive muscle

relaxation) or are categorized as low-effort activities (e.g., reading, leisurely walking, and listening to music) induces relaxation and enables the recovery process (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Ongoing psychophysiological activation caused by work strain can mediate the process that converts such stress into health problems and fatigue (Brosschot, Pieper, & Thayer, 2005). Relaxation involving low activation activities may reduce prolonged activation and increase the positive affect to offset the negative affect. By doing so, relaxation can lead to recovery that enhances the restoration of organisms to a pre-stressor state and remove negative affect (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Relaxation is found to be negatively associated with fatigue as a result of work, but positively associated with serenity and satisfaction in life (Reinecke, 2009; Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, 2008; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Previous empirical research suggested that stress-related complaints decreased in both the short and long run through relaxation (Stone, Kennedy-Moore, & Neale, 1995; Van der Klink et al., 2001). Also, experiencing relaxation in the evening was found to be associated with perceived serenity in the morning (Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, 2008).

According to the COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), participating in activities that provide the opportunity to be challenged and to learn new things during nonwork periods enhances the process of building up necessary internal resources such as self-efficacy. Mastery experiences are the third attribute of recovery experiences and are associated with mastery-related activities outside work (i.e., learning a new language or new sport) allowing individuals to be distracted from job tasks and challenging them to gain new knowledge through their personal competency and capability (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006; Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Even though

experiencing mastery requires some degree of self-regulation, which might put additional demands on individuals, such experiences can aid recovery because they support newly built resources (i.e., skills, competencies, and positive mood) (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). For instance, attending a language class requires some self-discipline and the ability to get over the temptation to stay at home and do nothing in the evening (Vohs & Baumeister, 2004). The study by Fritz and Sonnentag (2006) showed that obtaining mastery experiences during vacation had a positive relationship with recovery at the end of the vacation and a negative relationship with exhaustion levels after the vacation, confirming the benefits of mastery experiences. Perceiving mastery in the evening was also related to having positive levels of energy in the morning (Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, 2008). In addition, pursuing sports, which is an activity related to mastery experiences, is known to enhance the affective state (Rook & Zijlstra, 2006; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007; Sonnentag & Natter, 2004).

The last valuable element of the recovery process is control (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2001). Perceiving control can be added to experiencing mastery or gaining self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Reinecke, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Control refers to a desire to manage life events and have self-determination during time away from work (Kelley, 1971; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007; Sonnentag & Geurts, 2009). It can be illustrated as the ability of a person to select activities he/she prefers from two or more choices during his/her leisure time (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Having control during nonwork time when choosing activities to participate in is necessary in facilitating recovery process because it regulates an external resource (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Experiencing control in nonwork periods is known to enhance

an individual's health and well-being (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009). In the longitudinal study by Griffin, Fuhrer, Stanfeld, and Marmot (2002), the findings demonstrated that females who felt less control over activities at home reported higher depressive levels five years later than those who perceived more control at home. Additionally, males with low control at home were found to have higher levels of depression and anxiety five years later than those who had higher control at home. Experiencing control was also shown to have negative associations with complaints about health, emotional exhaustion, symptoms of depression, recovery needs, and sleep problems while having positive associations with life satisfaction (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007).

## 2.2 Vacation Activities: The Road to Recovery

If “people are masters of their own fate,” individuals have the freedom to actively choose and do things on their own in order to achieve their desirable outcomes (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010). Vacation provides opportunities for individuals to fulfill such needs and support a process of recovery. Engaging in vacation activities can activate the process of recovery through active mechanisms as suggested by previous studies (De Bloom, et al., 2009; De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010). Such mechanisms can be explained by three relevant theories: the COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and Broaden-and-Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001).

### 2.2.1 The Recovery Related Theories for Vacation Activities

For the COR Theory, the basic explanation was provided in the previous section as it was linked to the two attributes of recovery experiences (mastery and control). In relation to vacation activities, this theory suggests that recovery can occur through the process of being away from work demands and/or engaging in activities requiring the different resources from what used at work as well as through the process of acquiring new internal resources like energy, positive mood, and self-efficacy (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). In the context of vacation, the term “resources” is defined as the “time and attention” dedicated to the activities individuals value highly, such as spending time with family, exercising, and hobbies that can produce energy (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010, p.335).

The Self-determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) consists of multiple constructs (e.g., autonomy support, motivation, mental needs) associated with changes in behaviors. Specifically, the concept of autonomy support is important in explaining vacation effects. Autonomy support is known to be the perception of individuals of their own environment, allowing them to have different choices and options and to realize their own view that would give them logic when choosing options (Sweet et al., 2012). Autonomy, competence, and relatedness are three psychological aspects supported by higher levels of autonomy support. However, only autonomy and relatedness are crucial elements in supporting the recovery process in a vacation context. Deci and Ryan (2002) described autonomy as the source or the fundamental perception of an individual’s behaviors, and such behaviors are derived from his/her own will and experiences about

self-determined behaviors. Relatedness was defined as the desire to be closely connected to others (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Since vacation is a period that allows individuals to engage in their own selected activities and socialize with others, it indeed provides an opportunity for individuals to fulfill their needs for autonomy and relatedness. Past research has shown that an individual's need for autonomy and relatedness was satisfied during nonwork periods such as weekends, and these individuals reported perceiving higher positive and lower negative affect in such periods than in work periods (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010; Reis et al., 2000; Ryan, Bernstein & Brown, 2010; Sheldon, Ryan, & Reis, 1996). Satisfying the two basic needs by engaging in freely chosen activities during nonwork periods can stimulate the recovery process as well as bring about positive outcomes.

The Broaden-and-Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001) explained the role of positive emotions (i.e., joy, pride, and love) on individual health and well-being due to their ability to broaden momentary thought-action collections and create their own enduring resources (i.e., physical, psychological, and intellectual resources). Tugade and Fredrickson (2007) stated that positive emotions balance their functions and effects with negative emotions. Despite the impact of negative emotions on survival-oriented behaviors, positive emotions help broaden and promote varied, novel, and exploratory thoughts and actions. In the previous experimental study by Fredrickson et al. (2000), the findings revealed that critical cardiovascular arousal caused by negative emotions could be quickly mitigated by positive emotions. In addition, experiencing positive emotions such as pleasure is known to trigger the brain's "pleasure reward" system to produce particular hormones (i.e., serotonin, dopamine), which might rapidly reduce and control

the stress responses (Esch & Stefano, 2004). Similarly, engaging in freely chosen vacation activities can bring about positive emotions which support the recovery process. These positive emotions have both short- and long-term benefits on health and well-being, such as building up enduring personal resources (i.e., new skills, psychological resilience, and social support) as well as providing buffers against stressors in the future (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010).

### 2.2.2 Types of Vacation Activities

Previous scholars have indicated that individuals who participate in leisure activities and tourist activities possess similar psychological and behavioral characteristics, implying that leisure and vacation activities are connected in some way (Carr, 2002; Chang & Gibson, 2011; Hamilton-Smith, 1987; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Ryan, 1994). In a leisure study, Ryan (1994) explored holiday or vacation experiences through the concepts of the leisure sciences and noted that “holidays include a series of behaviors (some of which are sporting in nature) in which needs for relaxation, skill acquisition, self-development, etc., form a set of relationships; and it is argued that parallels with other leisure activities can be drawn” (p. 294). This also supports an assumption that leisure and vacation activities are related. In a more recent study, outdoor recreation, physical activities, and sports were found to be the most frequently participated in activities both for daily leisure and on vacation (Brey & Lehto, 2007). An examination of the relationship between daily leisure activities and vacation activities through the concept of leisure involvement provided more explanation of how leisure activities can be linked to vacation activities. Previous studies advised a few different



classifications of leisure activities. For instance, Tinsley and Eldredge proposed 11 groups of leisure activities based on the properties of need satisfaction as “agency, novelty, belongingness, service, sensual enjoyment, cognitive stimulation, self-expression, creativity, competition, vicarious competition, and relaxation” (as cited in Brajša-Žganec, Merkaš, & Šverko, 2010, p.82). Moreover, Lloyd and Auld classified leisure activities into 6 categories: mass media, social activities, outdoor activities, sports, cultural activities, and hobbies (as cited in Brajša-Žganec, Merkaš, & Šverko, 2010, p.82).

Furthermore, leisure activities can also be categorized into 3 groups as individual, joint, and parallel activities (Lehto et al., 2012; Orthner, 1975). To differentiate parallel from joint activities, the levels of interaction with nature were considered. Parallel activities (e.g., listening to the radio, going to a museum or church, and hunting) are known to have an interaction that is “either nonexistent or limited to reactions regarding the particular stimuli that evoke their common interest,” while joint activities (e.g., camping with friends, visiting friends and relatives, and playing games) are activities requiring “significant interaction among the participants for the successful completion of the activity” (Lehto et al., 2012, p. 838). In the family leisure context, Ingen and Eijck (2010) examined the association between leisure activities and social capital. They classified activities into productive and consumptive activities based on the degree of sociability. Productive activities were characterized as active and creative participation requiring collaboration toward certain goals, such as exercising, painting, gardening, and activities involving construction or repair. Consumptive activities were related to a form of passive participation, often associated with observing, undergoing particular

experiences, or using cultural goods such as going to the cinema, watching TV, playing online games, attending cultural or sport events, and shopping (Ingen & Eijck, 2010; Lehto et al., 2012).

In the tourism context, vacation leisure activities can be categorized into 2 main groups: sports and nonsport activities. In the study by Bertielli and Boksberger (2005) identifying travel market segments based on the relationship between a tourist's travel motivation and activity participation, 39 sport and 35 nonsport activities were explored in approximately one thousand households in Switzerland. Five clusters of activities were also found based on the similarity of vacation activity structures: family/partner holiday, hanging around, active relaxation, residual, and destination orientation (Bertielli & Boksberger, 2005, p.261). Leisure travel-based activities were also grouped with regard to cultural factors and the levels of activity and passivity required for participation. In the study by Pizam & Fleischer (2005) that examined the roles of cultural dimensions on an individual's chosen active or passive tourist activities, 34 leisure activities engaged in during leisure trips were assessed according to the preferences of students from different countries. All activities were grouped according to eight factors based on similar characteristics: wildlife and water bodies, history and religion, outdoor physical, hedonic and sensation seeking, fishing and hunting, performing arts, festivals, food and friends, and farms and pilgrimage, and the levels of activity versus passivity were rated for each factor (Pizam & Fleischer, 2005, p.17). The differences in preferred active versus passive activities were thus found among groups of countries with three different cultural dimensions (uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and individualism/collectivism).

However, in the context of recovery during nonwork periods, five types of activities have been studied: physical, social, low-effort, work-related, and household and caregiving activities (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012; Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Sonnentag, 2001; Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006).

### 2.2.3 Vacation Recovery-related Activities

In previous research on off-job time activities, low-effort, social, and physical activities were regarded as “resource-providing activities” and known to induce recovery by recreating resources and converting types of demand required from individuals during nonwork periods (i.e., De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012; Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Rook & Zijlstra, 2006; Sonnentag, 2001; Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). Under a vacation context, such group of activities can be referred as “resource-providing vacation activities.”

Low-effort activities such as reading or watching TV are passive and require less mental activity, which may activate the recovery process. People are likely to anticipate relaxation from activities requiring fewer social, physical, and intellectual demands, such as less active activities like taking a light walk or having a sauna (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Social activities are related to activities emphasizing social interaction and offering the chance to gain social support, such as meeting new friends, spending time with family members, and dining out with others (van Hooff et al., 2011). Such activities are known to enhance recovery because stressors are inhibited, helping the mind and body to function as in a pre-stressor state (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006; Sonnentag, 2001). Social support is also considered to be a significant

external resource that aids in retrieving other resources (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006; Hobfoll, 1998; Ragsdale et al., 2011; Sonnentag, 2001; Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). Not only was obtaining social support proved to have a positive relationship with well-being, but it was also potentially a buffer for the negative impact of stress, specifically for women (Beehr et al., 2003; Luszczynska & Cieslak, 2005; Taylor et al., 2000; Terry, Nielsen, & Perchard, 1993). Although physical activities such as exercising require some of an individual's resources, such resources are retrieved differently from those demanded for work, and participating in such activities may induce recovery (Rook & Zijlstra, 2006). The benefits of engaging in physical activities were confirmed by a longitudinal study which found a significant relationship between the number of workouts per week and the amount of fatigues an individual accumulated over time (Bultmann, et al., 2002). Participating in physical activities (i.e., sports) is also known to promote mastery experiences (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007).

*Hypothesis (H1):* Resource-providing vacation activities are positively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.

*H1a:* Engaging in low-effort activities during vacation is positively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.

*H1b:* Engaging in social activities during vacation is positively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.

*H1c:* Engaging in physical activities during vacation is positively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.

On the other hand, other types of activities called “resource-consuming activities” and including job-related (e.g., work preparation at home) and household and caregiving activities (e.g., washing or taking care of children) are viewed as inhibitors of recovery. When performing such activities, high responsibility is needed, similar resources to work are reclaimed, and those resources can be lost or threatened, resulting in load reactions (Demerouti et al., 2009; Ragsdale et al., 2011; Rook & Zijlstra, 2006). Additionally, Sonnentag (2001) studied the relationship among work-related recovery activities and individual well-being and uncovered the effect of time spent on engaging in low-effort, social, and physical leisure activities that could enable daily recovery, as indicated by improved affective well-being. Nevertheless, the opposite occurred with time spent on resource-consuming activities during nonwork periods, because such activities rely on similar resources to those used during work hours, leading to a longer time to deal with stressors and providing less support for well-being (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). In addition, some nonwork-related activities can lead to vacation hassles (i.e., being mentally disturbed by family arguments, lack of rest from partying all day and night), requiring additional efforts from individuals and resulting in the perception of an incomplete recovery (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006).

*Hypothesis (H2):* Resource-consuming vacation activities are negatively associated with a resort visitor’ recovery experiences.

*H2a:* Engaging in work-related activities during vacation is negatively associated with a resort visitor’s recovery experiences.

*H2b*: Engaging in household and caregiving activities during vacation is negatively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.

Even though nonwork related activities taxed different resources, some might call for more effort expenditures than others, which could prolong stress-response procedures and block the recovery process (Demerouti et al., 2009; Ragsdale et al., 2011). Rook & Zijlstra (2006) suggested that time spent participating in low-effort and social activities did not predict lower fatigue levels and were not conducive to recovery during nonwork periods. Since some low-effort activities might be too passive to help distract individuals from thinking of work, feeling passive could also induce a sense of lethargy and weariness. By contrast, some people did not experience more fatigue when engaging in job-related activities, because they liked their jobs and spent lots of time working on them. Mixed findings were also found on time spent engaging in social activities (van Hoff et al., 2011). For example, the study by Sonnentag (2001) showed a positive relationship between time spent on social activities and the indicators of recovery, while the same association was found to be negative in the study by Sonnentag & Natter (2004), and no association was found in the study by Rook & Zijlstra (2006). The findings of those previous diary studies have been inconsistent and do not clarify which group of activities actually aids recovery, nor have they provided a clear explanation for the relationship between certain types of activities and specific attributes of recovery experiences. This study, therefore, would like to untie this knot and provide more insight for both research scholars and industrial practitioners, especially in the field of hospitality and tourism.

### 2.3 Vacation Settings: a Situational Factor for Recovery Opportunities

According to the studies on work stress and recovery experiences, the recovery process is assumed to be related with specific groups of activities (i.e., relaxing activities), but the choice of activities is different for each individual. Although people have different preferences for particular activities, the psychophysiological effect underlying such preferences might be uniform across people (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). For example, people who describe their nonwork experiences as “relaxing” may either choose reading a magazine or listening to music as their preferred activity (Fritz et al., 2010). Individuals are often expected to participate in several activities, which are frequently a repertoire of associated activities (e.g., activities grouped by similar characteristics), within certain areas. Payne et al. (2004) conducted research on recreation experience preferences and activity profiles in a particular Canadian forest landscape and found four groups of preferred experience among individuals with recreation and tourism purposes. In addition, the relationship between the different groups of experience preference and the four types of activity profiles was examined and used in identifying areas that could produce conflicts among activities or operational problems.

Furthermore, frequently participating in physical activities in warmer and sunnier locations during vacation was perceived to be a potential moderator of recuperation after the vacation among vacationers who specifically reported a higher degree of stress before the vacation (Strauss-Blasche et al., 2005). Considering vacation settings as a situational factor therefore helps in determining which activities are preferred in the area and how

experiences can be influenced differently (Pierskalla et al., 2004). In this study, the resort destinations located in different areas of Thailand are chosen as setting variables.

### 2.3.1 Thailand: A Popular Tourist Destination

Thailand is usually described as the “land of smiles” to convey an image of friendliness (Kanto Production Company Limited as cited in Panto & Pan, 2009, p.1). Thailand has been positioned as “a cultural, natural, and historical destination” by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) (Henkel et al., 2006, p.1; Rittichainuwat, Qu, & Brown, 2000). In 2009 and 2010, Thailand was nominated as “the Best Tourist Country” by the Swedish Grand Travel Award held by Travel News Magazine. It was also chosen as one of the most popular tourist destinations aside from Spain and Turkey and was declared “The World’s Best Tourist Country 2010” by the Norwegian Grand Travel Awards (Panto & Pan, 2009, p.1). With such prestigious awards, Thailand has been proved to be an outstanding tourism destination. Thailand has positioned itself as a glamorous, natural, friendly, and exhilarating destination with several attractive infrastructures, consisting of five star hotels, countless restaurants, and many tourist agencies (Business Monitor International, 2009). “Amazing Thailand” was successfully used as a theme to promote Thailand during the 1990s and included the concept of a “peaceful, hospitable, and year round tourism destination” with “high-quality and value-for-money products and services” (Andrew & Siengthai, 2009, p.298). Andrew and Siengthai (2009) wrote that the campaign of “Seven Amazing Wonders” had recently been launched highlighting “Thainess, treasure, beaches, nature, health and wellness, trends, and festivities” to promote Thailand as a “brand” (p.299). Thainess is considered



to be “The art of Thai living,” including Thai traditions, lifestyles, as well as cultural products for the hospitality and tourism sectors. Treasure or “Land of heritage and history” promotes Thailand as a destination with unrivaled world heritage sites, historical sites, and astonishing temples and museums. Thai trends include trendy boutique hotels, shopping centers, and dining and nightlife, while festivities include global events as well as famous Thai festivals (Andrew & Siengthai, 2009). However, these trends are favorable differently among various tourists’ demographics. For instance, the previous study about Thailand’s destination images suggested that female tourists rated shopping as a higher important tourist activity than their male counterparts, while male tourists were likely to perceive nightlife and entertainment and a variety of sports (e.g., golfing, Thai boxing) in Thailand to be more importance than the females do (Henkel et al., 2006).

*Hypothesis (H3):* Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist between male and female resort visitors in Thailand.

Additionally, Thailand is known to be home to several popular beach resorts as well as to be a destination that offer ecotourism products (e.g., national park tours, soft adventures), and provide inexpensive and unique health and wellness products (e.g., spas, health resorts, and other medical tourism products and services) (Andrew & Siengthai, 2009, p.299-300). According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), medical tourism, for example, has recently become a significant business, generating revenues for the tourism industry and the nation since medical costs tend to be cheaper than in more developed countries (Business Monitor International, 2009). Tourists in this segment,

both long-stay and repeated shorter stay travelers, are likely to be from many countries around the world, which helps promote the concept of “health-and-holiday.” As an example of senior Europeans and Japanese, they tend to be major “health-and-holiday” travelers in Thailand (Business Monitor International, 2009, p.19). By encouraging tourists to participate in vacation activities that may induce recovery experiences, Thailand can possibly promote its medical tourism into the next level. Indeed, the study of the role of vacation activities on recovery experiences is needed so that destination marketers as well as hospitality and tourism operators in Thailand can have a better picture of what they should offer to their target market.

#### 2.3.1.1 Geographical Diversity of Thailand

Thailand is approximately 514,000 square kilometers (200,000 square miles) in area—nearly as big as Spain or France (Lam, 2011). It is located in Southeast Asia between the Indochina peninsula and the Malay peninsula. According to the information from the TAT website (2014), Thailand is located close to 15 degrees north of the equator, which makes the country a tropical place with temperatures ranging from 19 to 38 degrees Celsius (66 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit). Thailand shares its borders with four countries: Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Malaysia (Lam, 2011). Its geography varies from the hills and mountains rising along the north and west side to the beaches along the coast line in the south (TAT, 2014a). In spite of its tropical climate, Thailand can be divided into 76 provinces with four distinct primary regions: the north, the north east, the central and east coast, and the south.

The north is surrounded by forestry mountains stretching from the western border with Myanmar. The highest point of Thailand is in the northern part and is called the peak of Doi Inthanon with a height of 2,565 meters (8,415 feet) (TAT, 2014a). Located in quite a natural region where exotic flowers and wildlife can be seen, and the weather is considered to be cooler than in the other regions. The northern region is also regarded as the home of several ethnic tribes (i.e., the Karen, Hmong, and Akha), who live in the small villages around the mountain areas (Rawlinson, 2009). Many archaeological sites and unique local cultures can thus be found in this region. In Chiang Mai (the main city in the north), for instance, visitors can interact with local people dressed in traditional clothes and learn about local culture through them and their handmade products. In the hilly interior, visitors can also engage in trekking and/or rafting in some areas such as Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Son (Rawlinson, 2009).

The next unique region of Thailand is the north east or what is called by Thais, “Isan.” It is located close to the border with Laos along the Mekong River and on the Khorat Plateau, which connects with Cambodia in the south (TAT, 2014a). The north east covers around one third of Thailand’s total area. The attractions in this regions mostly feature historical sites such as the prominent sandstone shrines of Phimai and Phanom Rung, but also include two of the most visited national parks, Khao Yai and Phu Ruea (Rawlinson, 2009).

The central and east coasts of Thailand are dominated by the central plains and the Chao Phraya River, the major river in Thailand, which enters the capital city, Bangkok from the north before draining into the Gulf of Thailand on the east coast (TAT, 2014a). In the unique interior of this region, a variety of attractions can be found ranging

from cultural and city interests to beach and water activities. Since Bangkok is regarded as the capital city of Thailand, it features several major attractions such as the Grand Palace, the temple of the reclining Buddha, and the famous shopping districts (i.e., Siam Square, Silom, and Chatuchak) (Rawlinson, 2009). Bangkok is also built on the banks of the Chao Phraya River, so it has several canals where visitors can get away from the busy Bangkok traffic and take a city tour on the “longtail” boats (Lam, 2011; Rawlinson, 2009). Furthermore, tourists can obtain more cultural experiences by traveling to the suburban cities (i.e., Ayudhaya, Samutsakorn, and Supunburi) around Bangkok because they can visit several Buddhist temples, historical ruins, battlefields, and floating markets. The coastal destinations close to Bangkok such as Pattaya and Rayong on the east coast and Cha-am and Hua Hin on the west coast are mostly visited by both domestic and international tourists. Such areas feature several beach resorts offering recreation activities (i.e., horse-riding on the beach, golfing, and clubbing). While the east-coast resorts provide more entertainment and nightlife activities, the west-coast resorts, located far from urban areas, are regarded as the country’s oldest beach resorts and are generally quieter than those in the east (Rawlinson, 2009; TAT, 2014a).

The last distinct regional area of Thailand is the south. It is known as the panhandle of Thailand and stretches down the Malay peninsula, which separates the Andaman Sea on the west shore from the Gulf of Thailand on the east (TAT, 2014a). The southern area is known as a “sun and sea” destination with beautiful beaches along the shoreline and the islands of the Andaman Sea (Rawlinson, 2009). The islands of Phuket province and Koh Samui are examples of the well-known tourist destinations in this region and feature a variety of water sports and outdoor activities (i.e., snorkelling, sea-

kayaking, and jet-skiing). Many upscale beach resorts are also located in such areas and offer a wide range of activities and amenities from golfing to pampering in the high-end spas (Rawlinson, 2009). Nonetheless, plenty of cultural attractions (i.e., wilderness sanctuaries and historical trading ports), natural wonders (i.e., national parks, forests, and waterfalls), trekking, and jungle safaris can be found on the inlands off the peninsula (TAT, 2014a).

Because of the diversity of Thailand's geography, varied activities can be offered at the destination to fulfill the different needs of visitors. As the description in the book "Explorations in Thai tourism" by Erik Cohen (2008) says, Thailand shows its past through genuine culture, beautiful nature, and historic sites, while its present can be seen in its modern infrastructures. Tourists who travel to Thailand are encouraged to explore both sides of life, for example, the unspoiled nature up in the north versus the hedonic pleasures of sun, sand, and sea in the south, the quiet suburban versus the busy urban lifestyles, and the more relaxing activities (e.g., spa treatments, sun bathing) versus the more violent sports (e.g., Thai boxing) (Cohen as cited in Lam, 2011). These contrasting aspects of Thailand are hard to experience all at once, so tourists tend to visit the destination that offers experiences that are more appealing to them during their current visit. Different patterns of tourist behaviors based on their resort selection in different regions of Thailand are thus examined in the current study.

*Hypothesis (H4):* Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist among different regional locations of the chosen resort destinations in Thailand.

### 2.3.1.2 The Characteristics of Tourists in Thailand

Thailand is considered one of the largest tourist hubs in the world and its tourism consists of two critical markets as international and domestic tourists (McDowell & Choi, 2010; TAT, 2008a, 2008b). According to the statistical records from the Department of Tourism of Thailand (2013), the total number of tourists visiting Thailand in 2011 was 174,118,377 and included 133,177,728 domestic tourists and 40,940,649 international tourists. These numbers represented an 11.3% increase over the total number of tourists in 2010. In terms of international arrivals, Thailand was placed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of the world and the 4<sup>th</sup> among the countries in Asia and the Pacific region (McDowell & Choi, 2010; WTO, 2007). In 2012, the number of international tourists arriving in Thailand was approximately 22.4 million, an increase of 16.24% from 2011 (Figure 2.1). Furthermore, in June 2013, about 2.1 million international visitors traveled to Thailand, an increase of 25.02% from June the previous year (Department of Tourism, 2013). Thailand's economy is significantly influenced by tourism in terms of increasing employment rates, investment, and foreign exchange (TAT News Room, 2006). Promoting tourism can bring more money into Thailand, improve productivity, and maximize resources used from other industries (Thailand Board of Investment, 2001).

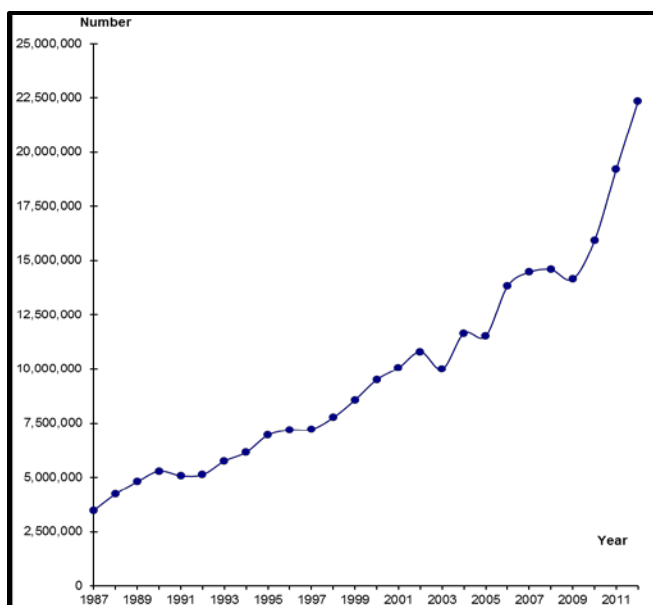


Figure 2.1 Numbers of International Tourist Arrivals in Thailand between 1987 and 2012

Thailand as an international destination located in the center of Southeast Asia attracts visitors who travel from various tourism markets with different travel distances. Time and money are two significant factors required from an individual who travels to different places and the costs associated with such factors have been known to be increased by the distance between the destination and the individual's origin (Lee et al., 2012). According to the theory of distance decay, Bull (1991) suggested that tourism demands tended to have inverse relationship with travel distance, meaning that an increase in travel distances could lead to a decrease in demands for travel (Bao & McKercher, 2008; Zillinger, 2005). Greer and Wall (1979) however found that before travel demand would decline exponentially, such demand tended to increase as the distance went up until the point where an individual perceived sufficient sense of escapism from his/her usual environment. Obviously, the quantity or share of visitors as well as tourist behaviors can be affected by the distance of tourist destination (Bao &

McKercher, 2008). Several studies have been explored the influence of distance on tourist behaviors between short- and long-haul visitors either travelling as inbound or outbound tourists (Bao & McKercher, 2008; Crouch, 1994; Lee et al., 2012; Lo & Lam, 2005; McKercher, 2008).

Long-haul travel is refer to a trip between different regions involving flights with at least six hours in duration or having a travel distance over 3,000 miles, while short-haul travel includes domestic destinations and a travel distance less than 3,000 miles or engage in flights with less than six hours (Archer, 1989; Boerjan, 1995; Lo & Lam, 2005; Medlik, 1996). Long-haul visitors to Thailand are likely to travel from the countries in the Middle-East (i.e., United Arab Emirate, Saudi Arabia), Oceania (i.e., Australia, New Zealand), and Europe (i.e., Italy, France), and North and South America (i.e., USA, Brazil). On the other hand, short-haul visitors to Thailand tend to be those from Asian countries (i.e., China, India, and Singapore). Behavior differences between these two groups of visitors were also suggested by amount of time and money available for travel. Paul and Rimmawi (1992) wrote that individuals with more time and money were likely to make a trip far away from their home and visit multiple destinations, while the reverse appeared to others with limited time and budget. The previous study by Crouch (1994) also compared different characteristics of short- and long-haul visitors and found that long-haul visitors were less likely to be sensitive to the price than their short-haul counterparts. Furthermore, people travelling from the farthest distance appeared to be males, obtain high education and income, and have managerial or professional careers, implying that long-haul visitors were likely to have more income discretion to spend on travel (Bao & McKercher, 2008; Moutinho & Trimble, 1991). In addition, individuals



who travelled from long distant places were mostly found to be first time visitors (Lau & McKercher, 2004; Moutinho & Trimble, 1991).

Domestic tourists are also considered to be as crucial as international tourists in aiding the economy of developing countries since they tend to face less travel barriers when travelling within their own country and can generate high numbers of visitors throughout the year (McDowell & Choi, 2010). Understanding behaviors of domestic and international visitors in Thailand can offer insights for destination marketers to develop appropriate marketing strategies and promote the destination to the right target markets. The product consumption is known to be affected by the product images that individuals have in mind prior to a purchase (Sirgy & Su, 2000). Similarly, the images of destination held by tourists can influence their choices of destination and activities. For example, Henkel et al. (2006) found that sightseeing were perceived as the most important images of Thailand, followed by friendliness of local people and food among domestic and international visitors, while freedom from diseases and terrorism were perceived to be more significant image of Thailand by international visitors than the domestic ones (p.285). Tourist behaviors therefore deserve further observations to determine whether there is any choice of activities and perceived travel experiences differing between domestic and international visitors travelling from different distances to Thailand.

*Hypothesis (H5):* Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist among domestic visitors, short-haul international visitors, and long-haul international visitors.

### 2.3.1.3 Tourist Intention to Visit Thailand

The intention of tourists to visit Thailand can attribute to psychological factors such as travel motivation and cultural aspects. The destination choices of tourists are known to be motivated by push and pull factors (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Bansal & Eiselt, 2004; Chen, Prebensen, & Huan, 2008; Crompton, 1979). Push factors are defined as the internal/ psychological motives, such as escapism (Yuan & McDonald, 1990), relaxation and socialization (Crompton, 1979), and seeking or learning and stimulus avoidance (Beard & Ragheb, 1983), driving individuals to certain places. These aspects reflect the specific personalities of tourists and determine why they travel from their home to different locations (Azman & Chan, 2010; Crompton, 1979; Kim & Lee, 2000; Oh et al., 1995). The study by Yuan and McDonald identified five push factors (escape, novelty, prestige, enhancement of kinship relationships, and relaxation/hobbies) and seven pull factors (budget, culture and history, wilderness, ease of travel, cosmopolitan environment, facilities, and hunting) in motivating overseas travel among tourists from Japan, France, West Germany, and the UK (as cited in Baloglu & Uysal, 1996, p.33). Novelty was found to be the most crucial push factor for an individual's decision to travel abroad, while escape was the second most motivating factor. The degree of importance attached to such factors differed among the countries despite the similar reasons for travel.

Novelty is one of the travel motivations used to segment tourists and is defined as a quest for something that is currently different from past experiences (Cohen, 1982; Crompton & Mckey, 1997; Gitelson & Crompton, 1984; Feng, 2007; Hsieh & Chang,

2006; Lee & Crompton, 1992; Rittichainuwat, 2011; Yuan & McDonald, 1990). In other words, it is a search for fresh and unfamiliar experiences, not necessarily adventurous experiences. The levels of novelty seeking vary across individuals. For instance, visitors who travel to the same destination many times are regarded as low novelty seekers, while those who usually switch to new destinations are considered to be high novelty seekers (Feng & Jang, 2004). Traveling overseas to learn about different cultures is also considered to be motivated by novelty seeking, and engaging in local activities as well as staying in local accommodation, in turn satisfy the need for novelty and broaden cultural knowledge for tourists (Basala & Klenoshy, 2002; Calantone & Johar, 1984; Hu & Rutchie, 1993; Rittichainuwat, 2011). In the same vein, international tourists visiting Thailand may be motivated by a search for novelty, because they intentionally travel to different places, stay in different cultural societies, and acquire new cultural knowledge. Domestic tourists, on the other hand, can either be low or high novelty seekers. Thai local tourists with low levels of novelty seeking tend to go to the same tourist place repeatedly, whereas, those with higher levels of novelty seeking like to travel to new tourist attractions and participate in different types of activities (Rittichainuwat, 2011).

What is more, tourists from different countries are characterized by different cultural values. Culture can potentially influence a tourist's destination choice (Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007) and is defined as "the accumulation of shared meaning, rituals, norms, and traditions among members of a society, is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one society from another" (Crotts, 2004, p. 83; Hofstede, 1980). This implies that different societies are regulated by unique beliefs, norms, and lifestyles. In fact, decisions made by different consumers from different countries are

affected by cultural differences as suggested in previous studies (Arora & Fosfuri, 2000; Kacen & Lee, 2002; Tahir & Larimo, 2004). A tourist's destination choice can be influenced by four cultural factors: the tourist's national culture, the tourist's individual level of culture, the destination's culture, and the cultural distance between a tourist's home culture and the destination's culture (Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007, p. 1498).

Different tourist behaviors, including their patterns of travel and preferred activities, can be explained by a tourist's national culture (Dybka, 1988; Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007; Pizam & Jeong, 1996; Pizam & Sussman, 1995; Ritter, 1987; Sheldon & Fox, 1988). As an example of the difference in vacation preferences found between Japanese and German tourists, the Japanese preferred a shorter length of stay and tended to select all-inclusive packages for their vacation such as skiing, golfing, and beach activities (Dybka, 1988; Ritter, 1987). Pizam and Jeong (1996) also found that Americans were likely to be more social with tourists from other countries than the Koreans and Japanese. Similarly, the individual level of a tourist's culture is also likely to affect an individual's choice of destination (Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007). Tourists from the same country can be segmented into different categories based on their cultural values. Some American tourists, for example, may be classified into the "security and reassurance" group, similar to the high uncertainty avoidance group of Hofstede, (1980) as they seek stability and security (Muller, 1991).

Furthermore, the culture of the destination is also critical to tourists when choosing the place for their vacation (O'Leary & Deegan, 2003). Not only does a destination's image include physical attractions, scenery, and local climates, but it also consists of cultural qualities influencing a tourist's destination choice (Ng, Lee, & Soutar,

2007). For example, McKercher and Cros (2003) identified five types of tourists to Hong Kong and called them as “purposeful, sightseeing, casual, incidental, and serendipitous” according to the diversity in performing cultural activities (Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007, p.1498). The results demonstrated that Hong Kong was perceived as a country with a distinct culture, history, and heritage by purposeful and sightseeing groups as compared to their own cultures (McKercher & Cros, 2003; Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007). Furthermore, cultural distance can determine a tourist’s intention to visit certain destinations. Cultural distance (CD) refers to how much one society shares social norms and values with another society (Hofstede, 2001). It measures the discrepancy between different cultural groups such as different nations, city and rural societies, and the similarity or differences between national cultures and particular destination cultures (Moufakkir, 2011; Shenkar, 2001). The concept of CD hypothesizes that the more similar the tourist’s national culture is to the destination’s culture, the better the understanding between tourists and local people, implying that uncertainty about the destination is reduced by cultural familiarity. Tourists to mainland China as an example are mostly Hong Kong residents because they share similar cultural background (Pacific Asia Travel Association, 1995). Likewise, Thai tourists and tourists from overseas may be driven to take a vacation in Thailand by cultural similarity.

However, such an assumption is in contrast to some studies which suggested that long-haul travelers might be motivated by cultural differences rather than similarities (e.g., McKercher & Cros, 2003 and O’Leary & Deegan, 2003). To implement the right marketing strategies, a destination marketer should be able to recognize whether its targeted tourists are driven by cultural similarities or cultural differences. As mentioned

earlier, a tourist's individual level of culture also influences the choice of destination. Gnoth and Zins (2010) examined the cultural roles of international travelers in Thailand and Vietnam and found that not all people from the same nations acted according to their national culture as perceived in their home countries. For instance, tourists from Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan were clustered at the end of an individualistic continuum in spite of exhibiting strong collectivism in their hometowns, showing that these tourists did not share the same value system with their general population. Similarly, Japan tended to exhibit more feminine values (i.e., caring, sympathy) in vacation settings than when they were at home (Gnoth & Zins, 2010). Therefore, citizens of the same country do not necessarily share similar values and/or travel preferences. A tourist's destination choices may be influenced by an individual trait and associated with other motivation factors.

### 2.3.2 Resort Destinations in Thailand

Since the numbers of tourists in Thailand continue to rise, several infrastructures have to be developed and built to accommodate both domestic and international travelers. Despite several crises that Thailand faced after the financial crisis in 1997, the tsunami in 2004, and the political turmoil since 2008 (Cohen & Neal, 2010), Thailand's hospitality and tourism industry was able to recover quickly. For instance, the tsunami which occurred in 2004 destroyed many infrastructures, including small guesthouses and boutique resorts located near the Andaman Sea. Even though the tsunami brought major losses to the hotels around those areas, it enhanced hotel businesses in other areas of Thailand (Andrew & Siengthai, 2009). For example, at the beginning of 2005, the

Shangri-La, Bangkok reported a rise in its total revenues of 12.8% from the previous year (Business Monitor International, 2009). However, Thai hotel businesses, especially in the South, recouped their losses and soon returned to normal operations. Some of the hotels with minimal damage were reopened by March 2005, and some were still shut down during that low season period; for most, business had returned to normal by August of the same year (Business Monitor International, 2009).

Even after the worst natural disaster that Thailand had ever faced, the Thai lodging industry continued to grow. In 2011, Thailand featured a total of 530,623 hotel rooms with 43.84% occupancy rates (NSO, 2012). In 2011, the number of guest arrivals, both Thai and foreigners, to such accommodation was around 86.24 million, an increase of 28.52% from the previous year representing more growth in the lodging sector of Thailand (NSO, 2012). Following the Tsunami crisis, countless new resorts were opened in several destinations such as Bangkok, the East coast of Thailand (i.e., Pattaya, Rayong), Northern Thailand (i.e., Chiang Mai), and the West and South coast of Thailand (i.e., Hua Hin, Krabi, and Phuket). The resorts featured many major international hotel brands, such as the Sheraton, Hilton, Marriott, Accor, and Le Meridien, to attract more international guests (Business Monitor International, 2009), and Thai resort brands, such as Anantara, Centara, Sri Panwa, and other boutique brands began to emerge. An increase of the numbers of lodging properties supports Thailand in accommodating both Thai and foreign tourists.

According to Brey, Morrison, & Mills (2007), the term “resort” was broadly defined to include diverse lodging products ranging from boutique resorts to integrated destinations (p.80). A resort can be considered as “a self-contained, individual vacation

establishment owned by a single company” (Timothy & Teye, 2009, p.140). Ten categories of resorts were proposed by Rutes et al., including “beach, golf and tennis (BGT), spa, vacation villages, vacation ownership and condominium resorts, marina hotels, ski, eco-tourists, multi-resorts, destination complexes, theme parks, and cruises” (as cited in Brey, Morrison, & Mills, 2007, p.417). Gee, on the other hand, classified resorts based upon the weather as “summer resorts, cold weather resorts, the warm winter resorts, and the four-season resorts” (as cited in Brey, Morrison, & Mills, 2007, p.417). Huffidine categorized resorts as “resort destinations” and “resort properties” (as cited in Brey Morrison, & Mills, 2007, p.417). However, the focus in this study is only those resort destinations defined as “sub-categorized by various qualifiers including variations of accommodation types, self-contained business entities, availability of specialty restaurants and wide variety of recreation activities” (Huffidine as cited in Brey et al., 2007, p.417). Resort destinations are generally found in locations with differing geographies, climates, activities, cultures, and experiences (Shelton, 2001). A numbers of studies about resort destinations have focused on the environmental characteristics of resorts, which could enhance the comprehension of direct and indirect effects for sole-owner resorts and resort destination planning and development (Ayala, 1991a, 1991b, 1995, 1996, 1997; Bruyere, Rodriguez, & Vaske, 2002; Helber, Conlin, & Baum, 1995; Inbakaran & Jackson, 2005; Kermath & Thomas, 1992). Ayala studied how ecofriendly resorts could minimize any negative effects on the overall surroundings and nearby communities, while Kermath and Thomas examined how improving economies could lead to changes in tourist resorts (as cited in Inbakaran & Jackson, 2005, p.55). Most of such studies emphasized the supply side of resort destinations while ignoring the demand



side, which is a resort visitor. To gain a better understanding about resort destination planning and development, segmenting visitors to resort destinations into different groups based on their preferences deserves more attention.

Most resorts in Thailand are located in different geographical areas and offer a variety of activities to their guests. Spas, golfing, water-based activities, shopping, and entertainment and nightlife are major resort vacation activities helping tourists to unwind during their nonwork period (Chon & Singh 1995; Davison, 2008; Rittichainuwat, 2011). Nevertheless, activity preferences tend to be varies among visitors with different primary purposes. While being pampering in a spa is popular among health-seeking tourists who like to isolate themselves and recharge their physical and psychological systems, golfing and activities related to nightlife and entertainment are likely to motivate business-related tourists and golfers when choosing certain resort destinations during their business trips (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2002; Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2012; Tassiopoulous & Hayclam, 2008).

*Hypothesis (H6):* Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist among visitors with different primary purposes of the trip.

Even though resort activities themselves may not be a primary motivator for tourists to choose certain destinations for their vacation, they are considered to be a basic satisfaction factor that can lead to desired vacation experiences (Correia, Oom do Valle, & Moco, 2007; Panto & Pan, 2009). Age, gender, education levels, types of occupation, ethnicities, and trip characteristics (e.g., length of stay, primary purpose of travel, and trip location) were also found to be significant variables in explaining a tourist's destination

choice and tourist behaviors (Lehto, O’Leary, & Morrison, 2002). Not only can resort visitors be segmented based on their activity preferences and favorable experiences, but also according to their demographic differences.

#### 2.4 Recreation Opportunities: The Study Framework

To gain a better understanding of the relationship between vacation activity and the vacation recovery experience, the concept of the recreation opportunity production process was adopted as a framework in this study. This concept has its root in the theory of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) (Clark and Stankey, 1979; Driver and Brown, 1978). To obtain preferred specific experiences, individuals were assumed to engage in certain activity in a certain setting (Garber-Yonts, 2005). The ROS is one of the most powerful inventories used for managing and planning in recreational and park management because it gives a rational and reliable basis for decision making (More et al., 2003; Stanis et al., 2009). Traditionally, the ROS was conceptualized based on the nature of recreation, which was based on activities (e.g., swimming, fishing, camping). Later, a behavioral approach was taken into consideration when determining recreation opportunities and referred to experiences derived from engaging in recreation (Driver & Tocher, 1970; Manning, 2012). The latter approach is associated with the psychological perspective, suggesting that human behaviors are mostly directed toward achieving certain needs or satisfaction (Crandall, 1980; Manning, 2012). When the two approaches are taken together, recreational supply and demand are linked. Driver and Brown (1978) came up with the definition for such an association, which is the natural transition of recreational products/services from suppliers to users as a “recreation opportunity

demand hierarchy” (as cited in Garber-Yonts, 2005, p.8), or what is known in some of the literature as a “recreation opportunity production process” (Brown as cited in Pierskalla et al., 2004, p.164).

Four levels of the production process or the demand for opportunities were proposed by Driver and Brown (1978) and Bruns et al. (1994) as activities, settings, experiences, and benefits. The first level is activities (e.g., camping, hiking, canoeing), which are considered to be the most tangible aspect and the most easily realized by users and include actions that can lead to preferred experiences and benefits. The second level is settings: These act as situational attributes of the activity and are somewhat less tangible. Settings are usually classified into three types—physical, social, and managerial—and help individuals realize the next level of the process as well as suggesting certain types of activities in specific recreation areas. The third level is experience, which provides opportunities to realize particular psychological outcomes (e.g., excitement, enjoyment, relaxation) by engaging in preferred activities within proper environmental settings. The last level of the production process is benefits, which is an anticipated or valuable change of state or a better condition. Benefits can be recognized by individuals, society, or the environment when experiences are satisfied and may include improvement in health and well-being or the development of new skills and abilities (Garber-Yonts, 2005; Manning, 2012; Pierskalla et al., 2004).

Pieskalla et al. (2004) suggested that activities and settings could be viewed as the input of the production process leading to particular recreation opportunities, while experiences and benefits could be thought of as the output. However, the highest level benefits are the most abstract of the four and quite difficult to measure because they are

not directly associated with the input of the process; most studies related to recreational behaviors initially emphasize the experience level (Manning, 2012). Therefore, the concept of the recreation opportunity production process is applied as a framework to identify specific types of vacation activities that can contribute to certain dimensions of recovery experiences and explain their relationship in the case of resort destination vacations in Thailand.

## 2.5 Conceptual Model

Based on the literature review of vacation recovery experiences, vacation activities, Thailand and its resort destinations, and recreation opportunity, the current study would like to propose a conceptual model (as Figure 2.2) to develop insights into how vacation activities can influence vacation recovery experience among tourists visiting resort destinations in Thailand during summer vacation.

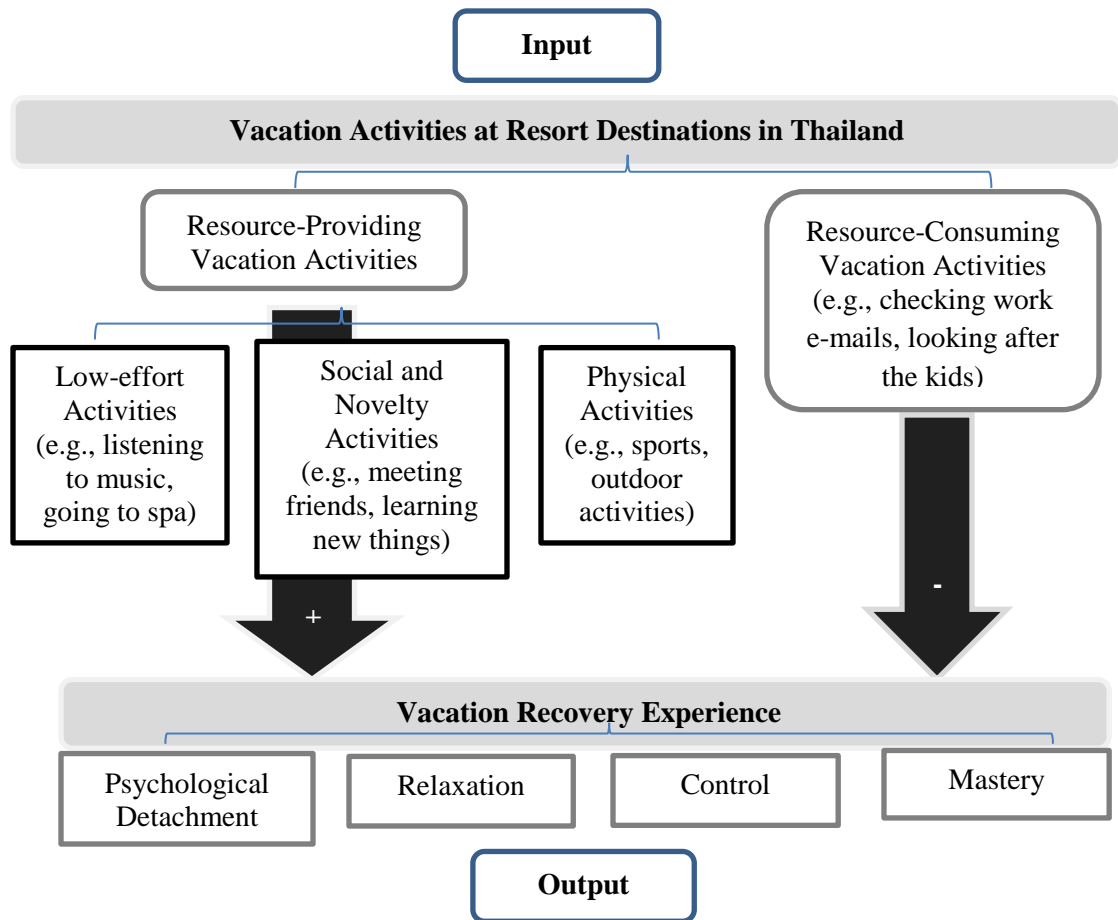


Figure 2.2 The Proposed model for Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience

## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Data Collection

Resort visitors in Thailand were the population of interest and were randomly selected. Both domestic (Thai) and international visitors who took a recent vacation at resort destinations in Thailand were asked to complete the survey. Data were collected between July 16 and October 13, 2013. The survey method was used to obtain information about vacation activities, vacation recovery experiences, and demographics among various resort visitors. The survey questionnaires were distributed through on-site and online channels by trained researchers.

According to the 2012 Hotels and Guest Houses Survey, the total number of hotels and guest houses in Thailand operated in 2011 was approximately 9,800 accommodating around 86.24 million guests, of whom 60.42% were Thai and 36.58% were international (NSO, 2012). Due to the large population with limited time and resources, convenient and snowball sampling methods were used for sample selection in this study. Even though such methods were known to pose some limitations (e.g., sampling bias and privacy concerns), they have been used in many exploratory studies (Salkind, 2005). Both a paper- and internet based survey were used to obtain enough samples and the format of both versions was similar enough as to produce no significant difference in the results (Dolnicar, Laesser, & Matus, 2009).

The first set of data with a total of 190 respondents (57.4%) was gathered using intercept method during July and August 2013 from four physical locations. 41 respondents were resort visitors at the two main resort destinations (Centra Coconut Beach Resort and Dusit Thani Hua Hin Hotel) located in the south, and the west coast of Thailand. The features of such resorts were described in Table 3.1 (a) and their facilities and amenities were visually illustrated in Figure 3.1. Moreover, 82 respondents were resort visitors attending the event called the Art and Cultural Exchanges of the Mekong River Region (during July 21-23, 2013) at Rajamankala University of Technology Isan (RMUTI) in the northeast of Thailand. The attendees came from 9 countries around Asia and the numbers of attendees from each country were presented in Table 3.1 (b). The remaining 67 respondents were Thai residents taking a computer course at one computer institution in Bangkok with a class size of a hundred students and their chosen resort destinations tended to be geographical varies than the first two groups.

Table 3.1(a) The Features of On-Site Resort Destinations

<b>Resort name</b>	<b>Centra Coconut Beach Resort</b>	<b>Dusit Thani Hua Hin hotel</b>
Location	The secluded Thong Tanote Beach on Samui island, the Southern island of Thailand	The coastal town of Hua Hin on the west coast of Thailand. Located just 2.5 hours away from Bangkok by car
No. of guest rooms	54	296
Facilities and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-site Restaurants and bars</li> <li>• Beachfront swimming pool with children pool</li> <li>• Long pool flanked by the two resort buildings and pool bar</li> <li>• Two Jacuzzi rooms and four treatment rooms</li> <li>• Well-being services (e.g., holistic and beauty treatments)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-site Restaurants and bars</li> <li>• Two swimming pools and children pool</li> <li>• Beauty salon</li> <li>• Devarana Spa</li> <li>• Sauna, steam room &amp; Jacuzzi</li> </ul>

Table 3.1(a) Continued

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fitness room</li> <li>• Rental boats for kayaking</li> <li>• Complimentary wireless internet access</li> <li>• Scheduled shuttle service for the city tour</li> <li>• Laundry facilities</li> <li>• Tour information desk</li> <li>• Motorbike and care rental</li> <li>• Meeting spaces and banquet facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DFIT fitness center</li> <li>• Two squash courts</li> <li>• Complimentary wireless internet access</li> <li>• Four floodlit tennis courts</li> <li>• Horseback riding</li> <li>• Shopping arcade</li> <li>• Scheduled shuttle service for the city tour</li> <li>• Tour information desk</li> <li>• Limousine services and car rental</li> <li>• Meeting spaces and banquet facilities</li> <li>• The world-class golf courses located nearby</li> </ul>
Area Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Big Buddha Temple</li> <li>• Tao &amp; Nang Yuan Island</li> <li>• Pha Ngan Island</li> <li>• Mu Koh Ang Thong National Marine Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hua Hine Vineyard</li> <li>• Kaeng Krachan National Park</li> <li>• Khao Luang, the Cave Temple</li> <li>• Khao Sam Roi Yot National Park</li> <li>• Khao Takiab</li> <li>• Khao Wang, the Mountain Palace</li> <li>• Marukathayawan Summer Palace</li> <li>• Pala-u Waterfall</li> <li>• Phra Ram Ratchaniwet Palace</li> </ul>

Source: Centara Hotels & Resorts (2014) and Dusit International (2014)





Figure 3.1 Facilities and Amenities of the On-Site Resort Destinations

Table 3.1(b) The Numbers of Attendee at the Art and Cultural Exchanges of the Mekong River Region

Country	No. of attendee	Percentage (%)
Brunei	25	7.23
Cambodia	29	8.38
China	22	6.36
Laos	58	16.76
Malaysia	25	7.23
Philippine	20	5.78
Singapore	20	5.78
Thailand	120	34.68
Vietnam	27	7.80
Total	346	100.00

Source: Rajamankala University of Technology Isan (RMUTI), 2013

In addition, the second set of the data, which yielded a total of 141 respondents (42.6%) were derived from online surveys gathered between September and October

2013 from Facebook users and a website called “Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk).” The survey link created from Google Docs was posted on two Facebook groups: Chulalongkorn Psychology Student Alumni group (1,001 registered members) and Purdue Hospitality and Tourism Management group (346 registered members) to allow the data to be obtained from resort visitors in Thailand with various demographics (i.e., nationalities, ages, and occupations) and on the MTurk website. MTurk is a new online marketing tool run by Amazon.com offering a quick and inexpensive way of reaching target participants (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). It has proved beneficial for conducting research in the field of psychology and social sciences because the website provides the necessary features to enhance project completion and the research participants were found to be diverse and represent noncollege populations better than other online survey sources (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2012). Goodman, Cryder, and Cheema (2012) also found that the data collected through MTurk were reliable and consistent with previous behavioral research using a traditional approach to data collection. MTurk was thus considered appropriate for obtaining data for the current study. After acquiring a proper sample size, the survey link was deactivated to limit the number of respondents.

The profiles of on-site and online respondents are presented in Table 3.2. Some demographic variables of the respondents appeared to be different between the two methods of survey such as on-site survey contained more female respondents (68.95%), while online survey contained more male respondents (58.16%). Whereas some other variables yielded similarity among the two groups such as respondents aged between 25-34 years old were a dominated group in both on-site (37.40%) and online (61.70%)

survey. Additionally, the response patterns of vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience were mostly proved to be similar (e.g., Listening to the radio/ watching TV:  $t=.003, p>.05$ ; Excursion:  $t=1.860, p>.05$ ; I forgot about work:  $t=.231, p>.05$ ; I used the time to relax:  $t=3.465, p>.05$ ), suggesting that there was somewhat homogeneity existed among the population from the two different survey channels.

Table 3.2 The Profiles of On-Site versus Online Resort Visitors

Variables		Survey method			
		On-site (N=190)		Online (N=141)	
		N	%	N	%
Gender	male	59	31.05	82	58.16
	female	131	68.95	59	41.84
Marital status	Single	112	58.95	61	43.26
	Married	78	41.05	80	56.74
Types of visitor	Domestic	75	39.50	23	16.31
	Short-haul International	71	37.40	90	63.83
	Long-haul International	44	23.20	28	19.86
Ages	18-24	38	20.00	24	17.02
	25-34	72	37.90	87	61.70
	35-44	23	12.10	20	14.18
	45-54	27	14.20	6	4.26
	55-64	20	10.50	4	2.84
	65 and above	10	5.30	0	.00
Occupation	Professional	27	14.21	46	32.62
	Managerial	23	12.11	31	21.99
	Sales	13	6.84	0	.00
	Retired/ Unemployed	10	5.26	1	.71
	Office worker	54	28.42	26	18.44
	Labor/ Production	1	.53	0	.00
	Housewife	4	2.11	9	6.38
	Military	6	3.16	1	.71
	Educator	13	6.84	14	9.93
	Student	26	13.68	10	7.09
Other	13	6.84	3	2.13	

Table 3.2 Continued

Education	Middle school	4	2.11	0	.00
	High school	30	15.79	8	5.67
	Bachelor's degree	105	55.26	82	58.16
	Master's degree	50	26.32	51	36.17
	Others	1	.53	0	.00
Primary Purpose of the trip	Business + Leisure	33	17.4	20	14.2
	Recreation	125	65.8	19	13.5
	Stop over on the way to another destination	14	7.4	60	42.6
	Visit friends/ relative	14	7.4	33	23.4
	Others (i.e., Summer camps)	4	2.1	9	6.4
Travel companions	family	87	45.80	80	56.74
	friends	83	43.70	47	33.33
	none	13	6.80	10	7.09
	other	7	3.70	4	2.84
Regional locations of the chosen resorts	North & North East	98	51.60	6	4.26
	Central & Nearby Coasts	49	25.80	49	34.75
	South	43	22.60	86	60.99
First-timers vs. Repeaters	No	34	17.89	12	8.51
	Yes	156	82.11	129	91.49
Length of stay	1 night	45	23.70	13	9.22
	2 nights	60	31.60	31	21.99
	3 nights	36	18.90	27	19.15
	4 nights	14	7.40	14	9.93
	5 nights	12	6.30	23	16.31
	More than 5 nights	23	12.10	33	23.40

With both offline and online methods, a total of 351 surveys were received.

However, surveys containing missing values that were not associated with the result or criterion variables were excluded from the analysis (Griliches, 1986). After sorting out the missing data, 331 usable surveys remained for the data analysis.

### 3.2 Instrumentation

The questionnaire was designed based on an extensive review of the literature related to recovery experiences, vacation, and leisure and travel activities both from an academic and industry viewpoint. It was validated by a panel of three professors in the Hospitality and Tourism area. Since the questionnaire was also distributed to Thai residents, it was first generated in English and then was translated into Thai and proofread by Thai academic scholars prior to distribution. Thai resort visitors were asked to choose to complete the survey version that they most comfortable with. The questionnaire contained four parts: general travel information, resort vacation activities, vacation recovery experiences, and demographics (Table 3.3). Items of general travel information and demographics were derived from past studies related to vacation and destination tourism, including both close- and open-ended answers, allowing the respondent to give an appropriated answer when the supplied choices did not properly capture any unexpected factors or responses. The respondents were asked to specify the name of the resort destination they stayed at, length of their stay, whether they are a first time customer at such resort, their trip purpose, and their intention to revisit the same resort destination in the future as well as providing their demographic profiles at the end of the questionnaire.

Table 3.3 Survey Variables and Types of Measurement

Variables	Questions	Item Measures
<b>• Trip characteristics</b>		
Name of the chosen resort destination	What is the name of the resort you are currently staying at (or last visited)?	Text: Resort name
Location of the chosen resort destination	Where is this resort located at? (i.e., name of the city or region) ( <i>Please specify</i> )	Text: Open-ended answers
First-time vs. Repeated visitors	Is this your first time staying at this resort?	Discrete: Yes/No
Length of stay	How long did you stay at this particular resort?	Discrete: Specify a numbers of night stay
Criteria for resort selection	In one sentence, could you tell us the most important reason why you choose to stay at this resort destination?	Text: Open-ended answers
Purpose of the resort vacation	What was the primary purpose of this visit? ( <i>Please check one</i> )	Discrete: Multiple choices
Intention to revisit	Would you like to return to this resort destination on another visit?	Discrete: Yes/No
<b>• Vacation activities</b>		
	Think about the activities you participated during this resort vacation. For each activity or group of activities listed, please circle the point on the scale which <u>best estimates</u> how much you participated.	Continuous: 7-point Likert scale
<b>• Vacation recovery experience</b>		
	For each of the following statements, please circle the point on the scale where you feel is true for you <u>most of the time</u> in describing your resort vacation experience.	Continuous: 5-point Likert scale
<b>• Demographics</b>		
Age	What is your birth year? ( <i>please specify</i> )	Discrete
Gender	What is your gender?	Discrete: Male/Female

Table 3.3 Continued

Marital status	What is your marital status?	Discrete: Single/Married
Country of origin	Which country are you from? ( <i>please specify</i> )	Text: Country name
Travel Companion	Who else come with you on this trip?	Discrete: Multiple choices
Occupation	What is your occupation?	Discrete: Multiple choices
Education	What is the highest level of education you have attained?	Discrete: Multiple choices

Table 3.4 presents the list of vacation activities which was developed from the review of literatures related to leisure and recreation activities, tourist activities (Beritelli & Boksberger, 2005; Jopp & Hertzog, 2010; Pizam and Fleischer, 2005), and from the suggestions of vacation activities available in Thailand from the industry guidelines such as the website of Tourism Authority of Thailand (2014b) and travel agencies. Thirty-eight activities were initially included on the survey (see Table 3.4) and the respondents were asked to rate their choices of activities on a 7-point Likert Scale from 1 = never did it to 7 = did a lot, which allowed the researcher to capture both the frequency and intensity of their participation on each activity. Since there were many activity items to be considered, the wider range of the measurement scale tended to be appropriate to determine significant differences among the responds. The content of such a scale was also validated by the panel of expertise including three professors in Hospitality and Tourism field.

For vacation recovery experience, the measurement was borrowed from the Recovery Experience Questionnaire by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) to assess the four

components of psychological detachment, relaxation, control, and mastery with 16 items. To fit such a scale into a resort vacation context, the preliminary statement “During this resort vacation...” was used, instead of “During time after work...,” which appeared in the original questionnaire (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007, p.211). The respondents were asked to rate how they agreed with each statement related to recovery experiences during their resort vacation on a 5-point Likert Scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Examples of the statement in each component were: “During this resort vacation, I distanced myself from work” (Psychological detachment), “During this resort vacation, I used the time to relax” (Relaxation), “During this resort vacation, I decided my own schedule” (Control), and “During this resort vacation, I sought out intellectual challenges” (Mastery).



Table 3.4 Sources of Vacation Activities in Thailand

		Literature Review	Industry guideline
Item 1	Jogging / Walking for exercise	√	
Item 2	Sport club or Fitness exercise (i.e., Swimming, Tennis, Weight lifting)	√	√
Item 3	Flexibility (i.e., Stretching, Yoga, Tai chi)	√	√
Item 4	Swimming (in river, sea)	√	√
Item 5	Beach volleyball	√	√
Item 6	Golfing	√	√
Item 7	Surfing / Windsurfing	√	√
Item 8	Jet skiing / Water skiing	√	√
Item 9	Diving (i.e., Snorkeling, Scuba diving)	√	√
Item 10	Paddling (i.e., Canoeing, Kayaking)	√	√
Item 11	Rafting (i.e., bamboo rafts, rubber rafts)	√	√
Item 12	Cycling (i.e., road bikes, mountain bikes)	√	√
Item 13	Hiking / Trekking	√	√
Item 14	Horseback riding / Elephant riding	√	√
Item 15	Going to Sauna / Jacuzzi	√	√
Item 16	Wellness (i.e., Spa treatment, Massages)	√	√
Item 17	Sun bathing	√	√
Item 18	Reading (i.e., books, newspapers, magazines)	√	
Item 19	Listening to the radio / Watching TV	√	
Item 20	Checking / sending e-mail	√	
Item 21	Playing games (i.e., card games, online games)	√	
Item 22	Writing postcards	√	
Item 23	Spending time with family/ friends	√	√
Item 24	Eating out at restaurants	√	√
Item 25	Trying the regional cuisine (i.e., Thai food)	√	√
Item 26	Learning the Thai language	√	
Item 27	Meeting other people (i.e., new friends, local people)	√	√
Item 28	Engaging in prays or meditation	√	√
Item 29	Excursion (i.e., by bus, cruise, rail)	√	√
Item 30	Shopping (i.e., at the mall, local market)	√	√
Item 31	Jungle Safari, Wide life viewing	√	√
Item 32	Sightseeing / Taking pictures or videos	√	√
Item 33	Going to the zoo/ Natural Parks	√	√
Item 34	Going to a bar or night club	√	
Item 35	Going to the movies / concerts	√	
Item 36	Attending cultural events (i.e., watching traditional performances, going to local festivals)	√	√
Item 37	Visiting historical/ religious sites	√	√
Item 38	Visiting museums / art galleries	√	

### 3.1 Statistical Data Analysis

The data were analyzed in five steps by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), Version 21.0. First of all, descriptive statistics were used to provide the respondent profiles based on demographics and the characteristics of their resort trip. Second, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed on the items of resort vacation activities and vacation recovery experience to explore their underlying dimensions and reduce the number of items by grouping them into appropriate factors. In this study, the principal component analysis with varimax rotation, one of the most common methods in EFA, was used to obtain relatively small factor numbers that could account for most of the variance in the dependent variables and maximize the sum of the squared coefficient's variances (DeCoster, 1998). On the basis of the findings of EFA, the items that had Eigenvalues greater than 1 and factor loadings greater or equal to 0.4 were retained. The findings will be shown in the result section. Four dimensional recovery experiences were analyzed by using EFA instead of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), because such constructs have not been applied in the context of vacation in Thailand. Then, the reliability tests were performed on all factors of vacation activities and all dimensions of vacation recovery experience. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were obtained as an index of reliability to assess the internal consistency of an instrument or scale represented by a number from 0 to 1 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Third, one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to investigate differences in groups of vacation activities and dimensions of a vacation recovery experience resulting from the exploratory factor analysis. Vacation activity factors and vacation recovery experience dimensions were included as dependent

variables. MANOVA was used instead of the simple one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) because MANOVA was more effective in reducing the chances of committing a Type I error. The series of MANOVA were run separately on two groups of dependent variables (vacation activity factors and vacation recovery experience dimensions) because of the difference in their measuring scales. Four main sociodemographic and trip characteristic variables were tested against vacation activity factors and vacation recovery experience dimensions: gender, country of origin (i.e., Thai versus other countries), primary purpose of the trip (i.e., recreation, business, visiting friends and relatives), and chosen resort location (i.e., north and north east, south, and central and nearby coastal provinces of Thailand). Tests were conducted to find the differences in those demographic characteristics in terms of vacation activities and vacation recovery experience.

Fourth, multiple linear regression analysis (MLR) was employed to examine the relative importance of vacation activity factors on each dimension of vacation recovery experience. It is a statistical method that is appropriate for testing the relationship between a dependent variable and two or more predicted variables (independent variables). In MLR, the accuracy of the predictions is determined by the explained variance, and the importance of the predictors in explaining the variance of the dependent variable is identified. Four models of regression analysis were tested separately in this study as follows:

$$\text{Recovery1 (Psychological detachment)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Activity}_1 + \beta_2 \text{Activity}_2 + \dots + \beta_n \text{Activity}_n$$

$$\text{Recovery2 (Relaxation)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Activity}_1 + \beta_2 \text{Activity}_2 + \dots + \beta_n \text{Activity}_n$$

$$\text{Recovery3 (Control)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Activity}_1 + \beta_2 \text{Activity}_2 + \dots + \beta_n \text{Activity}_n$$

$$\text{Recovery4 (Mastery)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Activity}_1 + \beta_2 \text{Activity}_2 + \dots + \beta_n \text{Activity}_n$$

Moreover, canonical correlation analysis was executed to explore a more detailed relationship between vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences because such a method is more appropriate in testing the relationship between two sets of variables simultaneously (Hotelling, 1936; Sherry & Henson, 2005). Seven factors of vacation activities and four dimensions of vacation recovery experience were included in this analysis. To interpret the result, canonical structural coefficients were specifically used because they are known to be more reliable for interpretation than other methods such as canonical weights and canonical cross-loadings (Yun & Lehto, 2009).

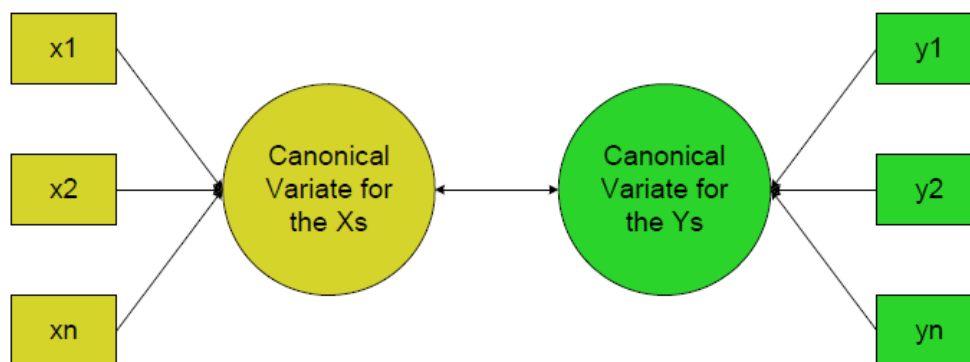


Figure 3.2 The Simulation of the Relationship between Two Set of Variables in CCA

Lastly, to further identify groups of resort visitors who provided similar responses on the vacation activities participated in and perceived vacation recovery experience

during their vacation at the resort destination in Thailand, cluster analysis was chosen. A two-stage cluster procedure was conducted by running hierarchical cluster analyses, first to determine the number of clusters, then by using K-means clustering to provide mean values for the variables in each cluster. One-way ANOVA was also performed to test the differences of perceived vacation recovery experiences among clusters. Chi-Square tests were finally employed to explore any significant differences among clusters regarding resort visitor demographics and selected travel behaviors.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

#### 4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Resort visitors in Thailand

The descriptive profiles of the respondents are summarized in Table 4.1. Based on the summary of the demographic characteristics, the majority of respondents were female (57.40%) and single (52.27%). Of all the respondents, 48.60% were short-haul international visitors travelling from Asian countries (Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam), 29.60% were domestic visitors (or Thai visitors), and 21.80% were long-haul international visitors traveling from the United States, Saudi Arabia, Oceania (Australia and New Zealand), and other countries in Europe (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Macedonia, Serbia, Spain, UK). The average age of the respondents was approximately 35 years old, and most of them were between 25 and 34 years of age (48%) followed by those between 18 and 24 years of age (18.70%). Over half of the respondents held a bachelor's degree (56.50%), and the next largest group had obtained a master's degree or higher (30.51%). In addition, most of the respondents were office workers (24.17%), followed by the respondents who reported working in the professional field [e.g., physicians, nurses, and lawyers] (22.05%).

Table 4.1 Summaries of Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Variable		No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	141	42.60
	Female	190	57.40
		331	
Age	18-24	62	18.70
	25-34	159	48.00
	35-44	43	13.00
	45-54	33	10.00
	55-64	24	7.30
	65 and above	10	3.00
		331	
Marital Status	Single	173	52.27
	Married	158	47.73
		331	
Type of Visitors	Domestic visitors (Thais)	98	29.60
	Short-haul international visitors (from <i>Asian countries</i> )	161	48.60
	Long-haul international visitors (from <i>America, Oceania, Middle East, and Europe</i> )	72	21.80
		331	
Occupation	Professional	73	22.05
	Managerial	54	16.31
	Sales	13	3.93
	Retired/ Unemployed	11	3.32
	Office worker	80	24.17
	Labor/ Production	1	0.30
	Housewife	13	3.93
	Military	7	2.11
	Educator	27	8.16
	Student	36	10.88
	Others (i.e., freelancer, park rangers, and DJ)	16	4.83
			331
Education	Middle school	4	1.21
	High school	38	11.48
	Bachelor's degree	187	56.50
	Master's degree or higher	101	30.51
	Other (none)	1	0.30
		331	

Table 4.1 Continued

Demographic Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age Ranges & Average	331	18	72	34.48	12.38

#### 4.1.2 Travel Patterns of Resort Visitors in Thailand

The trip characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 4.2. Based on such a table, the resorts visited ranged from the south to the north of Thailand. Of all respondents, 39.27% went to any of the 54 resort destinations located in the south, followed by 31.42% went to any of the 53 resort destinations located in the north and north east, and the other 29.31% went to any of the 97 resort destinations located in the central and nearby coastal provinces (See Appendix B for more detail). Over half of the respondents were first time visitors (86.10%) and nearly half of them had recreation (43.50%) as their primary purpose, while the next largest group consisted of visitors who reported stopping over on the way to another destination (22.36%). In addition, half of the respondents were visiting the resort destination with their family members (50.45%), and the other half were either traveling with friends (39.27%), alone (6.95%), or with others such as coworkers (3.32%). The majority of the respondents stayed at the chosen resort destination for 2 nights (27.49%), while others stayed for 3 nights (19.03%), 1 night (17.52%), and more than 5 nights (16.92%); nearly all of the respondents (93.05%) wanted to revisit their chosen resort.



Table 4.2 Trip Characteristics of Resort Visitors in Thailand

Variable		No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Visited Areas of Resort Destinations in Thailand	North & North East	104	31.42
	Central & nearby Coastal Provinces	97	29.31
	South	130	39.27
		331	
First Time Visitor	Yes	285	86.10
	No	46	13.90
		331	
Primary Purpose of the Trip	Business + Leisure	53	16.01
	Recreation	144	43.50
	Stop over on the way to another destination	74	22.36
	Visit friends/ relative	47	14.20
	Others (i.e., company trips, university camps)	13	3.93
		331	
Travel Companions	Family	167	50.45
	Friends	130	39.27
	None	23	6.95
	Others (i.e., coworkers, employers)	11	3.32
		331	
Length of Stay [Night <sub>(s)</sub> ]	1	58	17.52
	2	91	27.49
	3	63	19.03
	4	28	8.46
	5	35	10.57
	More than 5	56	16.92
	331		
Intention to Revisit	Yes	308	93.05
	No	23	6.95
		331	

Additionally, open-ended questions were asked about the most important reason for choosing to visit the particular resort destinations in Thailand, and content analysis was performed in order to determine the response pattern. The results in Table 4.3 can be

categorized into three attributes: Environmental features, resort amenities and services, and others. The first two attributes were classified based on physical appearances of the chosen resort destinations and the literature review related to recreation settings and resort destination attributes (Garber-Yonts, 2005; Manning, 2012; Meng, Tepanon & Uysal, 2008; Pierskalla et al., 2004). Other attributes accounted for the reasons that did not fit within any of the first two attributes. The respondents described their resort choice with either a single attribute or multiple attributes.

The reasons for resort selection were mostly listed under ‘Environmental features’ (N=187), implying the physical appearance of the chosen resort settings. When choosing resort destinations in Thailand based on such attributes, the most considered reason was *beautiful nature/environment* (39.57%), and the second most frequent reason was *good location* (23.53%). Settings of natural beauty such as beaches, rivers, and mountains as well as the ease of travel to the resort were likely to determine the choice of resort destination. The next most frequent responses were listed as ‘Resort amenities & services’ (N=159), reflecting the management structure and policy of the chosen resort as well as the availability of its products and services. Under this attribute, *reasonable price* (21.38%) was the most frequent response given as the most important reason in selecting particular resort destinations, followed by *convenience & comfort of accommodation* (16.98%). Many people were sensitive to the price and preferred a product that was worth their money. For example, many respondents wrote that their resort choices were inexpensive and offered comfortable rooms (i.e., large rooms and the room connected to the pool area). The reasons listed under ‘others’ (N=104) were the least frequent responses. The respondents described other reasons for selecting particular resort

destinations as *recommended by friends/family* (20.19%), *found from the internet/ TV ads* (18.27%), and *good reputation* of the resort (11.54%). This could be because a majority of the respondents went to resort destinations in Thailand with their family (50.45%) so they might have gotten some suggestions from their family members and they possibly obtained more resort information from websites or television programs prior to their purchase.

Table 4.3 Significant Reasons for the Choice of Resort Destination

No.	Attribute	Reasons	N	Percentage (%)
1	Environmental features	Beautiful nature/environment ( <i>e.g., nice sea, beaches, rivers, mountains, and local farms</i> )	74	39.57
		Good location ( <i>e.g., close to the town center, easy to commute, close to the commercial beach, and near many attractions</i> )	44	23.53
		Quiet & peaceful/Uncrowded area	32	17.11
		Nice weather/ atmosphere	22	11.76
		Relax and restful environment	13	6.95
		Friendliness of local people	2	1.07
			187	
2	Resort amenities & services	Reasonable price	34	21.38
		Convenient & comfortable of accommodation ( <i>e.g., spacious rooms, pool-access rooms</i> )	27	16.98
		Various choices of resort facilities/amenities ( <i>e.g., swimming pool, camping space, restaurant, spa &amp; massage</i> )	25	15.72
		Impressive décor ( <i>e.g., Thai culture/style, luxurious, romantic</i> )	21	13.21
		Quality of services ( <i>e.g., serving delicious meals, well-trained staff</i> )	20	12.58
		Cleanliness	16	10.06
		Safety & Security	7	4.40
		A variety of resort activities	4	2.52
		Featured fun & entertainment activities	4	2.52
		Allowed pets to be on the property	1	0.63
	159			

Table 4.3 Continued

No.	Attribute	Reasons	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
3	Others	Recommended by friends/ family	21	20.19
		Found from the internet/ TV ads	19	18.27
		Good reputation ( <i>e.g., being a part of a popular chain hotel, good online reviews</i> )	12	11.54
		Part of business trip ( <i>e.g., seminars, visiting clients</i> )	7	6.73
		Good for family vacation	6	5.77
		Good place for honeymoon	5	4.81
		Satisfied with the past experience	5	4.81
		Free stay/ Hotel point redemption	5	4.81
		Part of a tour package	4	3.85
		Arranged by the university	4	3.85
		Offered the best experience	4	3.85
		Passed by	4	3.85
		Looked good on the photos	3	2.88
		Easy to visit friends and relatives	2	1.92
		Seeking novelty	2	1.92
		Room availability	1	0.96
			104	

#### 4.2 The Patterns of Resort Vacation Activities and the Vacation Recovery Experience

In this section, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to determine the multidimensionality of resort vacation activities in Thailand and the vacation recovery experience. The 38 activities used as the scale to measure the frequency and intensity of the activity participation were tested, and their pattern is shown in Table 4.4 (a) and (b). The Recovery Experience Questionnaire (REQ) was the scale adopted in the current study to assess the recovery experiences perceived by resort visitors in the vacation context. To test the multidimensionality of recovery experiences and validate this scale in the vacation setting as to whether it was consistent with scales in previous studies,

another EFA was performed on 16 items of vacation recovery experience, and its pattern is presented in Table 4.5 (a) and (b).

#### 4.2.1 Vacation Activities: Factor Analysis

The Principal Component Analysis (PCA), one of the methods in EFA, was used in this study. This method yielded a 7-factor solution for the component of resort vacation activities in Thailand, confirming their multidimensionality. Based on factor loadings, 3 activity items (writing postcards, engaging in prayers or meditation, and learning the Thai language) were dropped from the original list of activities after repeating the procedure. The seven components were *Physical & Outdoor*, *Cultural & City Interest*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, *Social & Non-exerting*, *Active Nature Pursuit*, *Personal Care*, and *Time for Myself*. Table 4.4 (a) describes each component in terms of the number of items, mean, standard deviation (SD), initial eigenvalue, the percentage of variance explained, the corresponding alpha reliability coefficient, and the result of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) and the Bartlett tests. The means of *Cultural & City Interest* ( $M = 2.61$ ,  $SD = .978$ ) and *Physical & Outdoor* ( $M = 1.57$ ,  $SD = .895$ ) were the two highest scores based on the 7-point Likert Scale (1=never did to 7=did a lot). The higher the average score, the more the respondents were likely to choose as well as frequently engage in certain activities. The KMO, which was .914, represents the sampling adequacy. With the Kaiser criterion, the seven components yielded eigenvalues above 1 and are recorded in Table 4.4 (a); together, they explained a total of 63.34% of the variance in the data set.

Table 4.4(a) Summaries of the Factors of Vacation Activities

Factor	Name	No. of items	Mean	SD	Initial Eigenvalues	Variance (%)	Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
1	Physical & Outdoor	11	1.57	.895	10.810	30.89	.913
2	Cultural & City Interest	7	2.61	.978	3.601	10.29	.866
3	Online Media & Entertainment	4	2.32	.991	2.216	6.33	.724
4	Social & Non-exerting	4	2.74	.761	1.917	5.48	.575
5	Active Nature Pursuit	4	1.73	.663	1.455	4.16	.679
6	Personal Care	2	2.29	1.095	1.157	3.31	.668
7	Time for Myself	3	2.47	.718	1.010	2.89	.507

Note: N=331, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) = .914, Bartlett test = 6079.626 ( $p=.000$ )

a. Total variance explained = 63.34%

b. 7-point Likert Scale (1=never did to 7=did a lot)

In Table 4.4 (b), all remaining activities in the model are broken down into each factor, and the results from the PCA were presented in terms of the mean, SD, factor loadings, and communality. Communalities generally indicate which variables resulting from factor analysis could work best or worst. Factor 1, *Physical & Outdoor* ( $\alpha = .913$ ) is related to activities and sports requiring bodily activity and consists of 11 activity items; most activities are performed outdoors, except sport club or fitness exercise. For instance, swimming for leisure ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 2.096$ ) and sport club or fitness exercise ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 2.096$ ) had the highest mean in this component. Factor 2, *Cultural & City Interest* ( $\alpha = .866$ ) includes activities related to learning local culture and wandering around town, including 7 activity items such as shopping ( $M = 4.92$ ,  $SD = 1.76$ ) and meeting new people [i.e., new friends, local people] ( $M = 4.38$ ,  $SD = 1.760$ ). Factor 3, *Online Media & Entertainment* ( $\alpha = .724$ ) consists of 4 activity items associated with

activities done over the internet or Wi-Fi and nightlife and entertainment activities. In factor 3, checking/ sending e-mail ( $M = 4.27$ ,  $SD = 2.136$ ) and going to a bar/nightclub ( $M = 3.55$ ,  $SD = 2.020$ ) are the best examples of online media and entertainment activities participated in during the resort vacation. Factor 4, *Social & Non-exerting* ( $\alpha = .575$ ) refers to activities required human interaction and no physical laborious. The examples of this component are eating out at the restaurant ( $M = 5.28$ ,  $SD = 1.608$ ) and spending time with family/ friends ( $M = 5.23$ ,  $SD = 1.890$ ), representing the two highest mean scores for factor 4. Factor 5, *Active nature pursuit* ( $\alpha = .675$ ) consists of four activity items related to outdoor and active interaction with nature/environment. For example, sightseeing/taking pictures & videos ( $M = 5.40$ ,  $SD = 1.700$ ) with the highest mean score and cycling ( $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = 1.886$ ) and jungle safari ( $M = 2.92$ ,  $SD = 1.920$ ) are activities that well describe this component. Factor 6, *Personal Care* ( $\alpha = .668$ ), includes two low-effort activities related to personal hygiene, wellness [i.e., spa treatment, massages] ( $M = 3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.848$ ), and going to sauna/ Jacuzzi ( $M = 2.85$ ,  $SD = 1.849$ ). The last factor, *Time for Myself* ( $\alpha = .507$ ), refers to activities requiring less effort and more independence, like listening to the radio/ watching TV ( $M = 4.74$ ,  $SD = 1.818$ ) and reading ( $M = 4.56$ ,  $SD = 1.647$ ).

Table 4.4(b) Principal Component Analysis (PCA) of Initial Activity Items

Factor and Item name	Mean	SD	Factor loadings	Communality
<i>Factor 1: Physical &amp; Outdoor</i>				
Jet skiing/Water skiing	1.93	1.665	.868	.811
Beach Volleyball	1.98	1.672	.835	.755
Surfing/Windsurfing	1.82	1.584	.813	.737
Diving ( <i>i.e., snorkeling, scuba diving</i> )	2.22	1.815	.778	.684
Paddling ( <i>i.e., canoeing, kayaking</i> )	2.25	1.740	.763	.682
Golfing	1.84	1.515	.689	.601
Rafting ( <i>i.e., bamboo rafts, rubber rafts</i> )	2.15	1.649	.664	.670
Horseback/Elephant riding	2.21	1.738	.609	.598
Swimming for leisure ( <i>in the river or sea</i> )	3.47	2.096	.561	.517
Flexibility ( <i>i.e., stretching, yoga</i> )	2.61	1.778	.538	.575
Sport club or Fitness exercise ( <i>i.e., Tennis, Weight lifting</i> )	3.47	2.006	.470	.520
<i>Factor 2: Cultural &amp; City Interest</i>				
Visiting historical/religious sites	3.82	1.956	.808	.739
Visiting museums/art galleries	3.41	2.051	.774	.740
Attending cultural events	3.52	2.013	.749	.647
Going to the zoo/Natural Parks	3.73	2.172	.614	.637
Meeting new people ( <i>i.e., new friends, local people</i> )	4.38	1.760	.608	.510
Shopping	4.92	1.761	.558	.597
Excursions ( <i>i.e., by bus, cruise, rail</i> )	4.18	1.887	.526	.539
<i>Factor 3: Online Media &amp; Entertainment</i>				
Checking/sending e-mails	4.27	2.136	.740	.657
Playing games ( <i>i.e., online or board games</i> )	3.64	2.131	.695	.672
Going to the movies/concerts	2.82	2.016	.602	.696
Going to a bar/nightclub	3.55	2.020	.530	.592
<i>Factor 4: Social &amp; Non-exerting</i>				
Trying the regional cuisine ( <i>i.e., Thai food</i> )	4.79	1.883	.741	.631
Eating out at restaurants	5.28	1.608	.688	.584
Sun bathing	3.02	2.236	.499	.671
Spending time with family/friends	5.23	1.890	.436	.473



Table 4.4(b) Continued

Factor and Item name	Mean	SD	Factor loadings	Communality
<i>Factor 5: Active Nature Pursuit</i>				
Hiking/Trekking	2.68	1.838	.574	.654
Cycling	2.99	1.886	.506	.647
Sightseeing/Taking pictures & videos	5.40	1.700	.473	.530
Jungle Safari	2.92	1.920	.451	.600
<i>Factor 6: Personal Care</i>				
Wellness (i.e., spa treatment, massages)	3.80	1.848	.736	.700
Going to Sauna/Jacuzzi	2.85	1.849	.629	.619
<i>Factor 7: Time for Myself</i>				
Reading (i.e., books, newspapers, magazines)	4.56	1.647	.641	.597
Listening to the radio/watching TV	4.74	1.818	.560	.660
Jogging/ Walking for exercise	3.56	1.842	.512	.625

Note: 7-point Likert Scale (1=never did to 7=did a lot)

- a. Extract Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
- b. Loading factors  $\leq .40$  were suppressed and are not shown in the table.
- c. Equally distributed loadings were also excluded

Based on Table 4.4 (c), the mean scores of resort vacation activities were compared and ranked from the most frequently chosen activities to the least one. Among all activities listed, sightseeing/taking pictures & videos ( $M = 5.40$ ,  $SD = 1.700$ ) appears to be the most favored activity during a resort vacation in Thailand, followed by eating out at restaurants ( $M = 5.28$ ,  $SD = 1.608$ ), spending time with family/ friends ( $M = 5.23$ ,  $SD = 1.890$ ), shopping ( $M = 4.92$ ,  $SD = 1.761$ ), and trying the regional cuisine ( $M = 4.79$ ,  $SD = 1.883$ ). Such activities are parts of 3 components: *Active Nature Pursuit*, *Cultural & City Interest*, and *Social & Non-exerting*, while the more physical active activities (e.g., jet skiing, golfing, and surfing) tend to be less involve by resort visitors in Thailand.

Table 4.4(c) Means Comparison of all Vacation Activities

Ranking	Activity	N	Mean	SD
1	Sightseeing/ Taking pictures & videos	331	5.40	1.700
2	Eating out at restaurants	331	5.28	1.608
3	Spending time with family/ friends	331	5.23	1.890
4	Shopping	331	4.92	1.761
5	Trying the regional cuisine	331	4.79	1.883
6	Listening to the radio/ watching TV	331	4.74	1.818
7	Reading	331	4.56	1.647
8	Meeting new people	331	4.38	1.760
9	Checking/ sending e-mails	331	4.27	2.136
10	Excursion	331	4.18	1.887
11	Visiting historical/ religious sites	331	3.82	1.956
12	Wellness	331	3.80	1.848
13	Going to the zoo/ Natural Parks	331	3.73	2.172
14	Playing games	331	3.64	2.131
15	Jogging/ Walking for exercise	331	3.56	1.842
16	Going to a bar or night club	331	3.55	2.020
17	Attending cultural events	331	3.52	2.013
18	Sport club or Fitness Exercise	331	3.47	2.007
19	Swimming for leisure	331	3.47	2.096
20	Visiting museums/ art galleries	331	3.41	2.051
21	Sun bathing	331	3.02	2.236
22	Cycling	331	2.99	1.886
23	Jungle Safari	331	2.92	1.920
24	Go to Sauna/ Jacuzzi	331	2.85	1.849
25	Going to the movies/ concerts	331	2.82	2.017
26	Engaging in prays or meditation	331	2.78	1.838
27	Learning Thai language	331	2.75	1.896
28	Hiking/ Trekking	331	2.68	1.838
29	Flexibility	331	2.61	1.778
30	Writing postcards	331	2.55	1.779
31	Paddling	331	2.25	1.740
32	Diving	331	2.22	1.815
33	Horseback riding/ Elephant riding	331	2.21	1.738
34	Rafting	331	2.15	1.649
35	Beach Volleyball	331	1.98	1.672
36	Jet Skiing/ Water skiing	331	1.93	1.665
37	Golfing	331	1.84	1.515
38	Surfing/ Windsurfing	331	1.82	1.584

Note: 7-point Likert Scale (1=never did to 7=did a lot)

#### 4.2.2 The Vacation Recovery Experience: Factor Analysis

To validate the multidimensionality of recovery experiences in the vacation setting, an exploratory factor analysis was executed. By performing PCA on 16 recovery experience items, a 4-factor solution was yielded for the dimensions of a vacation recovery experience perceived during a resort vacation in Thailand. Table 4.5 (a) represents each dimension in terms of the mean, standard deviation (SD), initial eigenvalue, percentage of variance explained, corresponding alpha reliability coefficient, and results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) and the Bartlett tests. *Relaxation* ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = .667$ ) showed the highest mean score based on the 5-point Likert Scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). A dimension with a high mean score implies that respondents were likely to obtain particular attributes of a vacation recovery experience by participating in resort vacation activities. In other words, most resort visitors to Thailand perceived relaxation after engaging in their chosen vacation activities. Moreover, the KMO of .869 represented the sampling adequacy. Based on the Kaiser criterion, the four dimensions with eigenvalues above 1 were recorded in Table 4.5 (a); together, they explained a total of 73.00% of the variance in the data set.

Table 4.5(a) Summaries of the Dimensions of Vacation Recovery Experiences

Dimension	Name	No. of items	Mean	SD	Initial Eigenvalues	Variance (%)	Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
1	Psychological Detachment	4	3.02	.914	5.886	36.79	.902
2	Relaxation	4	3.40	.667	3.210	20.06	.893
3	Control	4	3.10	.576	1.445	9.03	.849
4	Mastery	4	2.80	.689	1.139	7.12	.821

Note: N=331, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) = .869, Bartlett test = 3184.102

( $p=.000$ )

a. Total variance explained = 73.00%

b. 5-point Likert Scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree)

In Table 4.5 (b), all 16 items of a vacation recovery experience were classified under four dimensions by the mean, SD, factor loadings, and communality. The name of each dimension was derived from its initial measurement on the Recovery Experience Questionnaire (REQ) because the items loaded in a similar pattern to the original scale. The first dimension named *Psychological Detachment* ( $\alpha = .902$ ) included 4 items related to a sense of being mentally away from work during vacation. For example, during this resort vacation, ‘I got a break from the demands of work’ ( $M = 3.89$ ,  $SD = 1.152$ ) is a statement showing how vacation help an individual detach his/her mind from work and appears to have the highest mean score in this dimension. The second dimension named *Relaxation* ( $\alpha = .893$ ) included four items associated with a sense of being relaxed during vacation. During this resort vacation, ‘I did relaxing things’ ( $M = 4.35$ ,  $SD = .913$ ) and ‘I used time to relax’ ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = .905$ ) are the two best examples of how relaxation can be obtained by doing certain activities and spending time to relax. The third dimension named *Control* ( $\alpha = .849$ ) consisted of four items related to having control and

the freedom to choose during vacation. For instance, during this resort vacation, ‘I determined for myself how I would spend my time’ ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = .861$ ) and ‘I took care of things the way that I wanted them done’ ( $M = 4.11$ ,  $SD = .848$ ) were the two highest mean scores, implying a sense of control over time and activities. The fourth dimension named *Mastery* ( $\alpha = .821$ ) included four items related to gaining a sense of novelty and self-efficacy during vacation. Good examples of this component were during this resort vacation, ‘I learned new things’ ( $M = 4.01$ ,  $SD = 1.008$ ) and ‘I did things that challenged me’ ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $SD = 1.160$ ).

Table 4.5(b) Principal Component Analysis (PCA) of Vacation Recovery Experience  
Items

Item no. and Description	Mean	SD	Factor loadings	Communality
<i>Dimension 1: Psychological Detachment</i>				
Item 3 I distanced myself from my work	3.47	1.273	.886	.832
Item 2 I didn't think about work at all	3.43	1.276	.885	.822
Item 1 I forgot about work	3.67	1.220	.853	.781
Item 4 I got a break from the demands of work	3.89	1.152	.734	.671
<i>Dimension 2: Relaxation</i>				
Item 6 I did relaxing things	4.35	.913	.853	.842
Item 7 I used the time to relax	4.34	.905	.844	.820
Item 8 I took time for leisure	4.29	.973	.774	.755
Item 5 I kicked back and relaxed	4.21	1.082	.696	.677

Table 4.5(b) Continued

<i>Dimension 3: Control</i>		Mean	SD	Factor loadings	Communality
Item 14	I decided my own schedule	3.95	.944	.871	.806
Item 15	I determined for myself how I would spend my time	3.98	.861	.838	.750
Item 16	I took care of things the way that I wanted them done	4.11	.848	.745	.679
Item 13	I felt like I could decide for myself what to do	3.92	.888	.656	.566
<i>Dimension 4: Mastery</i>					
Item 11	I did things that challenged me	3.44	1.160	.830	.735
Item 10	I sought out intellectual challenges	3.42	1.126	.825	.719
Item 12	I did something to broaden my horizons	3.58	1.063	.742	.613
Item 9	I learned new things	4.01	1.008	.714	.611

Note: 5-point Likert Scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree)

a. Extract Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

b. Loading factors  $\leq .40$  were suppressed and are not shown in the table.

#### 4.3 The Demographic Differences of Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience

In this section, the differences of chosen vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience across different demographics were tested through a series of one way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). Gender, countries of origin, primary purposes of the trip, and regional locations of the resort were demographic variables of interest. MANOVAs were employed to explore the effect of demographic variables on the participated in vacation activities and the perceived vacation recovery experience, and could be used to answer hypothesis 3, 4, 5, and 6

related to demographic differences. Four dimensions of a vacation recovery experience and seven vacation activity factors were treated as dependent variables in this analysis and are as follows: *Psychological Detachment, Relaxation, Control, Mastery, Physical & Outdoor, Cultural & City Interest, Online Media & Entertainment, Social & Non-exerting, Active Nature Pursuit, Personal Care, and Time for Myself*. MANOVAs were run separately for vacation recovery experience dimensions and vacation activity factors because of the scale differences. Before the analysis, tests for violation of the assumptions were performed as follows: normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity; no serious violation was found in the data set. The Levene test was primarily employed to test the equality of variance, and a significant level of .001 was used for alpha. The assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was tested by running the Box test.

#### 4.3.1 Gender Differences

Tourist behaviors can differ between male and female resort visitors because of the differences in their travel motivations (Carr, 1999; Ford, 1991; Gibson, 1996). Several researchers have stated that the choices of leisure activities performed in the home environment differ between males and females (Henderson et al., 1988), indicating that activities engaged in at the vacation destination could vary between genders as well. This study thus examined gender effects on vacation activities and a vacation recovery experience by performing the MANOVA test.

Table 4.6 (a) and (b) presents statistically significant differences between males and females in terms of chosen vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience. The multivariate test resulted in  $F(7, 323) = 7.443$ ; the Wilks Lambda = .861; partial eta-squared = .139 for the significant differences between genders in their vacation activities and  $F(4, 326) = 2.261$ ; the Wilks Lambda = .973; partial eta-squared = .027 for the significant differences between genders in their vacation recovery experience. By looking at dependent variables separately, three factors of resort vacation activities were shown to differ at the significance level of .001, .01, and .05 as follows: *Physical & Outdoor* [ $F(1, 329) = 31.092, p = .000$ , partial eta-squared = .086], *Personal Care* [ $F(1, 329) = 10.075, p = .002$ , partial eta-squared = .030], and *Social & Non-exerting* [ $F(1, 329) = 5.556, p = .019$ , partial eta-squared = .017], while only *Mastery* was perceived as significantly different between males and females at the alpha level of .05 [ $F(1, 329) = 4.540, p = .034$ , partial eta-squared = .014]. The Bonferroni adjustment was used to test significant difference at the alpha level of .05 to avoid committing type I error in the hypothesis testing.

Further examination of the mean scores between males and females showed that male resort visitors reported higher scores on all vacation activity factors than females, except *Online Media & Entertainment*, *Cultural & City Interest* and *Time for Myself*. However, female resort visitors were likely to have higher scores on all vacation recovery experience dimensions, except *Psychological Detachment*. This implies that males frequently participate in more types of vacation activities during their resort vacation in Thailand, but females tend to obtain more varied attributes of a vacation recovery experience than males.



Table 4.6(a) Vacation Activity Differences by Gender (MANOVA)

Activity Factors	Levene Test (Sig.)	F	Sig	Gender			
				Male (N=141)		Female (N=190)	
				Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Physical & Outdoor	.000	31.092	.000***	1.88	1.03	1.34	.70
Cultural & City Interest	.284	.005	.942	2.61	.99	2.61	.97
Online Media & Entertainment	.368	.201	.654	2.29	.96	2.34	1.02
Social & Non-exerting	.212	5.556	.019*	2.86	.72	2.66	.78
Active Nature Pursuit	.630	3.484	.063	1.81	.66	1.67	.66
Personal Care	.032	10.075	.002**	2.51	1.15	2.13	1.02
Time for Myself	.579	.354	.552	2.44	.71	2.49	.72

Note: \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ ; Box Test=.000; Wilks Lamda=.861 ( $p=.000$ ).

- a. 7-point Likert Scale (1=Never did, 2=Slightly did, 3=Somewhat slightly did, 4=Moderately did, 5=Often did, 6=Somewhat did a lot, 7=Did a lot)

Table 4.6(b) Perceived Vacation Recovery Experience Differences by Gender (MANOVA)

Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions	Levene Test (Sig.)	F	Sig	Gender			
				Male (N=141)		Female (N=190)	
				Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Psychological Detachment	.556	.406	.524	3.06	.89	3.00	.93
Relaxation	.017	2.707	.101	3.34	.72	3.46	.62
Control	.073	1.177	.279	3.06	.61	3.13	.55
Mastery	.058	4.540	.034*	2.71	.72	2.87	.66

Note: \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ ; Box Test=.010; Wilks Lamda=.973 ( $p=.062$ ).

- a. 5-point Likert Scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree)

#### 4.3.2 Differences among Domestic Visitors, Short-haul and Long-haul International Visitors

Many previous studies have suggested that domestic and international tourists are motivated to travel by different reasons (e.g., Awaritefe, 2004, Greenwood & Moscardo, 1999, and Moscardo, 2001) and their decisions could be influenced by cultural factors

(Arora & Fosfuri, 2000; Kacen & Lee, 2002; Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007; Soutar, Grainger, & Hedges, 1999; Tahir & Larimo, 2004). Resort visitors from different countries thus may have different activity preferences and favorable vacation experiences. The current study explored such differences among three types of visitors based on their travel distance to Thailand: Domestic, short-haul international, and long-haul international visitors by performing MANOVA. No serious violation of any assumption was found. Based on multivariate tests in Table 4.7 (a) and (b), significant differences were found among different types of visitors both in vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience.

$F(14, 644) = 23.973$ ; Wilks Lambda = .432; partial eta-squared = .343 and  $F(8, 650) = 10.776$ ; Wilks Lambda = .780; partial eta-squared = .117 were test statistics for vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience respectively. While all factors of vacation activities in Table 4.7 (a) presented as statistically significant at the alpha level of .001—*Physical & Outdoor* [ $F(2, 328) = 27.000, p \leq .001$ ], *Cultural & City Interest* [ $F(2, 328) = 26.516, p \leq .001$ ], *Online Media & Entertainment* [ $F(2, 328) = 75.065, p \leq .001$ ], *Social & Non-exerting* [ $F(2, 328) = 43.172, p \leq .001$ ], *Active Nature Pursuit* [ $F(2, 328) = 13.120, p \leq .001$ ], *Personal Care* [ $F(2, 328) = 14.535, p \leq .001$ ], and *Time for Myself* [ $F(2, 328) = 9.808, p \leq .001$ ]— only three dimensions of a vacation recovery experience in Table 4.7 (b) were found to be perceived differently at the same alpha level—*Psychological Detachment* [ $F(2, 328) = 17.125, p \leq .001$ ], *Relaxation* [ $F(2, 328) = 10.856, p \leq .001$ ], and *Mastery* [ $F(2, 328) = 9.586, p \leq .001$ ].

The post hoc Scheffe test was then employed to explore differences among means of independent variables under each factor of vacation activities and vacation recovery

experience. The results from this multiple comparison method suggested statistically significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) between short-haul international visitors versus domestic and long-haul international visitors in regard to all factors of vacation activities, *Psychological Detachment*, and *Relaxation*. Moreover, the significant differences can be seen between domestic visitors versus long-haul international visitors, regarding activities related to *Cultural & City Interest*, *Social & Non-exerting*, and *Mastery*. In addition, for all dependent variables except *Control*, statistically significant differences were found between short-haul international visitors versus long-haul international visitors.

On comparing the means of these three different groups, short-haul international visitors were found to have higher mean scores than the other two groups for all dependent variables except activities related to *Social & Non-exerting*, *Psychological Detachment*, and *Relaxation*. This implies that short-haul international visitors tended to participate more frequently in *Physical & Outdoor* ( $M=1.91, SD=1.07$ ), *Cultural & City Interest* ( $M=2.92, SD=.82$ ), *Online Media & Entertainment* ( $M=2.89, SD=.87$ ), *Active Nature Pursuit* ( $M=1.91, SD=.66$ ), *Personal Care* ( $M=2.61, SD=1.04$ ), and *Time for Myself* ( $M=2.64, SD=.74$ ) activities and perceived more *Mastery* experiences ( $M=2.93, SD=.62$ ). In contrast, domestic visitors were likely to obtain more *Psychological Detachment* ( $M=3.31, SD=.83$ ) and *Relaxation* ( $M=3.58, SD=.67$ ) than the other two groups, but engaged moderately in activities related to *Cultural & City Interest* ( $M=2.56, SD=1.02$ ), *Active Nature Pursuit* ( $M=1.61, SD=.59$ ), and *Time for Myself* ( $M=2.34, SD=.64$ ) and perceive moderate sense of *Mastery* ( $M=2.81, SD=.69$ ). Long-haul international visitors, however, most frequently engaged in vacation activities related to *Social & Non-exerting* ( $M=3.23, SD=.63$ ), while perceiving the least sense of *Mastery*

( $M=2.51$ ,  $SD=.74$ ). Therefore, the results show that differences in the choices of vacation activities and the perceived vacation recovery experience exist among domestic visitors, short-haul and long-haul international visitors

Table 4.7(a) Vacation Activity Differences among Domestic Visitors, Short-haul and Long-haul International Visitors (MANOVA)

Activity Factors	Levene Test (Sig.)	F	Sig.	Type of Visitors					
				Domestic (N=98)		Short-haul international (N=161)		Long-haul international (N=72)	
				M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Physical & Outdoor	.000	27.000	.000***	1.18	.46	1.91*	1.07	1.34	.57
Cultural & City Interest	.007	26.516	.000***	2.56	1.02	2.92*	.82	1.99	.95
Online Media & Entertainment	.060	75.065	.000***	1.73	.82	2.89*	.87	1.85	.70
Social & Non-exerting	.449	43.172	.000***	2.27	.67	2.82	.70	3.23*	.63
Active Nature Pursuit	.513	13.120	.000***	1.61	.59	1.91*	.66	1.49	.66
Personal Care	.121	14.535	.000***	1.92	.96	2.61*	1.04	2.10	1.19
Time for Myself	.200	9.808	.000***	2.34	.64	2.64*	.74	2.26	.68

Note: \*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; Box Test=.000; Wilks Lamda=.432 ( $p=.000$ ).

- a. 7-point Likert Scale (1=Never did, 2= Slightly did, 3= Somewhat slightly did, 4=Moderately did, 5=Often did, 6=Somewhat did a lot, 7=Did a lot)

Table 4.7(b) Perceived Vacation Recovery Experience Differences among Domestic Visitors, Short-haul and Long-haul International Visitors (MANOVA)

Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions	Levene Test (Sig.)	F	Sig.	Type of visitors					
				Domestic (N=98)		Short-haul international (N=161)		Long-haul international (N=72)	
				M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Psychological Detachment	.405	17.125	.000***	3.31*	.83	2.74	.92	3.27	.83
Relaxation	.349	10.856	.000***	3.58*	.67	3.24	.66	3.54	.57
Control	.008	2.462	.087	3.02	.59	3.11	.52	3.21	.67
Mastery	.088	9.586	.000***	2.81	.69	2.93*	.62	2.51	.74

Note: \*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; Box Test=.000; Wilks Lambda=.780 ( $p=.000$ ).

- a. 5-point Likert Scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree)

#### 4.3.3 Differences in Primary Purposes of the Trip

The primary purpose of the trip is known to have an important effect on tourist destination choices (Hwang & Fesenmaier, 2003). Since such a variable can lead resort visitors to visit different destinations based on the nature of the trip, it can be assumed to influence tourist activity selections and their vacation experiences as well. In the present study, five primary purposes of the trip to various resort destinations in Thailand were compared by using MANOVA: Business + Leisure, Recreation, Stopping over on the way to another destination (Stopping over), Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR), and Others (not classified in the other four, such as retreats, summer camps). After checking the assumptions, no serious violation was detected in the data set. Table 4.8 (a) and (b) show statistically significant differences exist among the different primary purposes of the trip,  $F(28, 1155) = 3.559$ ; Wilks Lambda = .742; partial eta-squared = .072 for the test

on vacation activities and  $F(16, 987) = 4.529$ ; Wilks Lambda = .805; partial eta-squared = .053 for the test on perceived vacation recovery experience. According to Table 4.8 (a), all vacation activity components were significantly different at the alpha level of .001, .01, and .05, except *Active Nature Pursuit* [ $F(4, 326) = 14.394, p = .084$ ] and *Time for Myself* [ $F(4, 326) = 10.508, p = .059$ ]. The examples of significant vacation activities were *Physical & Outdoor Activities* [ $F(4, 326) = 11.731, p = .000$ ], *Online Media & Entertainment* [ $F(4, 326) = 4.894, p = .001$ ], and *Personal Care* [ $F(4, 326) = 4.354, p = .002$ ]. Moreover, the results in Table 4.8 (b) showed that only *Psychological Detachment* [ $F(4, 326) = 10.210, p = .000$ ] and *Relaxation* [ $F(4, 326) = 9.952, p = .000$ ] were perceived as significantly different among resort visitors having different primary purposes for their trip. The overall results thus suggest that resort visitors with different primary purposes for the trip were likely to engage in vacation activities differently and perceive a sense of psychological detachment and relaxation differently.

Furthermore, the results from the Scheffe test suggested that significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) existed among five different primary purposes of the trip based on the means comparison. The participation in activities categorized as *Physical & Outdoor*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, *Social & Non-exerting*, and *Personal Care* and the perception of a sense of *Psychological Detachment* and *Relaxation* was found to have significant differences among resort visitors with different trip purposes. For example, the levels of participation in *Physical & Outdoor* were found to be significantly different when comparing Business + leisure with VFR and considering Recreation against Stopping over and VFR. The results suggest that the resort visitors with Business + Leisure purpose ( $M = 1.46, SD = 1.03$ ) seemed to engage in *Physical & Outdoor* activities

significantly less than those whose purpose was VFR ( $M=2.07$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ) and the VFR visitors were likely to engage the most frequent in *Physical & Outdoor* when compared with the other groups. The other example was the participation in *Online Media & Entertainment*, which showed a significant difference between the groups of resort visitors with recreation and VFR as their primary purpose. The visitors with a Recreation purpose ( $M=2.08$ ,  $SD=.98$ ) were likely to report lower scores on *Online Media & Entertainment* activities than those with a VFR purpose ( $M=2.73$ ,  $SD=.88$ ), suggesting that visitors with a VFR purpose were more likely to participate in such activities than those with a recreation purpose. In addition, resort visitors with a Business + Leisure purpose ( $M=2.49$ ,  $SD=.81$ ) appeared to engage significantly less frequent in *Social & Non-exerting* activities than those with Stopping over purpose ( $M=2.97$ ,  $SD=.70$ ). By contrast, those with a Recreation purpose ( $M=4.11$ ,  $SD=2.20$ ) were found to engage in *Personal Care* activities significantly less frequent than those Stopping over ( $M=2.63$ ,  $SD=1.06$ ). Interestingly, the *Cultural & City Interest* activity factor were not present any significant difference among visitors with different primary purposes of the trip on the post hoc test, although it yielded a significant effect on the overall model ( $p \leq .01$ ).

In terms of perceived vacation recovery experience, *Psychological Detachment*, for example, was perceived as significantly different between the resort visitors with Business + Leisure purpose and those with the other three primary purposes (Recreation, Stopping over, and VFR). The visitors with Business + Leisure purpose were likely to exhibit the lowest score ( $M=2.35$ ,  $SD=1.01$ ) when rating their perceived *Psychological Detachment* than the other three: Recreation ( $M=3.17$ ,  $SD=.86$ ), Stopping over ( $M=3.23$ ,  $SD=.81$ ), and VFR ( $M=3.04$ ,  $SD=.77$ ), meaning that business-oriented resort visitors had

a harder time detaching their mind from work than the other groups. Additionally, Relaxation was the other dimension of vacation recovery experiences that yielded significant differences among the resort visitors with different primary purposes for the trip. The visitors with a Recreation purpose ( $M=3.63$ ,  $SD=.49$ ) appeared to have a higher mean score in such dimension than those with a Business + Leisure ( $M=3.02$ ,  $SD=.85$ ) and Stopping over ( $M=3.63$ ,  $SD=.49$ ) purpose, meaning that recreation-oriented visitors were likely to be more relaxed than those with business and stopping over purpose.

Table 4.8(a) Vacation Activity Differences among Primary Purposes of the Trip (MANOVA)

Activity Factors	Levene Test (Sig.)	F	Sig	Primary Purpose of the Trip					
				Business + Leisure (N=53)		Recreation (N=144)		Stop over (N=74)	
				M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Physical & Outdoor	.000	11.731	.000***	1.46	1.03	1.27	.51	1.89	.97
Cultural & City Interest	.019	3.349	.010**	2.88	1.05	2.43	.99	2.69	.87
Online Media & Entertainment	.754	4.894	.001***	2.47	.98	2.08	.98	2.43	1.00
Social & Non-exerting	.394	4.308	.002**	2.49	.81	2.69	.76	2.97*	.70
Active Nature Pursuit	.489	2.076	.084	1.64	.70	1.66	.66	1.88	.60
Personal Care	.752	4.354	.002**	2.23	1.04	2.05	1.10	2.63*	1.06
Time for Self	.207	2.299	.059	2.43	.85	2.39	.69	2.48	.66



Table 4.8(a) Continued

Activity Factors	Primary Purpose of the Trip			
	VFR (N=47)		Others (N=13)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Physical & Outdoor	2.07*	1.14	1.70	.89
Cultural & City Interest	2.81	.98	2.25	.66
Online Media & Entertainment	2.73*	.88	2.21	.89
Social Time	2.74	.73	3.15	.64
Active Nature Pursuit	1.85	.69	1.66	.60
Personal Care	2.54	1.01	2.37	1.17
Time for Myself	2.74	.67	2.47	.77

Note: \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ ; Box Test=.000; Wilks Lamda=.742 ( $p=.000$ ).

a. 7-point Likert Scale

b. Stopping over = Stopping over on the way to another destination, VFR = Visiting Friends and Relatives

Table 4.8(b) Perceived Vacation Recovery Experience Differences among Primary Purposes of the Trip (MANOVA)

Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions	Levene Test (Sig.)	F	Sig	Primary Purposes of the Trip					
				Business + Leisure (N=53)		Recreation (N=144)		Stop over (N=74)	
				M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Psychological Detachment	.089	10.210	.000***	2.35	1.01	3.17*	.86	3.23*	.81
Relaxation	.000	9.952	.000***	3.02	.85	3.63*	.49	3.33	.62
Control	.179	1.674	.156	2.95	.65	3.18	.57	3.09	.54
Mastery	.693	1.313	.265	2.84	.69	2.82	.69	2.70	.70

Table 4.8(b) Continued

Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions	Primary Purposes of the Trip			
	VFR (N=47)		Others (N=13)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Psychological Detachment	3.04*	.77	2.90	.92
Relaxation	3.30	.66	3.28	.92
Control	3.08	.49	3.02	.71
Mastery	2.93	.61	2.55	.84

Note: \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ ; Box Test=.000; Wilks Lamda=.805 ( $p=.000$ ).

a. 5-point Likert Scale

b. Stopping over = Stopping over on the way to another destination, VFR = Visiting Friends and Relatives

#### 4.3.4 Differences in Regional Locations of the Resort Destinations

Resort destinations are found in diversified locations and environments and tend to offer a variety of activities as well as vacation experiences (Brey, Morison, & Mills, 2007; Shelton, 2001). Since the geography of Thailand is diverse, resort destinations are characterized by various regional landscapes (i.e., mountains, rivers, and beaches), which can influence a visitor's activity choices and their perception of vacation recovery experiences. Although four distinct regions of Thailand were suggested by TAT (2014a), the north and north east areas have similar geographical characteristics (i.e., lots of hills and forests) and offer identical activities (i.e., nature and cultural-based activities), so they can be grouped into the same region. The chosen resort destinations were then grouped into three regions (north & north east, central & nearby coastal provinces, and south) and such regions are treated as independent variables in this case. MANOVA was applied to determine the differences in the regional locations of Thailand. Testing for the model assumptions did not show any violation, however, statistically significant differences in vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience were found among different regional resort locations as shown in Table 4.9 (a) and (b).

The tests of multivariate for vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience among different regional locations of the chosen resorts resulted in  $F(14, 644) = 20.327$ , Wilks Lambda = .481,  $p = .000$ , partial eta-squared = .306 and  $F(8, 650) = 7.085$ , Wilks Lambda = .846,  $p = .015$ , partial eta-squared = .025 respectively. According to the test for between-subject effects in Table 4.9 (a) and (b), the significant differences at the alpha level of .05, .01, and .001 were found among different regional

locations of the resorts for both vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience: *Physical & Outdoor* [ $F(2, 328) = 37.363, p = .000$ ], *Online Media & Entertainment* [ $F(2, 328) = 9.360, p = .000$ ], *Social & Non-exerting* [ $F(2, 328) = 31.753, p = .000$ ], and *Personal Care* [ $F(2, 328) = 4.318, p = .014$ ] as well as *Psychological Detachment* [ $F(2, 328) = 12.901, p = .000$ ], *Relaxation* [ $F(2, 328) = 4.239, p = .015$ ], and *Mastery* [ $F(2, 328) = 3.838, p = .023$ ].

The results from multiple comparisons using the post hoc Scheffe test revealed that the significant differences ( $p \leq .05$ ) among different regional locations could be found in *Physical & Outdoor*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, *Social & Non-exerting*, and *Personal Care* activity factor, perceived sense of *Psychological Detachment*, *Relaxation*, and *Mastery*. The resort visitors who reported going to resorts in the south ( $M=2.03, SD=.99$ ) area were more likely to participate in *Physical & Outdoor* activities than those who went to the central & nearby coastal provinces ( $M=1.44, SD=.81$ ) and the north & north east ( $M=1.13, SD=.52$ ). Similarly, the resort visitors who chose to stay at resorts located in the south ( $M=3.10, SD=.69$ ) tended to engage in *Social & Non-exerting* activities more frequently than those staying at the resorts in the central & nearby coastal provinces ( $M=2.66, SD=.71$ ) and the north & north East ( $M=2.37, SD=.70$ ). Additionally, visitors who reported staying at resorts in the north & north East area ( $M=2.60, SD=.99$ ) tended to engage in *Online Media & Entertainment* activities significantly more than others who stayed at resorts in the Central & nearby Coastal Provinces of Thailand ( $M=2.01, SD=1.03$ ). The resort visitors who stayed at resorts in the south ( $M=2.51, SD=1.14$ ) participated significantly more in activities associated with

*Personal Care* than those who went to resorts in the central & nearby coastal provinces ( $M=2.14, SD=1.02$ ).

In terms of perceived vacation recovery experience, *Psychological Detachment* was found to be perceived significantly less among resort visitors in the north & north east ( $M=2.67, SD=.93$ ) area than those in the central & nearby coastal provinces ( $M=3.25, SD=.88$ ) and the south ( $M=3.14, SD=.85$ ). On the other hand, the resort visitors who vacationed at resorts located in the central & nearby coastal provinces ( $M=3.55, SD=.54$ ) perceived a sense of *Relaxation* significantly higher than those who went to resorts in the south of Thailand ( $M=3.29, SD=.70$ ). Interestingly, perceiving *Mastery* was obtained significantly higher among resort visitors who visited the north and north east resorts ( $M=2.93, SD=.63$ ) than those staying at the southern resorts ( $M=2.69, SD=.69$ ).

Table 4.9(a) Vacation Activity Differences among Regional Locations of the Resort Destinations (MANOVA)

Activity Factors	Levene Test (Sig.)	Regional Location of the Resort							
		F	Sig	N & N/E (N=104)		Central (N=98)		South (N=129)	
				M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Physical & Outdoor	.000	37.363	.000***	1.13	.52	1.44	.81	2.03*	.99
Cultural & City Interest	.347	1.790	.169	2.70	.91	2.68	1.00	2.48	1.00
Online Media & Entertainment	.296	9.360	.000***	2.60*	.99	2.01	1.03	2.32	.90
Social & Non-exerting	.726	31.753	.000***	2.37	.70	2.66	.71	3.10*	.69
Active Nature Pursuits	.829	.471	.625	1.73	.68	1.68	.66	1.77	.66
Personal Care	.295	4.318	.014*	2.16	1.06	2.14	1.02	2.51*	1.14
Time for Myself	.946	.107	.898	2.49	.71	2.47	.71	2.45	.74

Note: \*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; Box's Test=.000; Wilks Lamda=.481 ( $p=.000$ ).

a. 7-point Likert Scale

b. N & N/E = north & north east; Central = central & nearby coastal provinces

Table 4.9(b) Perceived Vacation Recovery Experience Differences among Regional Locations of the Resort Destinations (MANOVA)

Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions	Levene Test (Sig.)	Regional Location of the Resort							
		F	Sig	N & N/E (N=104)		Central (N=98)		South (N=129)	
				M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Psychological Detachment	.679	12.901	.000***	2.67	.93	3.25*	.88	3.14*	.85
Relaxation	.017	4.239	.015*	3.41	.71	3.55*	.54	3.29	.70
Control	.521	.056	.946	3.12	.55	3.10	.58	3.09	.59
Mastery	.216	3.838	.023*	2.93*	.63	2.81	.73	2.69	.69

Note: \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ ; Box Test=.003; Wilks Lamda=.846 ( $p=.000$ ).

- a. 5-point Likert Scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree)
- b. N & N/E = north & north east; Central = central & nearby coastal provinces

The results of tested hypotheses using MANOVAs were found to support hypothesis 3, 4, 5, and 6 as presented in Table 4.10 since the different effects could be seen among these demographic variables.

Table 4.10 The Summarized Results of Hypotheses Testing for Socio-Demographic Differences (H3)

Hypotheses	Results
<i>Hypothesis (H3):</i> Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist between male and female resort visitors in Thailand.	Supported
<i>Hypothesis (H4):</i> Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist among different regional locations of the chosen resort destinations in Thailand.	Supported
<i>Hypothesis (H5):</i> Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist among domestic visitors, short-haul international visitors, and long-haul international visitors.	Supported
<i>Hypothesis (H6):</i> Differences in vacation activities and vacation recovery experiences exist among visitors with different primary purposes of the trip.	Supported

#### 4.4 The Relationship between Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience

After using MANOVAs to detect the significant differences existing among perceived vacation recovery experience and vacation activities across the demographics, the Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis and the Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA) were performed to test hypothesis 1 and 2.

##### 4.4.1 The Effects of Vacation Activities on Vacation Recovery Experience: Regression Analysis

The MLR was performed first to determine the effects of vacation activity factors on each dimension of vacation recovery experience. The series of regression were run separately on each dimension of vacation recovery experience, which resulted in four regression models. The MLRs' results are presented in Table 4.11 (a) and (b). The overall results in Table 4.11 (a) show that all four models were found to have significant predictors at the alpha level of .001, meaning that particular factors of vacation activities were important in explaining a certain dimension of vacation recovery experience. According to Table 4.11 (b), the variances inflation (VIFs) for all predicted variables were less than 10 and the condition indices were less than 30, indicating no violation of collinearity in any model (Belsley, 1991; Kleinbaum et al., 2008). To determine which independent variables meaningfully predict the specific dependent variable in each model, the *t* statistic test was employed. Stepwise regression was chosen as a procedure to identify the independent variables that should be included in the model by adding and removing independent variables until all variables included in the model were significant (Kleinbaum et al., 2008). In this case, the significant level was set at  $p \leq .05$  so if any *t*

value of an independent variable was found to be significant at this alpha level, it would then be retained in the model.

For the first model, *Psychological Detachment* was a dependent variable. The F-value of 13.086 was found to be significant at  $p \leq .001$ , suggesting that the result of the equation model could have been important in explaining the dependent variable. By following the selection procedure, four factors were found to be important in explaining perceived *Psychological Detachment* as Factor 1: *Social & Non-exerting* ( $t=3.935$ ,  $p=.000$ ), Factor 2: *Online Media & Entertainment* ( $t=-5.912$ ,  $p=.000$ ), Factor 3: *Time for Myself* ( $t=2.632$ ,  $p=.009$ ), and Factor 4: *Active Nature Pursuit* ( $t=2.524$ ,  $p=.012$ ). With *Relaxation* as a dependent variable in the second model, F-value was 12.913 and the model was found to have a significant difference at  $p \leq .001$ . When looking at the  $t$  statistic test, it resulted in four factors that could meaningfully explain perceived *Relaxation* as Factor 1: *Physical & Outdoor* ( $t=-3.791$ ,  $p=.000$ ), Factor 2: *Time for Myself* ( $t=4.236$ ,  $p=.000$ ), Factor 3: *Online Media & Entertainment* ( $t=-4.126$ ,  $p=.000$ ), and Factor 4: *Social & Non-exerting* ( $t=3.084$ ,  $p=.002$ ). The third model, *Control* was treated as a dependent variable in the MLR. F-value of 7.469 was significant at  $p \leq .001$  and only two important factors explaining perceived *Control* as Factor 1: *Social & Non-exerting* ( $t=2.410$ ,  $p=.016$ ) and Factor 2: *Time for Self* ( $t=2.336$ ,  $p=.020$ ). The fourth model is the model predicting *Mastery* perceived during vacation. The F-value of 37.997 was yielded, presenting a significant difference at  $p \leq .001$ . Two factors appeared to be the important predictors for perceived *Mastery* as Factor 1: *Cultural & City Interest* ( $t=8.705$ ,  $p=.000$ ) and Factor 2: *Social & Non-exerting* ( $t=-2.069$ ,  $p=.039$ ).

Table 4.11(a) Overall Effect of Four Activity-Recovery Models in MLR  
(Summary Table)

Model	Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Psychological Detachment ( $R^2 = .138$ , <i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .128</i> )	Regression	38.147	4	9.537	13.086	.000
		Residual	237.582	326	.729		
		Total	275.728	330			
2	Relaxation ( $R^2 = .137$ , <i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .126</i> )	Regression	20.058	4	5.014	12.913	.000
		Residual	126.591	326	.388		
		Total	146.648	330			
3	Control ( $R^2 = .044$ , <i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .038</i> )	Regression	4.769	2	2.384	7.469	.001
		Residual	104.706	328	.319		
		Total	109.475	330			
4	Mastery ( $R^2 = .188$ , <i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .183</i> )	Regression	29.479	2	14.739	37.997	.000
		Residual	127.233	328	.388		
		Total	156.712	330			

Note:  $p \leq .001$

Table 4.11(b) Significant Effects of Vacation Activity Factors on Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions (Variables in the Equation)

Model	Predicted Variable	B	$\beta$	t value	Sig	VIF	Condition Index
1	(constant)	2.238		10.176	.000		1.000
	<u>Factor 1</u> : Social & Non-exerting	.256	.213	3.935	.000	1.108	6.885
	<u>Factor 2</u> : Online Media & Entertainment	-.330	-.357	-5.912	.000	1.381	7.527
	<u>Factor 3</u> : Time for Myself	.203	.160	2.632	.009	1.394	9.694
	<u>Factor 4</u> : Active Nature Pursuit	.200	.145	2.524	.012	1.254	12.342
2	(Constant)	3.084		19.584	.000		1.000
	<u>Factor 1</u> : Physical & Outdoor	-.168	-.225	-3.791	.000	1.331	5.334
	<u>Factor 2</u> : Time for Myself	.234	.252	4.236	.000	1.338	7.024
	<u>Factor 3</u> : Online Media & Entertainment	-.173	-.257	-4.126	.000	1.466	9.582
	<u>Factor 4</u> : Social & Non-exerting	.149	.170	3.084	.002	1.143	12.344
3	(Constant)	2.566		18.047	.000		1.000
	<u>Factor 1</u> : Social & Non-exerting	.102	.134	2.410	.016	1.064	7.184
	<u>Factor 2</u> : Time for Self	.104	.130	2.336	.020	1.064	9.577



Table 4.11(b) Continued

4	(Constant)	2.235		15.874	.000		1.000
	<u>Factor 1</u> : Cultural & City Interest	.319	.452	8.705	.000	1.092	6.108
	<u>Factor 2</u> : Social & Non-exerting	-.097	-.108	-2.069	.039	1.092	8.964

Note: a. Dependent Variables: Model 1=Psychological Detachment, Model 2=Relaxation, Model 3=Control, Model 4=Mastery

b.  $p \leq .05$

Based on the result in Table 4.11 (b), the following regression equation for each model reflects a respondent's opinions on specific factors affecting their perceived vacation recovery experience during their resort vacation in Thailand:

Equation of Model 1:

$$\text{Psychological Detachment} = 2.238 + .256 \text{ Social \& Non-exerting} - .330 \text{ Online Media \& Entertainment} + .203 \text{ Time for Myself} + .200 \text{ Active Nature Pursuit}$$

Equation of Model 2:

$$\text{Relaxation} = 3.084 - .168 \text{ Physical \& Outdoor} + .234 \text{ Time for Myself} - .173 \text{ Online Media \& Entertainment} + .149 \text{ Social \& Non-exerting}$$

Equation of Model 3:

$$\text{Control} = 2.566 + .102 \text{ Social \& Non-exerting} + .104 \text{ Time for Myself}$$

Equation of Model 4:

$$\text{Mastery} = 2.235 + .319 \text{ Cultural \& City Interest} - .097 \text{ Social \& Non-exerting}$$

The interpretation of such equations for the models is that the variations of each perceived vacation recovery experience dimension can be significantly predicted by those variables included in each model. First, participating in activities related to *Social & Non-exerting*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, *Time for Myself*, and *Active Nature Pursuit* can explain the perceived sense of *Psychological Detachment* during a resort vacation in

Thailand. Second, participating in activities related to *Physical & Outdoor*, *Time for Myself*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, and *Social & Non-exerting* together can contribute importantly to the sense of *Relaxation* perceived during a resort vacation in Thailand. Third, participating in *Social & Non-exerting* and *Time for Myself* activities together can crucially contribute to the sense of *Control* perceived during a resort vacation in Thailand. Fourth, participating in activities related to *Cultural & City Interest* and *Social & Non-exerting* is conducive in explaining the perceived sense of *Mastery* during a resort vacation in Thailand.

Moreover, the unstandardized coefficients (B) in the equation suggest that the effect sizes of each predicted variable over the response (dependent) variable can be estimated. For instance, an increase of one unit in the predicted variable, *Social & Non-exerting* will lead to an increase of .102 in the response variable, *Control*, meaning that the more frequent the resort visitors engage in *Social & Non-exerting* activities, the more *Control* will be perceived. Since both predicted variables for *Control* were positive, the higher score of activities related to *Social & Non-exerting* and *Time for myself* indicated more favorable perception of *Control* derived from participating in such activities during a resort vacation in Thailand. The opposite can be seen in an increase of one unit in the predicted variable, *Online Media & Entertainment*, which will result in a decrease by .330 in the response variable, *Psychological Detachment*, meaning that the more frequent the respondent participated in the activities associated with *Online Media & Entertainment*, the less sense of *Psychological Detachment* was perceived.

In addition, the unstandardized coefficient B shows the important order of the predicted variables. In other words, the 'B' coefficient can suggest which predictor

provides a more powerful effect in predicting a certain dependent variable. For instance, *Time for myself* ( $B=.234$ ) tends to be the most influential predictor, explaining a sense of *Relaxation*, followed by *Online Media & Entertainment* ( $B= .173$ ), *Physical & Outdoor* ( $B=.168$ ), and *Social & Non-exerting* ( $B=.149$ ).

#### 4.4.2 The Correlation between Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience: Canonical Correlation Analysis

Understanding how certain vacation activities are tied to the specific attributes of vacation recovery experience will offer some marketing tools to resort operators in terms of providing the right activities or programs that can be tailored to the right vacation experiences. Only a few studies have examined the relationship between these two variables. This study is also the first in analyzing such a relationship in the context of resort vacations in Thailand. To further explore the association among the seven factors of resort vacation activities and the four dimensions of vacation recovery experience, Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA) was used. CCA is regarded as one of the multivariate techniques allowing simultaneous comparison among a set of independent (predictor) variables with many dependent (criterion) variables (Hotelling, 1936), meaning that only one statistical test can be performed on all variables of interest. Such a technique is also known to reduce the chance of Type I error, because it allows fewer tests to be executed on the same data set (Sherry & Henson, 2005). In CCA, however, there are no fixed criteria for evaluating the significance unlike the regular statistical correlation test. Sherry and Henson (2005) suggested that canonical structure coefficients ( $r$ ) loaded above .45 could be used for comparison following the selection criteria in

many factor analyses because such canonical coefficients were identical to factor scores, presenting the relationship between a variable and a canonical variate (Kuylen & Verhallen, 1981). Like the factor analysis, high canonical loadings imply the more significant roles of variables in creating canonical functions and imply high shared variance or high degree of intercorrelation among the sets of predictor and criterion variables (Hair et al., 2010). In this study, CCA was performed on two separate levels of vacation activities: Factor and item level.

#### 4.4.2.1 Vacation Activity Factors and Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions

The results in Table 4.12 (a) suggest that the full CCA model has a significant correlation across all functions of the relationship between vacation activity factors (predictors) and vacation recovery experience dimensions (criterion or dependent variables):  $F(28, 1155.2) = 7.799$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ; Wilks Lambda = .53567. Table 4.12 (b) shows that the ratio of the eigenvalue is the ratio of explanatory importance of the four canonical correlations (labeled “roots”) with squared canonical correlation ( $Rc^2$ ):  $Rc_1^2 = .2675$ ,  $Rc_2^2 = .1691$ ,  $Rc_3^2 = .0909$ , and  $Rc_4^2 = .0319$ . The unexplained variance of the model can be denoted by Wilks Lambda, meaning that 1 minus the value of Wilks Lambda can produce the full model effect size in an  $r^2$  metric (Nimon, Henson, & Gates, 2010). For this set of four canonical functions, the  $r^2$  type effect size was .4643, indicating that approximately 46% of the variance shared between the variable sets can be explained by the full model.

Table 4.12 (c) presents the results from the dimension reduction analysis which was used to test the hierarchical arrangement of functions for statistical significance.

When the full model (Root 1 to 4) was statistically significant, Root 2 to 4 and 3 to 4 were also statistically significant:  $F(18, 908.4) = 5.904$ ,  $p \leq .001$ , and  $F(10, 644) = 4.245$ ,  $p \leq .001$ , respectively. Although Root 4, which was tested separately, did yield statistical significance at the alpha level of .05 [ $F(4, 323) = 2.659$ ,  $p = .033$ ], it did not explain the substantial portion of shared variance between the variable sets ( $Rc_4^2 = .0318$  or 3.18%).

Table 4.12(a) Multivariate Tests of Significance: Factor Level

Test Name	Value	Approximate F	Hypothesis DF	Error DF	Pr > F
Wilks Lambda	.53567	7.799	28	1155.2	.000
Pillai Trace	.55938	7.502	28	1292.0	.000
Hotelling-Lawley Trace	.70164	7.981	28	1274.0	.000
Roy Greatest Root	.26753				

Note: N = 159; VAR variables (Predictors): N=7; WITH variables (Criteria): N=4

a. F Statistic for Roy Greatest Root is an upper bound.

Table 4.12(b) Eigenvalues and Canonical Correlations: Factor Level

Root No.	Eigenvalue	Percentage (%)	Cumulative (%)	Canonical Correlation	Square Correlation ( $R_c^2$ )
1	.36525	52.06	52.06	.51723	.2675
2	.20352	29.01	81.06	.41122	.1691
3	.09994	14.24	95.31	.30143	.0909
4	.03293	4.69	100.00	.17856	.0318

Note: Eigenvalues of  $\text{Inv}(E)*H = R_c^2 / (1 - R_c^2)$

a. Test of  $H_0$ : The canonical correlations in the current row and all that follow are zero.

b. Canonical correlation for each function separately

Table 4.12(c) Dimension Reduction Analysis: Factor Level

Roots	Wilks L.	F	Hypoth. DF	Error DF	Sig. of F
1 to 4	.53567	7.799	28	1155.2	.000
2 to 4	.73132	5.904	18	908.4	.000
3 to 4	.88015	4.245	10	644.0	.000
4 to 4	.96812	2.659	4	323.0	.033

Note: Hierarchical statistical significance tests in which only the last canonical function was tested separately

After reviewing the significance test and  $R_c^2$  for each function, only three canonical functions were analyzed to determine the relationship between the two sets of variables, which were seven factors of vacation activities (Physical & Outdoor, Cultural & City Interest, Online Media & Entertainment, Social & Non-exerting, Active Nature Pursuit, Personal Care, and Time for Myself), and the four dimensions of vacation recovery experience (Psychological Detachment, Relaxation, Control, and Mastery).

In the factor level, the variables with canonical loadings above .45 (as previously mentioned) were selected from the vacation activity factors as the predictors (V) and from the vacation recovery experience dimensions as the criterion variables (W) and were underlined in Table 4.12 (d). The chosen variables were interpreted in terms of an association between certain factors of vacation activities and specific dimensions of vacation recovery experience. For the first canonical function (result from V1 and W1), *Cultural & City Interest* ( $r = .7566$ ), *Online Media & Entertainment* ( $r = .5873$ ), and *Physical & Outdoor* ( $r = .4718$ ) were chosen as the predictor (V1), while *Mastery* ( $r = .7004$ ) was the only criterion variable (W1) chosen. Based on the canonical loadings, *Cultural & City Interest*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, and *Physical & Outdoor* appeared to have significant positive association with perceived *Mastery*. It implies that resort visitors who frequently engage in cultural and local activities (e.g., visiting ancient sites, local markets), online and nightlife entertainment activities (e.g., playing online games, hanging out in a bar), and physical skill-based and outdoor sports (e.g., golfing, playing water-based sports) are likely to obtain *Mastery* experiences from having a vacation in Thailand.

The second canonical function (result from V2 and W2) is the next strongest relationship. By assuming the first function does not exist, *Cultural & City Interest* ( $r = -.5777$ ) and *Active Nature Pursuit* ( $r = -.5390$ ) were selected as the high canonical loadings for predictors (V2). On the criterion side (W2), *Relaxation* ( $r = -.8487$ ), *Psychological Detachment* ( $r = -.7001$ ), *Mastery* ( $r = -.6116$ ), and *Control* ( $r = -.4533$ ) were all selected. Only positive associations can be seen between these chosen predictors and criterion variables in this function. The interpretation can be drawn from such an outcome, as the more resort visitors engage in culture and city oriented activities (e.g., attending cultural events, visiting museums, and excursion) and outdoor activities offered in nature-based settings/environment (e.g., sightseeing, hiking, and jungle safari), the more they can obtain sense of relaxation, psychological detachment, mastery, and control.

The third canonical function is the last strongest relationship if the first two functions are assumed not to be existed. *Physical & Outdoor* ( $r = .7806$ ) and *Social & Non-exerting* ( $r = .6263$ ) are the only two predictors with dominant loadings in V3, while *Psychological Detachment* ( $r = .5504$ ) is the only criterion variable considered in W3. Both *Physical & Outdoor* and *Social & Non-exerting* were found to have a positive relationship with *Psychological Detachment*. The interpretation of such a result may be that frequently participating in physically active and outdoor sport activities (e.g., water-based sports, golfing, and fitness exercises) and activities related to either socializing with others (e.g., dining out and spending time with family) or less physical used (e.g., sun bathing) are likely to offer an opportunity for resort visitors to free their mind from thinking about work and what they do on a regular basis.

Table 4.12(d) Canonical Solution for Vacation Activity Factors Predicting Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions for Functions 1, 2, and 3

Vacation Activity Factors (V)	Function 1		Function 2		Function 3	
	V1	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	V2	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	V3	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Physical & Outdoor Activities	<u>.4718</u>	22.26	.0790	0.62	<u>.7806</u>	60.93
Cultural & City Interest	<u>.7566</u>	57.24	<u>-.5777</u>	33.37	.1381	1.91
Online Media & Entertainment	<u>.5873</u>	34.49	.1702	2.90	.0847	0.72
Social & Non-exerting	-.1797	3.23	-.3044	9.27	<u>.6263</u>	39.23
Active Nature Pursuit	.3823	14.62	<u>-.5390</u>	29.05	.2634	6.94
Personal Care	.2481	6.16	-.1501	2.25	.1983	3.93
Time for Myself	.1711	2.93	-.4304	18.52	.2093	4.38
Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions (W)	W1	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	W2	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	W3	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Psychological Detachment	-.3132	9.81	<u>-.7001</u>	49.01	<u>.5504</u>	30.29
Relaxation	-.4436	19.68	<u>-.8487</u>	72.03	-.2837	8.05
Control	-.1421	2.02	<u>-.4533</u>	20.55	.1802	3.25
Mastery	<u>.7004</u>	49.06	<u>-.6116</u>	37.41	-.0740	0.55

Note: a. V1, V2, V3 represent structure coefficients (r) of vacation activity factors (Predictors).

b. W1, W2, W3 represent structure coefficients (r) of vacation recovery experience dimensions (Criterion variable).

c.  $r > .45$  is underlined

#### 4.4.2.2 Vacation Activity Items and Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions

To better understand the relationship between participated in vacation activities and perceived vacation recovery experience, the item level of vacation activities needs to be considered. The CCA was also performed on the initial 38 items of vacation activities with the 4 dimensions of a vacation recovery experience. The results in Table 4.13 (a), suggest that the full CCA model has a significant difference across all functions of the correlation between vacation activity items (predictors) and vacation recovery experience dimensions (criterion or dependent variables):  $F(152, 1154.2) = 3.134, p \leq .001$ ; Wilks Lambda = .25239. Table 4.13 (b) shows that the ratio of the eigenvalue is the ratio of



explanatory importance of the four canonical correlations (labeled as “roots”) with a squared canonical correlation ( $Rc^2$ ):  $Rc_1^2 = .42924$ ,  $Rc_2^2 = .29868$ ,  $Rc_3^2 = .23459$ , and  $Rc_4^2 = .17622$ . In this set of four canonical functions, the  $r^2$  type effect size (1 - the value of Wilks Lambda) was found to be .74761, indicating that approximately 74.8% of the variance shared between the variable sets can be explained by the full model.

The result of the dimension reduction analysis shown in Table 4.13 (c) presents the test of hierarchical arrangement of functions for statistical significance. When the full model (Root 1 to 4) was statistically significant, Root 2 to 4 and 3 to 4 were also statistically significant:  $F(111, 869.50) = 2.453$ ,  $p \leq .001$ , and  $F(72, 582) = 2.096$ ,  $p \leq .001$  respectively. Root 4, which was tested separately, did yield statistical significance at the alpha level of .01 [ $F(35, 292) = 1.785$ ,  $p \leq .010$ ], meaning that the results of the correlation from all four canonical functions were significance and should remain for the interpretation.

Table 4.13(a) Multivariate Tests of Significance: Item Level

Test Name	Value	Approximate F	Hypothesis DF	Error DF	Pr > F
Wilks Lambda	.25239	3.134	152	1154.2	.000
Pillai Trace	1.13872	3.058	152	1168.0	.000
Hotelling-Lawley Trace	1.69833	3.212	152	1150.0	.000
Roy Greatest Root	.42924				

Note: N = 143.5; VAR variables (Predictors): N=38; WITH variables (Criteria): N=4

a. F Statistic for Roy Greatest Root is an upper bound.

Table 4.13(b) Eigenvalues and Canonical Correlations: Item Level

Root No.	Eigenvalue	Percentage (%)	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation	Square Correlation ( $R_c^2$ )
1	.75205	44.28	44.28	.65516	.42924
2	.42587	25.08	69.36	.54651	.29868
3	.30649	18.05	87.40	.48434	.23459
4	.21392	12.60	100.00	.41979	.17622

Note: Eigenvalues of  $\text{Inv}(E)*H = R_c^2 / (1 - R_c^2)$

- Test of  $H_0$ : The canonical correlations in the current row and all that follow are zero.
- Canonical correlation for each function separately

Table 4.13(c) Dimension Reduction Analysis: Item Level

Roots	Wilks L.	F	Hypoth. DF	Error DF	Sig. of F
1 to 4	.25239	3.134	152	1154.2	.000
2 to 4	.44221	2.453	111	869.5	.000
3 to 4	.63053	2.096	72	582.0	.000
4 to 4	.82378	1.785	35	292.0	.006

Note: Hierarchal Statistical significance tests in which only the last canonical function was tested separately

After reviewing the significant test and  $R_c^2$  for each function, all four canonical functions were analyzed to determine the relationship between the two sets of variables, which were the 38 items of vacation activities and the four dimensions of vacation recovery experience. The variables with canonical structure coefficients loaded above .45 were chosen for comparison. In the item level, vacation activity items were treated as predictors (V), while vacation recovery experience dimensions were considered as criterion variables (W)

For the first canonical function (V1 and W1) [see Table 4.13 (d)], the activity item chosen as the predictor (V1) was *Going to the movies/ concerts* ( $r = .4695$ ) and the selected criterion variables (W1) were *Psychological Detachment* ( $r = -.7181$ ) and

*Relaxation* ( $r = -.6674$ ). Based on the loadings, *Going to the movies/ concerts* appeared to have significant negative association with *Psychological Detachment* and *Relaxation*, implying that the more resort visitors attend the movies or concerts, the less sense of psychological detachment and relaxation they can obtain. The second canonical function (V2 and W2) consisted of many activity items that had high canonical loadings. Seven predictors (V2) were chosen to be interpreted: *Meeting new people* ( $r = .6465$ ), *Attending cultural events* ( $r = .6029$ ), *Going to the zoo/ natural parks* ( $r = .5733$ ), *Excursions* ( $r = .5614$ ), *Visiting historical/ religious sites* ( $r = .5592$ ), and *Sightseeing/ taking pictures & videos* ( $r = .5073$ ). For the criterion variables (W2), *Mastery* ( $r = .8075$ ), followed by *Psychological Detachment* ( $r = .5842$ ) and *Relaxation* ( $r = .4947$ ) were chosen to be interpreted. According to the loadings, all selected predictors presented only positive associations with the selected criterion variables. Such results suggest that the more resort visitors engage in activities that allow them to learn more about a destination's cultures (i.e., interacting with local people, joining local events, going to the zoo, and going to historical/ religious palaces) and explore an environment of the destination (i.e., excursion, sightseeing and taking pictures), the more they can perceive sense of mastery, psychological detachment, and relaxation.

For the third canonical function (V3 and W3), three activity items were chosen for interpretation (V3): *Diving* ( $r = .6163$ ), *Beach Volleyball* ( $r = .5717$ ), *Sun bathing* ( $r = .5461$ ), *Jet skiing/ Water skiing* ( $r = .4715$ ), while *Relaxation* ( $r = -.5453$ ) was the only criterion variable (W3) chosen. It appears that all chosen vacation activity items are negatively associated with visitors' sense of relaxation. This result suggests that the more resort visitors engage in water and outdoor sports (diving, jet skiing, surfing, and beach

volleyball) as well as sun bathing, the less sense of relaxation they can perceive. The last canonical function (V4 and W4) involved only a few significant variables for both predictors and criterion variables. *Sun bathing* ( $r = -.4529$ ) was the only significant predictor (V4) chosen and *Control* ( $r = -.9280$ ) was selected as the significant criterion variable (W4). Both variables were positive correlated, implying that the more resort visitors engage in sun bathing, the more they can gain a sense of control from vacationing in Thailand.

Table 4.13(d) Canonical Solution for Vacation Activity Items Predicting Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions for Functions 1, 2, 3, and 4

Vacation Activity Items (V)	Function 1		Function 2	
	V1	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	V2	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Jogging/ Walking for exercise	-.0416	.17	.4213	17.75
Sport club or Fitness exercise	-.0192	.04	.1617	2.61
Flexibility (i.e., stretching, yoga)	.2173	4.72	.2376	5.64
Swimming for leisure (in the river or sea)	-.1241	1.54	.2398	5.75
Beach Volleyball	.2415	5.83	.1463	2.14
Golfing	.3723	13.86	.0243	.06
Surfing/ Windsurfing	.3939	15.51	.0032	.00
Jet Skiing/ Water skiing	.3638	13.24	.1075	1.16
Diving (i.e., snorkeling, scuba diving)	.1323	1.75	.1237	1.53
Paddling (i.e., canoeing, kayaking)	.0832	.69	.2362	5.58
Rafting	.2718	7.39	.2275	5.17
Cycling	.1608	2.59	.2847	8.11
Hiking/ Trekking	.0553	.31	.3374	11.39
Horseback riding/ Elephant riding	.2867	8.22	.2964	8.78
Going to Sauna/ Jacuzzi	.1629	2.65	.2765	7.64
Wellness (i.e., spa treatments, massages)	.0504	.25	.1162	1.35
Sun bathing	-.1432	2.05	.0221	.05
Reading (i.e., books, newspaper, magazines)	-.1045	1.09	.2045	4.18

Table 4.13(d) Continued

Vacation Activity Items (V)	Function 1		Function 2	
	V1	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	V2	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Listening to the radio/ watching TV	.1668	2.78	.1548	2.40
Checking/ sending e-mail	.3896	15.18	-.0996	.99
Playing games (i.e., online, board games)	.2736	7.49	.0741	.55
Writing postcards	.0922	.85	.2270	5.15
Spending time with family/ friends	-.4341	18.85	.1898	3.60
Eating out at restaurants	-.0825	.68	.0647	.42
Trying the regional cuisine	-.1045	1.09	.1769	3.13
Learning the Thai language	.4002	16.01	.2219	4.93
Meeting new people	.2442	5.96	<u>.6465</u>	41.80
Engaging in prayers or meditation	.3021	9.12	.3472	12.05
Excursion (i.e., by bus, cruise, rail)	.0841	.71	<u>.5614</u>	31.52
Shopping	.2097	4.40	.3801	14.45
Jungle Safari	.3012	9.07	.4385	19.22
Sightseeing/ Taking pictures & videos	-.2215	4.91	<u>.5073</u>	25.73
Going to the zoo/ Natural Parks	.2440	5.95	<u>.5733</u>	32.86
Going to a bar or night club	.2574	6.62	.1745	3.05
Going to the movies/ concerts	<u>.4695</u>	22.04	.2883	8.31
Attending cultural events	.3289	10.81	<u>.6029</u>	36.35
Visiting historical/ religious sites	.2943	8.66	<u>.5592</u>	31.27
Visiting museums/ art galleries	.4329	18.74	.4407	19.42
Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions (W)	<u>W1</u>	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	<u>W2</u>	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Psychological Detachment	<u>-.7181</u>	51.56	<u>.5842</u>	34.13
Relaxation	<u>-.6674</u>	44.55	<u>.4947</u>	24.47
Control	-.2312	5.34	.2821	7.96
Mastery	.4330	18.75	<u>.8075</u>	65.20

Table 4.13(d) Continued

Vacation Activity Items (V)	Function 3		Function 4	
	V3	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	V4	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Jogging/ Walking for exercise	.2165	4.69	-.1802	3.25
Sport club or Fitness Exercise	.1983	3.93	-.1075	1.15
Flexibility (i.e., stretching, yoga)	.1782	3.18	-.0084	.01
Swimming for leisure (in the river or sea)	.4107	16.86	-.0484	.23
Beach Volleyball	<u>.5717</u>	32.69	.0471	.22
Golfing	.3169	10.04	-.0574	.33
Surfing/ Windsurfing	.4457	19.86	-.0229	.05
Jet skiing/ Water skiing	<u>.4715</u>	22.23	-.0397	.16
Diving (i.e., snorkeling, scuba diving)	<u>.6163</u>	37.99	-.1875	3.51
Paddling (i.e., canoeing, kayaking)	.3981	15.85	-.0533	.28
Rafting	.3971	15.77	-.0018	.00
Cycling	.0391	.15	-.0877	.77
Hiking/ Trekking	.1750	3.06	-.0176	.03
Horseback riding/ Elephant riding	.2728	7.44	-.1380	1.90
Go to Sauna/ Jacuzzi	.2837	8.05	.0743	.55
Wellness (i.e., spa treatments, massages)	-.0539	.29	-.1477	2.18
Sun bathing	<u>.5461</u>	29.82	<u>-.4529</u>	20.51
Reading (i.e., books, newspaper, magazines)	-.0172	.03	-.3000	9.00
Listening to the radio/ watching TV	-.1180	1.39	-.1225	1.50
Checking/ sending e-mail	.0006	.00	-.3024	9.14
Playing games (i.e., online, board games)	.0875	.77	-.2052	4.21
Writing postcards	.3153	9.94	-.0565	.32
Spending time with family/ friends	-.1060	1.12	-.0917	.84
Eating out at restaurants	-.0402	.16	.0608	.37
Trying the regional cuisine	.2267	5.14	-.2651	7.03
Learning the Thai language	-.0214	.05	-.4390	19.27
Meeting other people	-.1766	3.12	-.2162	4.67
Engaging in prayers or meditation	.1638	2.68	-.1458	2.13
Excursion (i.e., by bus, cruise, rail)	.1797	3.23	-.0896	.80
Shopping	.0101	.01	-.3437	11.81
Jungle Safari	.1998	3.99	-.1211	1.47
Sightseeing/ Taking pictures & videos	-.2055	4.22	-.2190	4.80

Table 4.13(d) Continued

Vacation Activity Items (V)	Function 3		Function 4	
	V3	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	V4	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Going to the zoo/ Natural Parks	.0102	.01	.0543	.29
Going to a bar or night club	.2205	4.86	-.1912	3.65
Going to the movies/ concerts	.1273	1.62	-.0622	.39
Attending cultural events	.0534	.29	.0291	.08
Visiting historical/ religious sites	.1232	1.52	.0215	.05
Visiting museums/ art galleries	.0952	.91	.0998	1.00
Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions (W)	W3	r <sup>2</sup> (%)	W4	r <sup>2</sup> (%)
Psychological Detachment	.3525	12.43	.1371	1.88
Relaxation	<u>-.5453</u>	29.74	-.1117	1.25
Control	-.0760	.58	<u>-.9280</u>	86.12
Mastery	-.1768	3.13	-.3595	12.92

Note: a. V1, V2, V3 and V4 represent structure coefficients (r) of vacation activity factors (Predictors).

b. W1, W2, W3 and W4 represent structure coefficients (r) of vacation recovery experience dimensions (Criterion variable).

c.  $r > .45$  is underlined

Next, the results of hypothesis testing for H1 based on the MLRs and CCAs are presented in Table 4.14. The hypothesis H1 appeared to be partially supported since one of its sub-hypotheses (H1a) was partially supported. It was because the group of personal care activities, which were parts of low-effort activities suggested by previous studies, was found to have no significant contribution to any dimension of the vacation recovery experience. Nonetheless, the other sub-hypotheses (H1b and H1c) were proved to have significant positive effects on certain dimensions of vacation recovery experience. For hypothesis (H2), both sub-hypotheses (H2a and H2b) were supported by the negative association found between both types of resource-consuming vacation activities and certain dimensions of vacation recovery experience. For example, work-related activities

included in the group of online media and entertainment presented negative effects on a visitor's sense of relaxation, while household and caregiving activities (i.e., spending time with family/ friends) consisted in social and non-exerting activity factor appeared to have significant negative association with a visitor's sense of mastery.

Table 4.14 The Summarized Results of Hypotheses Testing for the Multiple Linear Regressions and the Canonical Correlation Analysis (H1 and H2)

Hypotheses	Results
<i>Hypothesis (H1):</i> Resource-providing vacation activities are positively associated with a resort visitor' recovery experiences.	Partially Supported
<i>H1a:</i> Engaging in low-effort activities during vacation is positively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.	Partially Supported
<i>H1b:</i> Engaging in social activities during vacation is positively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.	Supported
<i>H1c:</i> Engaging in physical activities during vacation is positively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.	Supported
<i>Hypothesis (H2):</i> Resource-consuming vacation activities are negatively associated with a resort visitor' recovery experiences.	Supported
<i>H2a:</i> Engaging in work-related activities during vacation is negatively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.	Supported
<i>H2b:</i> Engaging in household and caregiving activities during vacation is negatively associated with a resort visitor's recovery experiences.	Supported



#### 4.5 The Profiles of Resort Visitors in Thailand

Based on the patterns of participated in resort vacation activities in Thailand, the resort visitors can be classified into mutually exclusive groups by performing cluster analysis. A two-stage cluster analysis was employed to better understand the effect of resort vacation activities on resort visitors in terms of their perceived vacation recovery experience and demographics. Because one of the vacation activity factors had a less desirable Cronbach alpha value [Time for Myself ( $\alpha = .507$ )], the original 38 activity items were subjected to the analysis instead in order to better segment the resort visitors (Fiedler & McDonald, 1993). The hierarchical cluster analysis was executed for the first stage with the Ward method. To determine the number of clusters, a dendrogram was generated as a visual presentation of the distance at which clusters were combined (Figure 4.1). Three clusters were identified based on the result of the hierarchical clustering.

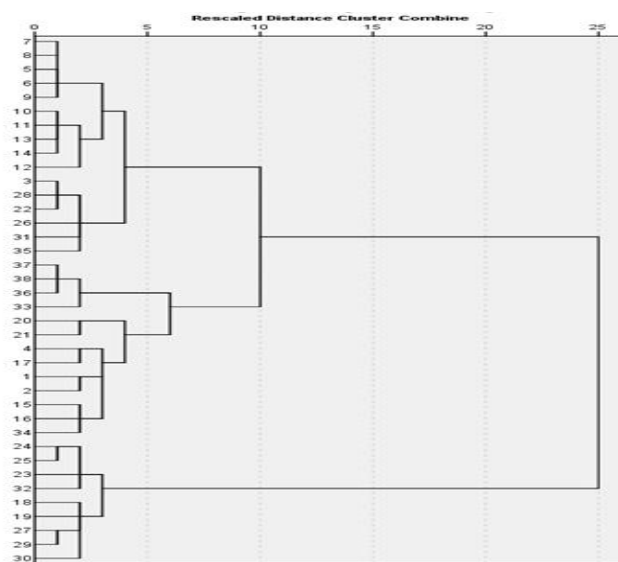


Figure 4.1 Dendrogram Using Ward Linkage

K-mean cluster analysis was the second stage to be performed on a 3-cluster solution derived from the first stage of analysis. This procedure allows each respondent to be definitively classified into different groups (Hair et al., 1998). The members in each cluster were further analyzed to determine the specific characteristics of the cluster and the differences among clusters. The clusters were for the dominant characteristics of resort vacation activity participation as in Table 4.15 (a). The three clusters were labeled as Activity doers ( $N = 71$ ), Socializers ( $N = 148$ ), and Relaxation seekers ( $N = 112$ ).

Cluster 1, Activity doers are self-directed resort visitors who exhibit high participation in nearly all resort vacation activities, for example, *Eating out at restaurants* ( $M = 5.73$ ), *Listening to the radio/ watching TV* ( $M = 5.25$ ), and *Sport club or Fitness exercise* ( $M = 5.24$ ). Cluster 2, Socializers includes resort visitors who highly involve in social and less physical demanded activities as indicated by their average participation in *Sightseeing/ Taking pictures & videos* ( $M = 6.00$ ), *Shopping* ( $M = 5.65$ ), and *Spending time with family/ friends* ( $M=5.55$ ) across three clusters. Cluster 3, Relaxation seekers consists of resort visitors reporting low participation in almost all activities especially those require physical laborious, for example, *Surfing/ Windsurfing* ( $M = 1.18$ ), *Beach Volleyball* ( $M = 1.21$ ), and *Jet skiing/ Water skiing* ( $M = 1.23$ ).

Table 4.15(a) Means and One-Way ANOVA Tests among Three Clusters

Resort Vacation Activities	Means			F-Value	Sig.
	Cluster I (n=71)	Cluster II (n=148)	Cluster III (n=112)		
Jogging/ Walking for exercise	5.03	3.46	2.76	41.571	.000
Sport club or Fitness Exercise	5.24	3.13	2.81	45.388	.000
Flexibility (i.e., Yoga, Pilates)	4.66	2.47	1.49	120.734	.000
Swimming for leisure	5.14	2.98	3.04	34.826	.000
Beach Volleyball	4.42	1.39	1.21	233.000	.000
Golfing	3.75	1.45	1.13	130.895	.000
Surfing/ Windsurfing	4.03	1.26	1.18	185.356	.000
Jet skiing/ Water skiing	4.35	1.30	1.23	225.085	.000
Diving	4.49	1.49	1.75	125.501	.000
Paddling (i.e., kayaking, canoeing)	4.28	1.71	1.69	97.245	.000
Rafting	4.07	1.86	1.30	106.831	.000
Cycling	4.62	3.08	1.85	65.705	.000
Hiking/ Trekking	4.45	2.55	1.71	68.819	.000
Horseback riding/ Elephant riding	4.30	1.93	1.26	120.518	.000
Go to Sauna/ Jacuzzi	4.58	2.86	1.74	73.618	.000
Wellness (i.e., spa, massage)	5.28	3.88	2.75	54.254	.000
Sun bathing	5.03	2.03	3.06	57.898	.000
Reading	5.04	4.80	3.95	13.369	.000
Listening to the radio/ watching TV	5.25	5.16	3.88	21.806	.000
Checking/ sending e-mail	5.11	4.22	3.79	8.728	.000
Playing games	5.13	3.97	2.25	57.649	.000
Writing postcards	4.24	2.34	1.76	59.934	.000
Spending time with family/ friends	5.14	5.55	4.88	4.220	.016
Eating out at restaurants	5.73	5.43	4.80	8.728	.000
Trying the regional cuisine	5.37	4.84	4.34	6.828	.001
Learning the Thai language	4.54	2.72	1.66	71.272	.000
Meeting other people (i.e., new friends)	5.18	4.98	3.09	63.583	.000
Engaging in prayers or meditation	4.66	2.77	1.60	94.620	.000
Excursion	5.23	4.72	2.79	65.765	.000
Shopping	5.55	5.65	3.54	74.093	.000
Jungle Safari	4.69	3.08	1.59	88.006	.000
Sightseeing/ Taking pictures & videos	5.46	6.00	4.57	25.996	.000
Going to the zoo/ Natural Parks	5.21	4.43	1.88	105.427	.000
Going to a bar or night club	5.35	3.49	2.49	59.151	.000
Going to the movies/ concerts	4.86	2.95	1.37	108.606	.000
Attending cultural events	5.03	4.18	1.71	131.157	.000
Visiting historical/ religious sites	5.21	4.47	2.09	120.496	.000
Visiting museums/ art galleries	5.17	3.89	1.67	122.384	.000

Note:  $p \leq .05$

Based on the three classified groups of resort visitors, differences among such clusters in terms of perceived vacation recovery experiences, demographic variables, trip characteristics, and resort vacation activity patterns were further explored by using one-way ANOVA and the Goodness of Fit Chi Square (see Table 14.21). The results in Table 14.15 (b) show that *Relaxation* [ $F(2,328) = 5.809, p \leq .01$ ] and *Mastery* [ $F(2, 328) = 19.595, p \leq .001$ ] are the only two dimensions of vacation recovery experience appearing to be significant across the clusters, meaning that the resort visitors in different clusters obtain a sense of being relaxed and perceive mastery experience differently. All demographic variables and trip characteristics, except marital status ( $p = .545$ ), yielded significant differences among the three clusters at the alpha level of .001.

The group of Activity doers (Cluster I) were likely to seek vacation activities that allowed them to obtain high *Mastery* experiences ( $M = 3.02$ ), considering the highest mean score of *Mastery* across three groups. This group of resort visitors appeared to actively participate in most types of activities and seemed to have the highest level of self-determination to pursue challenging and/or unfamiliar activities (i.e., water skiing, trying regional cuisine, and visiting historical/ religious sites). Unlike other groups, the group members tend to participate more in physical and outdoor (i.e., rafting, fitness exercise), cultural and city interest (i.e., visit museums, attend local events), and self-oriented (i.e., spa treatments, checking/sending e-mails, and playing online games) activities. Based on the differences in demographics and trip characteristics, the resort visitors in this group were likely to be male (66.2%), married (52.1%), and short-haul international visitors (84.5%). Most of them worked in the professional (36.6%) and managerial (23.9%) fields. In addition, they were likely to stay at a resort located in the

south of Thailand (66.2%) and be there for about 6 nights on average. Their primary purposes of the trip were stopping over on the way to another destination (35.2%), followed by visiting friends and relatives (VFR) (29.6%).

The group of Socializers (Cluster II) consists of resort visitors who sought to engage frequently in social and less exerting activities that could bring them high *Relaxation* ( $M = 3.51$ ). This group seemed to enjoy spending time with their travel companions (i.e., family and friends) and other people at the destination (i.e., local people), dining out, sightseeing, shopping, wandering around and learning more about Thai culture (i.e., attending cultural events, visiting historical sites). They were likely to participate less in activities requiring physical skills such as beach volleyball, jet skiing, and golfing. Most visitors in this cluster were female (68.9%), mostly single (55.4%), and worked as office workers (29.7%). The majority of them were considered to be short-haul international visitors (53.4%), while the domestic visitors (those from Thailand) were the second most type of visitor containing in this cluster. Moreover, they were likely to have recreation (47.3%) as the primary purpose of their trip and choose to go for a resort vacation in the north and north east of Thailand (48.6%) for an average of 3 nights.

The last cluster, Relaxation seekers, seemed to contain low-paced and laid-back resort visitors with a lower level of activity participation than the other two clusters in nearly all activities, allowing them to obtain the lowest sense of *Mastery* ( $M = 2.49$ ) but retrieve more sense of *Relaxation* ( $M = 3.41$ ). They were likely to participate more in low-effort activities that could be done either by themselves or with travel companions such as dining out, reading, and sun bathing. Based on the demographic comparison, this cluster consisted of mainly female resort visitors (57.1%). This group contained half

(50.9%) single and half married (49.1%) visitors. They were more likely to have professional jobs (25.0%) or work at the office (19.6%). They were mostly long-haul international visitors (45.5%) coming from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, and European countries (e.g., the United Kingdom, France, and Denmark) and had recreation (55.4%) as their primary purpose for the trip. They tended to choose resorts in the south of Thailand (48.2%) and stay for about 5 nights on average.

Besides, the resort visitors in every group were less likely to travel alone. Most of them preferred to travel with their family members. Furthermore, in terms of age groups, the resort visitors considered as young adults (aged 18-34 years) were the dominant group in all three clusters. However, the highest number of young adults was found in cluster I (84.5%) which was the most active group. On the other hand, middle-aged adults (aged 35-54 years) contained mostly in cluster II (25.0%) and III (25.9%), while older adults (aged 55 years and above) were found mostly in cluster III (15.2%). This implies that young adult resort visitors are likely to participate frequently in all kinds of activities inducing mastery experiences, whereas middle-aged and older adults tend to prefer more social and low activation activities which can lead them to obtain more sense of relaxation.

Table 4.15(b) Differences among Clusters on Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions, Demographics, and Trip Characteristics

Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions		Mean			F-Value	Sig.
		Cluster I (n=71)	Cluster II (n=148)	Cluster III (n=112)		
Psychological Detachment		3.09	3.00	3.01	.232	.793
Relaxation		3.18	3.51	3.41	5.809	.003**
Control		3.08	3.13	3.10	.273	.761
Mastery		3.02	2.93	2.49	19.595	.000***
Demographic Variables		Frequency (%)			Chi-sq	Sig.
		Cluster I (n=71)	Cluster II (n=148)	Cluster III (n=112)		
Gender:	Male	66.2%	31.1%	42.9%	24.202	.000***
	Female	33.8%	68.9%	57.1%		
Marital Status:	Single	47.9%	55.4%	50.9%	1.215	.545
	Married	52.1%	44.6%	49.1%		
Type of visitors:	Domestic visitors	4.2%	37.8%	34.8%	102.842	.000***
	Short-haul international visitors	84.5%	53.4%	19.6%		
	Long-haul international visitors	11.3%	8.8%	45.5%		
Occupation:	Professional	36.6%	12.8%	25.0%	51.343	.000***
	Managerial	23.9%	17.6%	9.8%		
	Sales	0.0%	6.1%	3.6%		
	Retired/Unemployed	1.4%	0.7%	8.0%		
	Office worker	19.7%	29.7%	19.6%		
	Labor/ Production	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%		
	Housewife	2.8%	3.4%	5.4%		
	Military	1.4%	2.7%	1.8%		
	Educator	5.6%	10.8%	6.3%		
	Student	7.0%	12.8%	10.7%		
	Others (i.e. DJ, park rangers)	1.4%	3.4%	8.9%		
Age:	18-24	19.7%	20.9%	15.2%	21.291	.019*
	25-34	64.8%	43.2%	43.8%		
	35-44	9.9%	12.8%	15.2%		
	45-54	4.2%	12.2%	10.7%		
	55-64	1.4%	8.8%	8.9%		
	65 and above	0.0%	2.0%	6.3%		

Table 4.15(b) Continued

Trip Characteristics		Frequency (%)			Chi-sq	Sig.
		Cluster I (n=71)	Cluster II (n=148)	Cluster III (n=112)		
Travel Companion:	Family members	53.5%	52.0%	46.4%	23.787	.001***
	Friends	39.4%	39.2%	39.3%		
	None	7.0%	8.8%	4.5%		
	Others (i.e., coworkers)	0.0%	0.0%	9.8%		
Resort Location:	North & North East	12.7%	48.6%	20.5%	59.598	.000***
	Central & nearby Coastal Provinces	21.1%	32.4%	31.3%		
	South	66.2%	18.9%	48.2%		
Primary Purpose of the trip:	Business + Leisure	14.1%	18.2%	14.3%	38.599	.000***
	Recreation	16.9%	47.3%	55.4%		
	Stopping over	35.2%	20.3%	17.0%		
	VFR	29.6%	10.1%	9.8%		
	Others (i.e., Summer and training camps)	4.2%	4.1%	3.6%		
		Mean			F-Value	Sig.
		Cluster I (n=71)	Cluster II (n=148)	Cluster III (n=112)		
Length of Stay		5.96	3.01	4.63	7.561	.000***

Note: \*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

- a. Stopping over = Stopping over on the way to another destination
- b. VFR = Visiting Friends and Relatives



## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

In this final chapter, the key findings of this study and both the theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

### 5.1 Summary of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to understand the role vacation activities play in vacation recovery experience through the lens of resort visitors in Thailand.

Taking vacation and engaging freely in self-chosen activities on vacation are known to enable the process of recovery. As previously mentioned, recovery was characterized by certain attributes called “recovery experiences,” consisting of four distinct properties, namely psychological detachment, relaxation, mastery, and control (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). To understand the link between vacation activities and the recovery process, the concept of recovery experiences was applied to the study. On-site and online surveys were administered to 331 visitors who had recently gone to resort destinations in

Thailand. The visitors were asked about their activity participation and their perception of the recovery experience during vacation. The baseline information from the descriptive analysis revealed that most resort visitors were likely to be single, middle-aged women and were considered to be short-haul international visitors. Many of them held Bachelor’s degree and were office workers or had professional careers (e.g., nurses, architects, and lawyers). Most visitors had travelled to the selected resort in Thailand only once for the

recreation purposes and stayed at the resort for 2 nights. The south and north & north-east of Thailand were the two most popular locations for the selected resort destinations.

Furthermore, the criteria for resort selection, gathered from resort visitors in a qualitative manner, were summarized under the three attributes of environmental features, resort amenities and services, and others as shown in Figure 5.1 (Garber-Yonts, 2005; Manning, 2012; Pierskalla et al., 2004). The environmental features of the resort (i.e., beautiful environment and nice location) were found to be the primary reason in choosing the resort. Attributes associated with resort amenities and services (i.e., pricing, room details, and amenities offered) were also mostly considered when selecting a resort destination. Many people preferred to travel with their family members and friends and chose to stay at certain resorts because of recommendation from their friends/ family and/or reviews from the media (i.e., websites, TV commercials).



Figure 5.1 Three Attributes for Resort Selection Criteria

In terms of vacation activities and vacation recovery experience, they were found to be multidimensional. Seven factors (Physical & Outdoor Activities, Cultural & City Interest, Online Media & Entertainment, Social & Non-exerting, Active Nature Pursuit, Personal Care, and Time for Myself) with a total of 35 items of vacation activities were identified and treated as the input of the proposed model, and four dimensions (Psychological Detachment, Relaxation, Control, and Mastery) with a total of 16 items of vacation recovery experience were identified as the output in this study. The five most popular vacation activities were also identified as 1) Sightseeing/ taking pictures & videos, 2) eating out at restaurants, 3) spending time with family/ friends, 4) shopping, and 5) trying the regional cuisine. Among the most popular vacation activities, social activities (eating out at restaurants, spending time with family/ friends, and trying the regional cuisine) were highly favored during a resort vacation in Thailand.

Moreover, some significant differences were found among demographics and trip characteristics in terms of vacation activities and vacation recovery experience, implying that resort visitors in Thailand were characterized differently by their preference and perception. For example, male resort visitors were more likely to participate in physical, personal care, and social and non-exerting activities than females. Additionally, the short-haul international visitors participated highly in many types of activities, including physical, cultural, personal care, online media and entertainment, and active nature pursuit activities, whereas the long-haul international visitors were mostly active in social and non-exerting activities such as spending time with family and friends and sun bathing. In terms of vacation recovery experience, interestingly, female resort visitors tended to perceive more sense of mastery than males; whilst Thai and long-haul

international visitors obtained more sense of psychological detachment and relaxation than those short-haul international visitors, who perceived the highest sense of mastery.

In addition, different factors of vacation activities also presented important effects on different dimensions of vacation recovery experience and their significant relationships were found from regression and correlation analyses [Figure 5.2 (a) and (b)]. Vacation activities appear to have multiple contributions to specific vacation recovery experience dimensions. Certain groups of vacation activities presented either positive or negative effect on specific dimensions of vacation recovery experience [Figure 5.2 (a)]. First, active nature pursuit, time for myself, social & non-exerting, and online media & entertainment activities were conducive to a visitor's sense of psychological detachment. However, a visitor's sense of psychological detachment was positively influenced by engaging frequently in active nature pursuit, time for myself and social & non-exerting activities rather than involving in online media & entertainment activities. Second, physical & outdoor, online media & entertainment, time for myself, and social & non-exerting activities were conducive to a visitor's sense of relaxation. A visitor's sense of relaxation, however, was positively influenced by engaging frequently in time for myself and social & non-exerting activities rather than performing physical & outdoor and online media & entertainment activities. Third, time for myself and social & non-exerting activities were conducive to a visitor's sense of control where both groups of activities presented positive effects on such a dimension of vacation recovery experience. Fourth, social & non-exerting and cultural & city interest were conducive to a visitor's sense of mastery. It appeared that a visitor's sense of mastery was positively influenced by engaging frequently in cultural & city interest activities rather than

involving in social & non-exerting activities. Surprisingly, only *personal care* activity factor did not present an important relationship with any vacation recovery experience dimension.

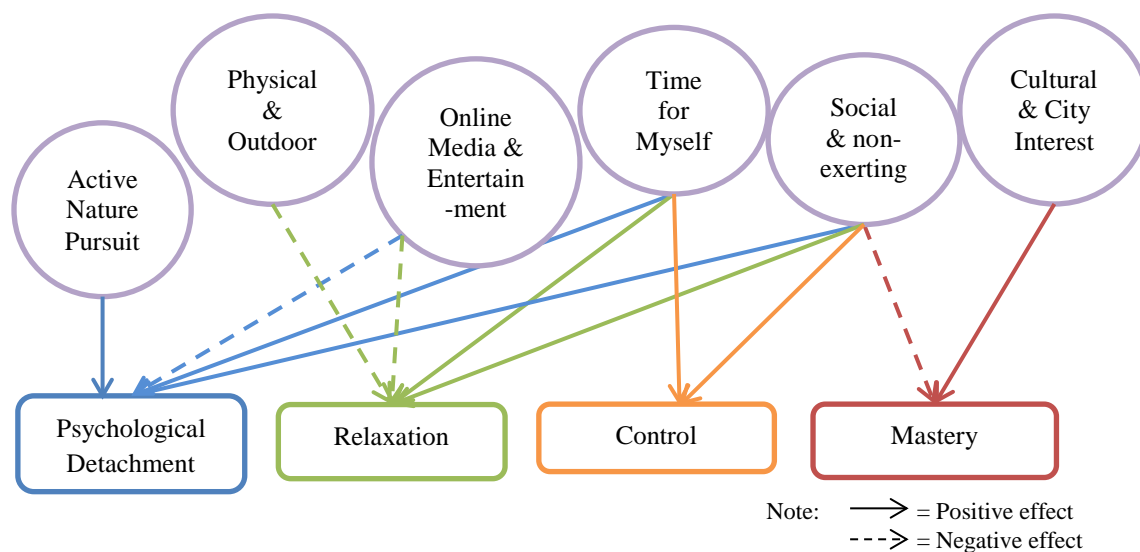


Figure 5.2(a) The Positive and Negative Effects found between Vacation Activity Factors and Vacation Recovery Experience Dimensions from MLR

In Figure 5.2 (b), three groups of relationships between vacation activity factors and vacation recovery experience dimensions were further identified as Activity-Recovery1, Activity-Recovery2, and Activity-Recovery3. All three groups of Activity-Recovery (A-R) presented only significant positive associations: A-R1, engaging in physical & outdoor, cultural & city interest, and online media & entertainment activities were conducive to a visitor's sense of mastery; A-R2, engaging in cultural & city interest and active nature pursuit activities were conducive to a visitor's sense of psychological detachment, relaxation, control, and mastery; A-R3, engaging in physical & outdoor and social & non-exerting activities were conducive to a visitor's sense of psychological

detachment. These findings thus can be further discussed based on the two theories underlying the process of recovery: The Effort-Recovery (E-R) Model and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. Such findings can also be supported by the significant associations found between the certain activity items and specific vacation recovery experience dimensions, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

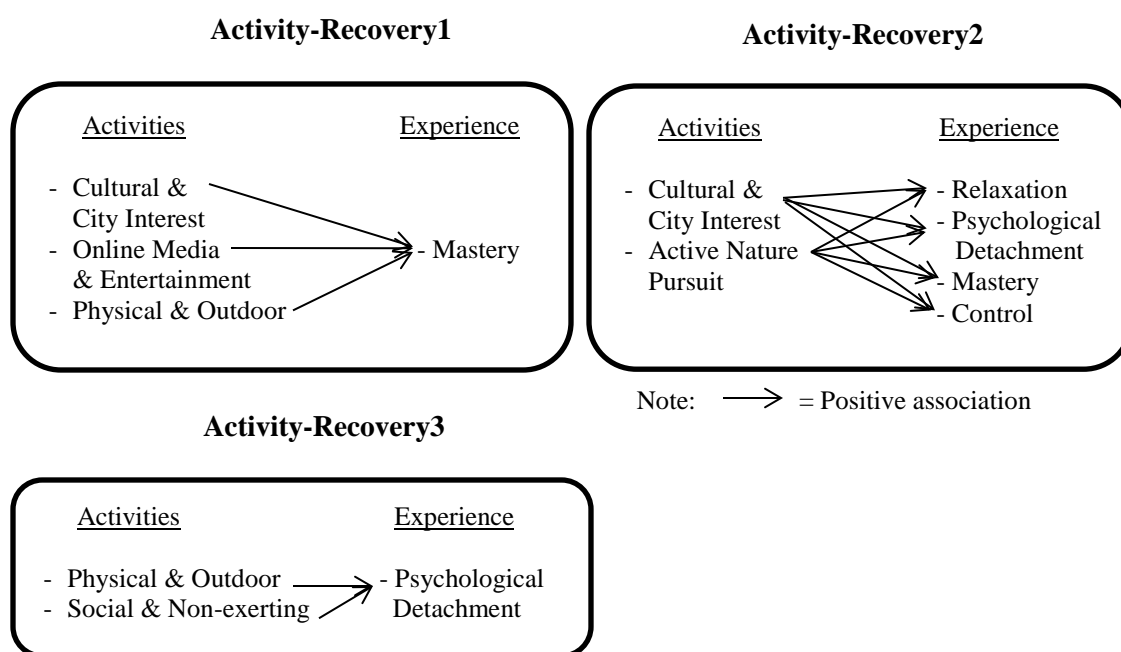


Figure 5.2(b) The Relationship between Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience in Three Activity-Recovery Groups

Finally, to segment and categorize the profile of resort visitors in Thailand, three cluster groups were identified as Activity doers, Socializers, and Relaxation seekers. These groups were classified according to different participation patterns of vacation activities, different perceptions of vacation recovery experience, and different in demographics and trip characteristics. Although these groups of resort visitors have a

unique profile, they do possess some similarities as exhibited in Figure 5.3. As an example of age groups, the majority of resort visitors in every group are young adults (18 – 34 years old). If not all three groups, some features are shared between the two visitor groups. For instance, Socializers and Relaxation seekers are likely to perceive a high relaxation experience, but a low mastery experience and consist of more middle-aged adults (35-54 years old) than the first group. In addition, Activities doers and Socializers contain mostly short-haul international visitors. For the preferred resort locations, the Activity doers and Relaxation seekers prefer to go for a resort vacation in the South of Thailand.

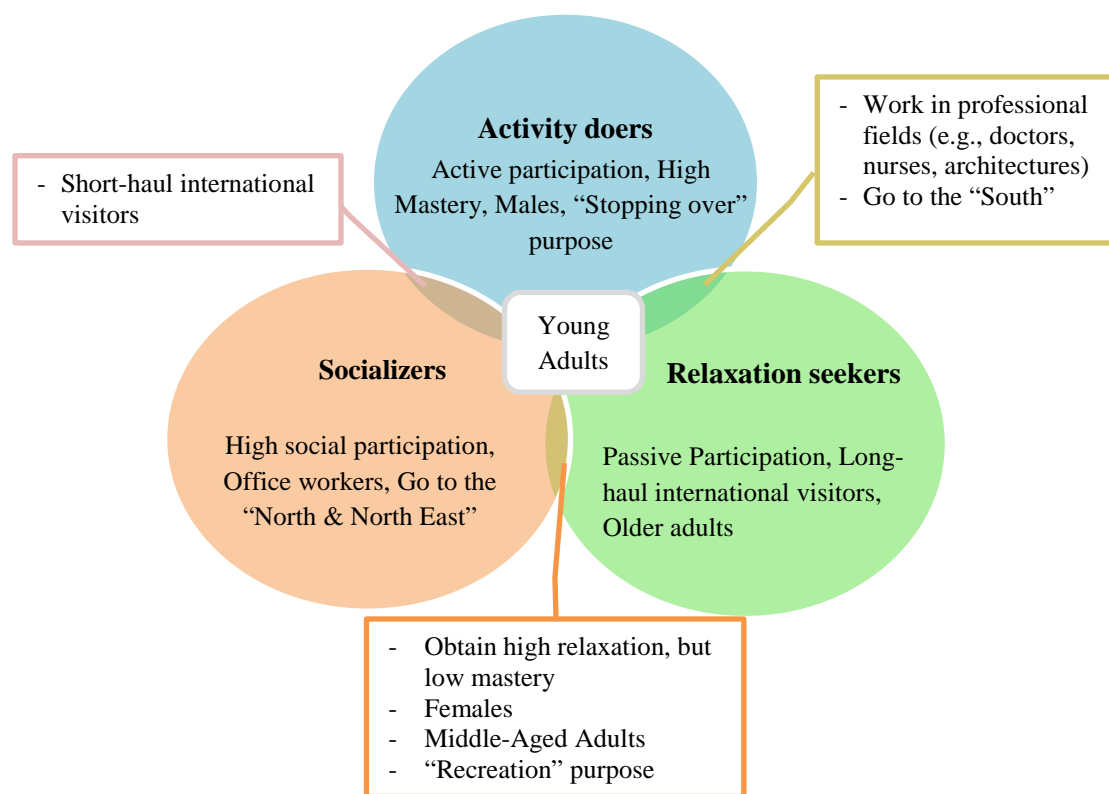


Figure 5.3 The Profiles of Resort Visitors in Thailand by Vacation Activities, Vacation Recovery Experience, Demographics, and Trip Characteristics

Above all, this study sheds light on what resort visitors can gain from their choices of vacation activities in Thailand. Grouping important vacation activities into certain factors and determining crucial dimensions of vacation recovery experience can help us to learn more about the effects of certain activity components on certain attributes of vacation recovery experience and the associations between them in the context of Thailand resort vacations. Also, uncovering the differences in terms of a resort vacationer's choices of activities and their perceived vacation recovery experience among different demographics and trip characteristics could inform the segmentation of resort visitors in Thailand. Even though the segments of resort visitors discovered in this current study are not universal, such findings come from a process of clustering based on empirical data rather than a predetermined set of variables and provide more value for local practitioners (Inbakaran et al., 2012). The information from the demographics determined for each cluster group makes it more practical for resort managers to serve the right group of resort patronage. To gain more insights from the findings of this study, the following section provides more meaningful discussions based around the fundamental theories related to the theme of this research.

## 5.2 Discussion

### 5.2.1 Multidimensionality of Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience

According to the first and second study objectives, by identifying specific patterns of vacation activities' choices and understanding the dimensions of vacation recovery experience perceived among resort visitors in Thailand, vacation activities and vacation



recovery experience are proved to be characterized by multiple dimensions as displayed in Figure 5.4(a) and 5.4(b).

In the current study, vacation activities can be grouped into seven different factors [Figure 5.4(a)]: Physical & Outdoor Activities, Cultural & City Interest, Online Media & Entertainment, Social & Non-exerting, Active Nature Pursuit, Personal Care, and Time for Myself. The names were adopted based on the features of activities included in each factor. Some factors resemble the leisure activities found in previous leisure studies, such as social, outdoor and sport, media, and cultural activities (Brajša-Žganec, Merkaš, & Šverko, 2010; Lloyd & Auld, 2002), while most activities are categorized differently from other vacation and recovery research, which mainly examine vacation activities in the five categories of physical, social, low-effort, work-related, and household and caregiving activities (e.g., De Bloom, Geurts & Kompier, 2012, 2013). Based on the result of this study, physical activities include *Physical & Outdoor* and *Active Nature Pursuit* factor, while social activities consist of *Social & Non-exerting* and *Cultural & City Interest* factor as well as some activity items of the *Online Media & Entertainment* factor, such as playing games and going to a bar/night club. Furthermore, low-effort activities consist of activities related to *Personal Care*, *Time for Myself*, and one item in *Social & Non-exerting* (sun bathing). Whereas work-related activities can be found in the *Online Media & Entertainment* factor (i.e., checking or sending e-mails) and some *Social & Non-exerting* activities are similar to caregiving tasks (i.e., spending time with family members).

Vacation recovery experience [Figure 5.4(b)] appears to be characterized by four dimensions (Psychological Detachment, Relaxation, Control, and Mastery), which are

identical to the four attributes suggested by previous recovery research (e.g., De Bloom, Geurts & Kompier, 2011, Ragsdale et al., 2011, and Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). However, such multiple dimensions represent the recovery experiences perceived on resort vacations in Thailand. Contrasting to the original scale of recovery experiences, most items in the *control* dimension exhibit higher mean scores and factor loadings than those in the *mastery* dimension; implying that perceived control may be more important to the recovery process during vacation than gaining mastery experiences for most resort visitors in Thailand.

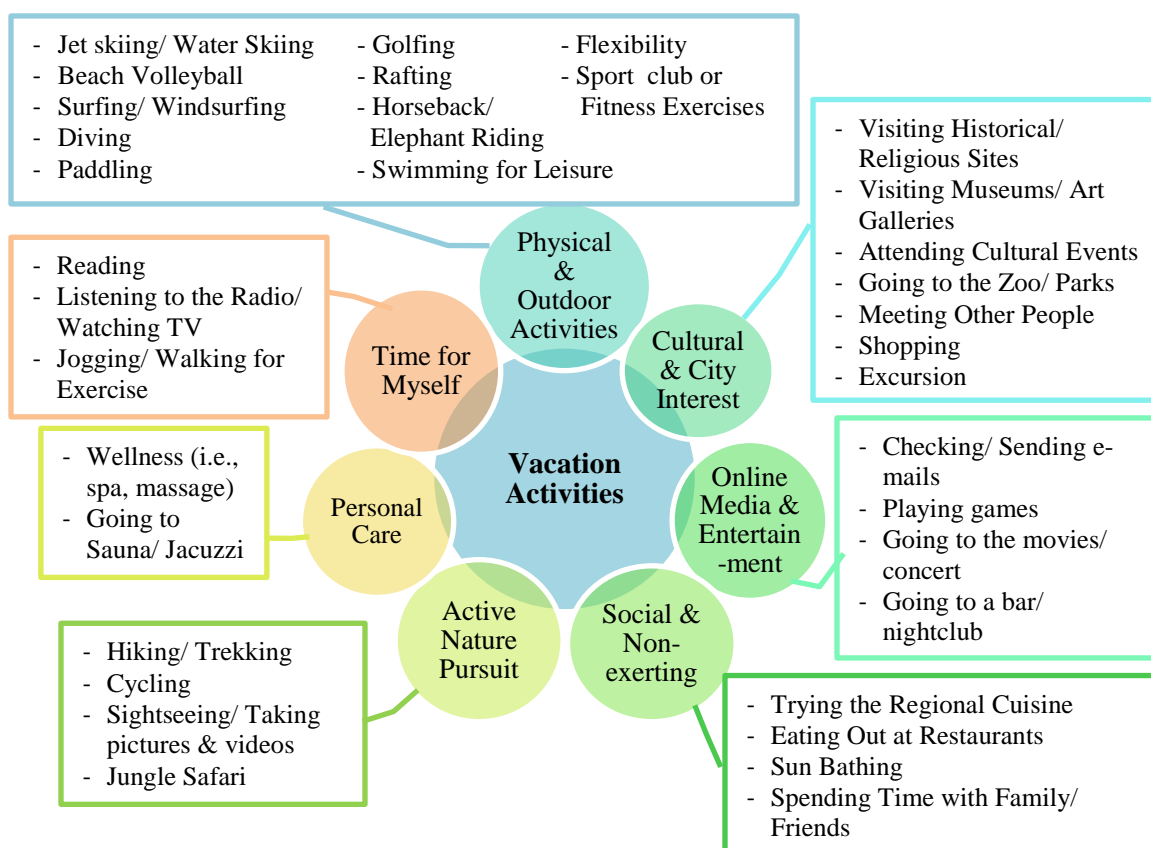


Figure 5.4(a) Factors of Vacation Activities at Resort Destinations in Thailand

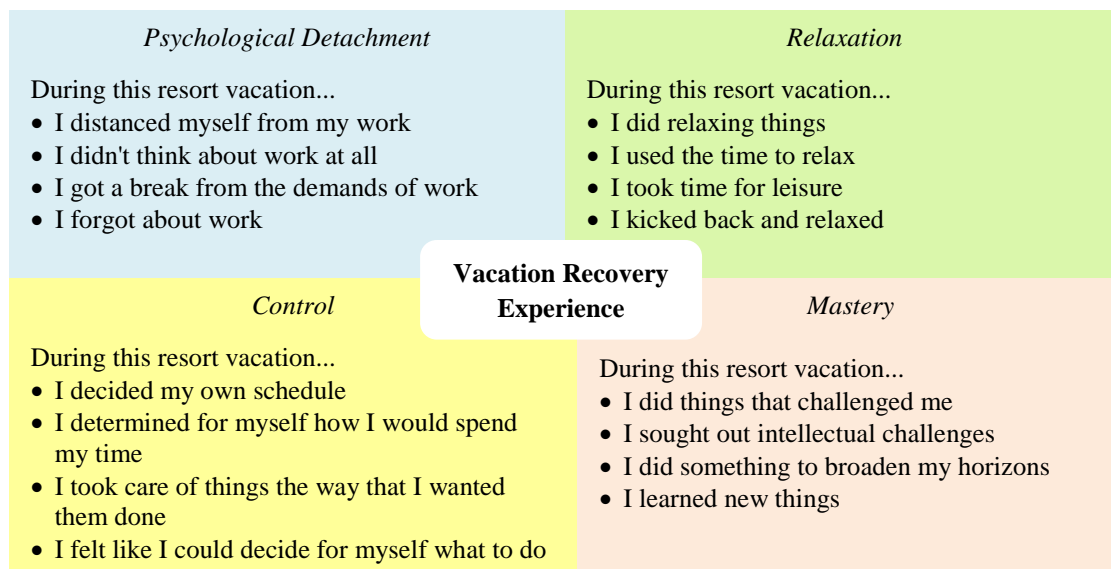


Figure 5.4(b) Dimensions of Vacation Recovery Experience

### 5.2.2 The Relationship between Vacation Activities and Perceived Vacation Recovery Experience

The results from this study demonstrated the role of vacation activity factors on vacation recovery experience dimensions, the study of which has been lacking, especially in the vacation context. Much research related to the psychological process of recovery has been conducted under work or study conditions (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2009, Ragsdale et al., 2011, and Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006), and some have studied the concept of vacation activities and recovery experiences separately (e.g., Rook & Zijlstra, 2007; Sonnentag 2001). This study is one of a few studies that uncover the effects of activities on such experiences as well as the link between them, which was proposed as the third study's objective. Based on the findings, engaging in activities categorized as *Cultural & City Interest*, *Active Nature Pursuit*, and *Time for Myself* appear to have only positive associations with certain dimensions of vacation recovery experience, while

engaging in *Physical & Outdoor*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, and *Social & Non-exerting* activities present both positive and negative associations with different dimensions of vacation recovery experience. Unexpectedly, only the group of *Personal Care* activities yielded neither significant positive nor negative association with any dimension of vacation recovery experience. Therefore, the hypothesis (H1) was partially supported because not all resource-providing vacation activities (physical, low-effort, and social activities) presented a positive association with certain dimensions of a resort visitor's vacation recovery experience. While, the hypothesis (H2) was supported because all resource-consuming vacation activities (work-related and household and caregiving activities) as parts of online media & entertainment and social & non-exerting activity factors appeared to be negatively associated with certain dimensions of a resort visitor's recovery experiences.

#### 5.2.2.1 The Positive Association of Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience

Engaging in *Social & Non-exerting*, *Time for Myself*, *Active Nature Pursuit*, *Cultural & City Interest*, and *Physical & Outdoor* activities were proved to have positive relationship with perceived sense of *Psychological Detachment*. Moreover, engaging in *Social & Non-exerting*, *Time for Myself*, *Cultural & City Interest*, and *Active Nature Pursuit* activities were positively correlated with perceived sense of *Relaxation*. This means that the more resort visitors participate in such physical, social, and low-effort activities, the better they can detach themselves psychologically and be relaxed from their daily routine and works. The explanation for such findings can be drawn from the E-R Model of Meijman and Mulder (1998), which described that the effort expenditure used

in performing vacation activities is different from the one used at work, leading to a decrease in load reactions (i.e., stress, exhaustion) and bringing in a sense of mentally being away from work and relaxation (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009).

For instance, involving in low-effort activities (i.e., listening to music, sun bathing, and reading) requires less psychological activation and can lead resort visitors to recover from their strain through the sense of psychological detachment and relaxation. In addition, Viswesvaran, Sanchez, and Fisher suggested that individuals are likely to gain social support from an involvement in social activities and such support can have a positive impact on well-being (as cited in Sonnentag, 2001, p.199). The finding thus aligns with the previous literature, suggesting that performing social activities (i.e., interacting with friends, gathering with family members) and low-effort activities (i.e., reading, watching TV) allow individuals to regain their health and restore their psychological resources (Hobfoll, 1998; Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Sonnentag, 2001; Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999). Furthermore, performing physical skill-based and outdoor activities (i.e., jet skiing, diving, and hiking) although can incur more resource expenditures (i.e., energy, time) from resort visitors, such activities require different costs from what is used to do job tasks. (Cartwright & Cooper, 2005; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2005; Ragsdale et al., 2011; Sonnentag, 2001; Sonnentag & Bayer, 2003; Sonnentag & Natter, 2004; Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). Similarly, being an active participant in physical activities during leisure time can distract a person's attention from work tasks, resulting in a temporary break from work demands and/or problems as well as bringing recovery to an individual's psychophysiological system (Sonnentag, 2001; Yeung, 1996).

Besides, participating in *Social & Non-exerting, Time for Myself, Active Nature Pursuit*, and *Cultural & City Interest* activities revealed positive relationship with perceived sense of control, implying that the more resort visitors involve in low-effort, social, and some outdoor nature-based activities, the more they are able to obtain sense of control. While, participating in *Cultural & City Interest, Active Nature Pursuit, Physical & Outdoor*, and *Online Media & Entertainment* were positively associated with perceived sense of mastery, meaning that the more resort visitors engage in physical, cultural, and some social and entertainment activities, the more they are able to gain mastery experiences. The COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) is applied in this case as it suggests that individuals attempt to gain more resources as well as maintain them and those resources are crucial in stimulating the recovery process.

Hobfoll (1989) stated that individuals normally look to regain lost or threatened resources either externally (i.e., assets) or internally (i.e., energy, self-efficacy) in order to recover from their fatigue and exhaustion from work. Engaging in activities related to intellectual and physical enrichment (i.e., cultural, entertainment, and physical activities) is known to enhance a sense of mastery because performing challenging and/or unfamiliar activities offers an opportunity to acquire new skills and/or knowledge, thereby enhancing a resort visitor's self-esteem and resulting in recovery (Bandura, 1997; Hobfoll, 1989; Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Whereas a sense of control, that is a person's ability to manage his/her own schedules and have a free choice of available options during time away from work (Kelley, 1971; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007), can be gained by engaging in any type of vacation activities because they are considered to be freely self-chosen activities. According to the Self-determination

Theory, Ryan and Deci (2000) suggested that an individual's need for autonomy and relatedness can be promoted by engaging in self-motivating activities where an individual can have control over time and energy (Ryan & Deci, 2006; van Hoof et al., 2011). Since vacation activities can offer social support, fulfill needs for autonomy and relatedness, and put less demands on individuals, the recovery experience can be proceeded (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sonnentag, 2001). Participating in activities inducing a sense of mastery and self-control thus can retain as well as increase new personal resources, leading resort visitors to obtain the recovery benefits of more energy, better mood, and more self-confidence (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2011; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007).

Nevertheless, the positive relationship found between particular vacation recovery experience dimensions and activities classified as *Cultural & City Interest*, *Active Nature Pursuit*, and *Social & Non-exerting* also reflected on the item level of vacation activities. On the item level, the positive associations were found among meeting new people, sightseeing, going to the zoo/parks, excursion, attending cultural events, and visiting historical/religious sites (as parts of *Cultural & City Interest* and *Active Nature Pursuit* factor) and perceived sense of psychological detachment, relaxation, and mastery, as well as the positive linkage found between sun bathing (a part of *Social & Non-exerting*) and perceived sense of control. These results conform to the previous study advising that spending time engaging in social, low-effort, and physical activities could enable a recovery process (Sonnentag, 2001).

### 5.2.2.2 The Negative Association of Vacation Activities and Vacation Recovery Experience

Engaging in *Online Media & Entertainment* activities was proved to be negatively associated with perceived sense of *Psychological Detachment*, while engaging in the same type of activities and *Physical & Outdoor* activities was conducive to be negatively associated with perceived sense of *Relaxation*. This means that the more resort visitors participate in work-related and entertainment activities, the less they can gain a sense of psychological detachment. Likewise, the more they perform physical activities with work-related and entertainment activities simultaneously, the less they can feel relax. Such relationships can be supported by a significant negative association found on the item level of vacation activities with certain dimensions of vacation recovery experience. For example, going to the movies/ concert (as a part of *Online Media & Entertainment* factor) presented negative association with perceived senses of psychological detachment and relaxation, while engaging in beach volleyball, jet skiing, and diving (as parts of *Physical & Outdoor* factor) were found to be negatively associated with perceived sense of relaxation.

Drawing from the E-R Model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998), when individuals keep facing activities required lots of efforts that are used during working hours and no internal resource is replaced, they are likely to be negatively affected by stress. Since the *Online Media & Entertainment* factor consists of some activities that are similar to work or what resort visitors do daily (i.e., checking/ sending e-mails), these activities can inhibit a sense of psychological detachment. Such a finding also complies with previous research, suggesting that the more visitors spend time doing work-related activities, the



less mentally detached from work they would be (e.g., De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012). Moreover, it has been known that when the time for engaging in resource-providing activities was impeded by involving in work-related activities during leisure time, the impact of stress could be prolonged and slow down the process of recovery (Ragsdale et al., 2011). Additionally, *Online Media & Entertainment* activities also include interactive media (i.e., playing online games) and non-interactive media (i.e., going to watch a movie), which have been found to have less clear effect on relaxation (Reinecke et al., 2011). For example, past studies have shown that engaging in interactive media activities could increase arousal levels (Ravaja et al., 2006; Reinecke & Trepte, 2008). With higher levels of arousal from participating in such activities, it would be hard for some people to obtain a sense of relaxation, which is characterized by low activation (Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, & Feldt, 2009; Stone, Kennedy-Moore, & Neale, 1995). In contrast, physical activities although have been regarded as benefactors of recovery in previous studies (De Bloom et al., 2012; Demerouti et al., 2009; Ragsdale et al., 2011; Rook & Zijlstra, 2006), they appear to present some contrast effect in this study. In the *Physical & Outdoor* factor, many activity items, such as water skiing, surfing, and scuba diving, are considered to be extreme sports. It is possible that many resort visitors in Thailand may concern about the physical equipment risk, which is a risk associated with tourism equipment failing to function properly and causing bodily injury or harm (Jonas et al., 2011; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). Since Thailand is a developing country, many tourists tend to worry about safety and security issues, leading them to perceive anxiety, which is “the fear of negative consequences” (Dowling & Staelin as cited in Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005, p.214), rather than perceiving relaxation. Such inconsistent effect of

physical and entertainment activities on a resort visitor's sense of relaxation however deserves more investigation.

Nonetheless, the negative association found between *Social & Non-exerting* activities and perceived sense of mastery present the other inconsistent result between recovery activities and recovery experiences because social and low-effort activities were identified as resource-providing activities, which aided the recovery process in the previous research (Hobfoll, 1998; Korpela & Kinnunen, 2011; Sonnentag, 2001; Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999). Even though engaging in *Social & Non-exerting* activities was proved to have a significant positive effect on the perceived sense of psychological detachment, relaxation, and control, it yielded a negative effect on the perceived sense of *Mastery* in the present study. When going on a vacation with family, resort visitors are usually accompanied by parents, children, and/or significant others whom they have to look after during the vacation so engaging in social activities can incur household and caregiving tasks. Sonnentag (2001) stated that caregiving activities are parts of the nonwork activities which are identical to daily activities. Engaging in vacation activities that require visitors to perform caregiving tasks may draw more energy and inhibit a process of gaining new resources (Van Hooff et al., 2011). Besides, most activities related to *Social & Non-exerting* are less physical active in nature and rarely offer opportunities to be challenged or to acquire new skills, leading a resort visitor to perceive low sense of mastery. Hence, the inconsistent effect of such social and low-effort activities needs to be justified in future studies as well.

Interestingly, none of the vacation activities presented a negative association with perceived sense of control. Since vacation is a period that provides opportunities for

individuals to determine activities to be participated in by themselves, they are likely to have more control over their time, energy, and money as explained earlier by the Self-determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2006). Thus, negative effects from stress can hardly block a resort visitor's sense of control. The other interesting finding is that among the seven factors of vacation activities, only *Personal Care* (i.e., massages, spa therapies) factor did not present an important relationship with any dimension of perceived vacation recovery experience. Since this group of activities can be regarded as low-effort activities, they are rather too passive and may not help resort visitors to completely free themselves from their work or daily routine (Rook & Zijlstra, 2006) or they just provide a neutral effect to all resort visitors who engage in such activities. However, Black discussed how individuals were motivated to go to the beauty salons by the importance of relaxation, removal from normal life, and time for oneself, which implied that personal care activities could enhance an individual's sense of relaxation and well-being (as cited in Little, 2013, p.43). Therefore, the effect of *Personal Care* activities on the recovery process deserves further attention.

#### 5.2.2.3 Resource-Providing vs. Resource-Consuming Vacation Activities: The Framework of Activity-Recovery Opportunity

Overall, the effects of vacation activities on the dimensions of vacation recovery experience can be summarized into two types of activities influencing recovery: Resource-Providing Vacation Activities and Resource-Consuming Vacation Activities (see Figure 5.5). According to the previous studies of recovery activities, the name Resource-Providing Activities was used to describe activities that potentially support recovery by restoring and building up resources, diverting the individual's original

demands, and eventually helping to remove psychobiological stress (Demerouti et al., 2009; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006; Rook & Zijlstra, 2007; Sonnentag, 2001; Winwood et al., 2007). Resource-Consuming Activities, on the other hand refer to the activities that tend to prevent recovery by continuing to deplete resources and increase stress (Demerouti, 2009), including both work and nonwork-related activities or daily hassles (e.g., cleaning, caring for kids) (van Hoff et al., 2011). Those activities were expected to prolong strains during nonwork periods (Ragsdale et al., 2011).

Under Resource-Providing Vacation Activities, three subcategories related to recovery activities have been suggested by previous researchers (e.g., Ragsdale et al., 2011). However, some names have been modified to reflect the current characteristics of vacation activities, namely: Low-effort, Social & Novelty, and Outdoor Adventurous activities. As shown in Figure 5.5, six vacation activity factors: *Time for Myself*, *Social & Non-exerting*, *Cultural & City Interest*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, *Active Nature Pursuit*, and *Physical & Outdoor* are classified under each sub-category of Resource-Providing Vacation Activities. Since *Social & Non-exerting* factor includes activities that can be considered as low-effort and social activities, it is classified under both sub-categories: Low-effort and Social & Novelty activities, and presents positive effects on perceived sense of psychological detachment, relaxation, and control. Nevertheless, activities related to *Social & Non-exerting*, *Online Media & Entertainment*, and *Physical & Outdoor* were found to be considered as parts of resource-providing or resource-consuming vacation activities in the current study because they appeared to have either positive or negative effects on a different dimension of vacation recovery experience as illustrated in Figure 5.5.

Furthermore, under Resource-Consuming Vacation Activities, three subcategories are included and labeled as Physical skill-based, Caregiving, and Work-related & Entertainment activities, corresponding to the three activity factors (*Physical & Outdoor*, *Social & Non-exerting*, and *Online Media & Entertainment* activities) (See also Figure 5.5). Only work-related and caregiving activities comply with what were considered to be Resource-Consuming Activities by the previous studies (e.g., Ragsdale et al., 2011, Rook & Zijlstra, 2006, and Sonnentag, 2001). However, the results in this study suggest that entertainment and physical activities are also classified under Resource-Consuming Vacation Activities for the first time and all three types of activities can be juggled between the two major components of the vacation recovery activities. Therefore, future studies need to be done to clarify the types of activities that should be included under the Resource-Consuming Vacation Activities component and the activities under each factor should be further validated.

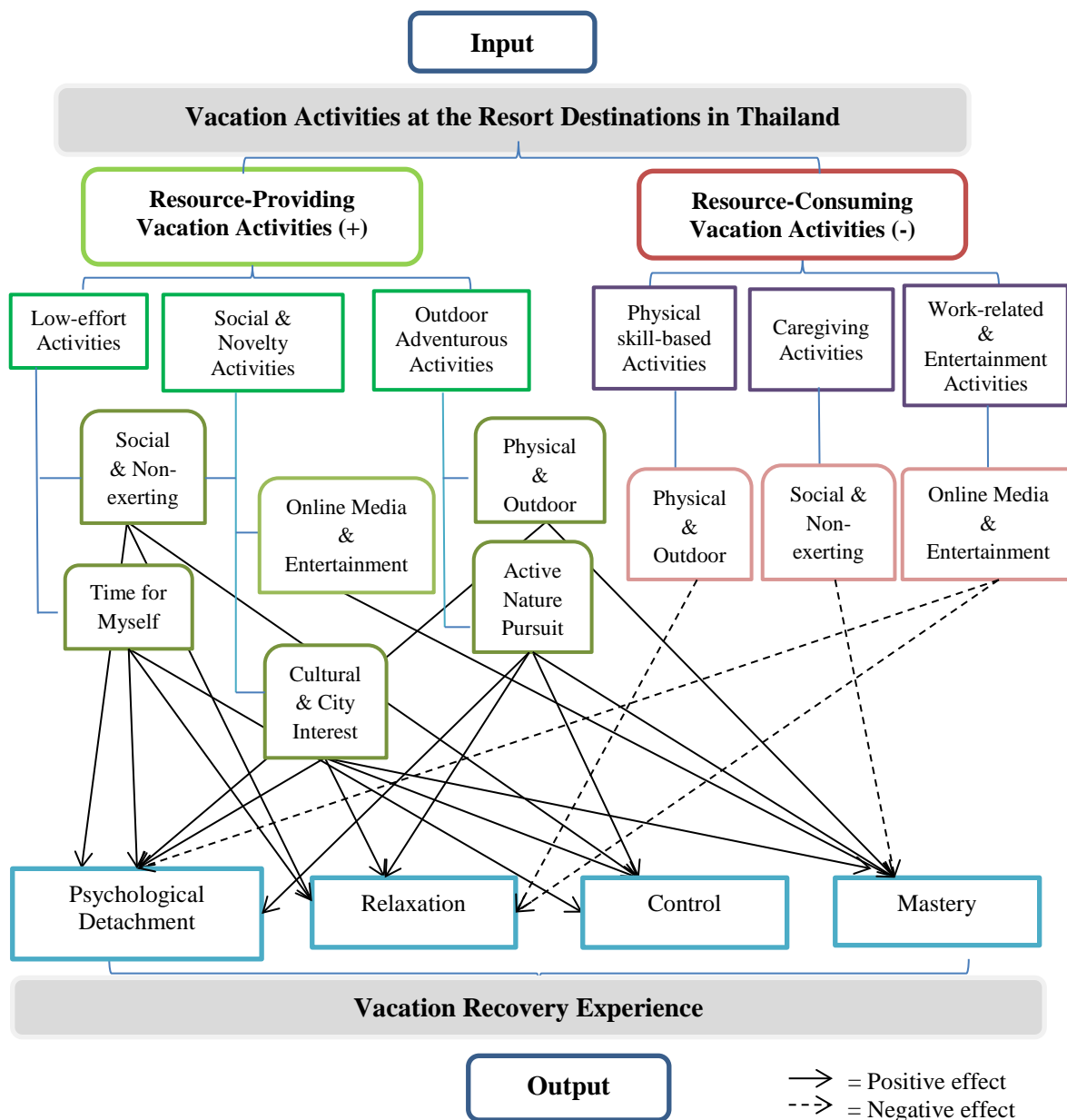


Figure 5.5 The Effects of Resource-Providing and Resource-Consuming Vacation Activities on the Four Dimensions of Vacation Recovery Experience

### 5.2.3 The Segmentation of Resort Visitors in Thailand

In this current study, three groups of resort visitors in Thailand were identified and labeled as: Activity doers, Socializers, and Relaxation seekers, according to the patterns of their activity participation and the significant dimension of vacation recovery experience. Segmenting the profile of resort visitors can be helpful for resort practitioners in tailoring products and services to the needs of certain groups as well as reducing marketing costs while improving the use of promotional channels (Dodd & Bigotte, 1997; Inbakaran & Jackson, 2005; Snepenger, 1987). As in other studies about tourist segmentation that link basis clustering with the important demographic variables (Inbakaran & Jackson, 2005; Jackson, Inbakaran, & Schmierer, 2003), the demographic patterns of each group will also be discussed.

#### 5.2.3.1 The Psychographic Characteristics of the Resort Visitors in Thailand

The most active resort visitors in Thailand are those in the first cluster, Activity doers, because they participate in many types of activities and obtain the highest sense of mastery, making them different from the other groups. Their most preferred activities are those related to self-challenges, both physical and intellectual, (i.e., engaging in extreme sports, hiking, and attending cultural events) and self-oriented activities (i.e., shopping, having spa or massage treatments, and listening to music or watching TV). Their high sense of mastery is also a result of engaging in challenging activities and being able to learn new things, because such activities can enhance competency and aptitude (Sonntag & Fritz, 2007). Beard and Ragheb found that individuals who preferred to participate in leisure activities characterized by intellectual stimulation were likely to

increase their recovery levels both physically and psychologically and enhance their self-confidence and goal attainment (as cited in Lloyd et al., 2007, p.34). Likewise, self-determination may be developed by participating in leisure activities that could cultivate a sense of mastery, self-competency, and self-esteem (e.g., team sports, hiking, and performing arts) (Iso-Ahola, LaVerde, & Graefe, 1989; Lloyd et al., 2007). Since perceiving a sense of mastery seems to be a dominant attribute of the vacation recovery experience for this group of resort visitors, actively participating in vacation activities that can build up new resources or retrieve the lost ones enhances self-mastery and increases the recovery process.

Unlike the first cluster, resort visitors regarded as Socializers (cluster II) tend to be less active, but more social-oriented because their most frequent chosen activities related to social activities as well as some outdoor nature-based activities that can be done with their family members, friends, and/or other people, for example, dining out, sightseeing, and taking pictures or videos. However, they engage less in physical skill-based activities and tend to obtain a significantly higher sense of relaxation than the other two groups, while still perceiving a moderate sense of mastery. Social activities are known to provide social interaction such as getting together with family members, acquaintances, and other people or groups as well as activities associated with eating out, attending a party, or calling others (Palmore & Luikart, 1972; Sonnentag, 2001; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Engaging in social activities can promote a recovery process by delivering social support, promoting interpersonal relationship, and decreasing demands on the resources required during typical work periods. According to the E-R model, the reduction of work demands during leisure time can thus induce a feeling of



relaxation as a part of recovery (Rook & Zijlstra, 2010). Additionally, previous research has revealed that individuals who obtained higher companionship and/or friendship from leisure participation were less likely to be affected by high levels of life stress than those with low social support (Iso-Ahola & Park, 1996; Kleiber, Hutchinson, & Williams, 2002). Furthermore, some have more freedom to interact with others during leisure time than at work; therefore, their emotion can be regulated better and used to facilitate recovery (Sonnentag, 2001). Hence, the resort visitors in this group tend to attribute their perceived vacation recovery experience through engagement in social activities which allow them to gain support from their travel companions (e.g., family members and friends) as well as other people encountered on vacation.

The last cluster, Relaxation seekers (cluster III), is regarded as the least active group, because resort visitors in this group appear to have lower levels of participation than the previous two in many activities. They seem to seek low-effort, less physically intense activities (e.g., reading, sun bathing) and some degree of social activities (e.g., dining out, spending time with family/friends) and are less intense than those visitors in cluster II. Participating in such activities may allow them to retrieve a feeling of relaxation rather than of mastery. This group reported obtaining the least sense of mastery among the three. Activity-induced relaxation typically involves freeing the mind and body (e.g., massage, meditation), putting fewer social demands on individuals, and avoiding bodily and cognitive effort and challenge (e.g., reading, listening to music, having a light walk) (Hartig et al. 2003; Jacobson, 1938; Pelletier, 2004; Tinsley & Eldredge, 1995). Such activities are often related to high passivity, implying that no work-associated demands are required during performing the activities, while more

internal resources may be gained (e.g., positive affects) (Rook & Zijlstra, 2006; Sonnentag, 2001; Stone, Kennedy-Moore, & Neale, 1995). Thus participating frequently in self-chosen, low-effort or passively engaging in vacation activities potentially leads to a perception of relaxation and facilitates recovery during a resort vacation.

#### 5.2.3.2 The Demographic Characteristics of Resort Visitors in Thailand

In terms of demographic differences, some key findings are discussed to support the main findings from differences found among the psychographic variables of the three clusters. Gender differences are first to be discussed as they support one of the study's hypotheses (H3). Male resort visitors are dominant in the first cluster, while females are the major group in the second and third cluster. This implies that male resort visitors in Thailand are more active than their female counterparts and prefer to gain a sense of mastery rather than relaxation. Such a finding can be explained by the social norms and values that characterize the leisure behaviors of males and females. In many societies, females are generally excluded from participating in several leisure activities not felt to be appropriate for them (Henderson et al., 1988; Pawsen & Banks, 1983). Frew & Shaw (1999) also stated that male and female tourists tend to experience vacation activities differently and enjoy participating in gender-specific activities. In the same study, for example, Australian male tourists were found to attend sports events more than female tourists, meaning that males are likely to have more interest in active activities than females (Frew & Shaw, 1999).

By looking at the differences in the pattern of activity participation, however the results from pairwise comparisons show that males tend to engage in *Physical &*

*Outdoor, Personal Care, and Social & Non-exerting* activities significantly more than females during a resort vacation, while females are likely to perceive higher sense of mastery. Although female resort visitors tend to be less active than their male counterparts, some of them are classified as socializers in the second cluster, implying that they tend to be active in social activities. Engaging in such activities somewhat can stimulate intellectual enrichment such as learning a new language from local people, which can lead female resort visitors to obtain more sense of mastery. With ongoing changes in societies, some groups of female especially those young and single ladies are likely to engage more in recreation activities and become as much active as male individuals (Carr, 1999; Deem, 1986). The study done by the Department of Education, for instance, found a little different in the proportion of males and females who report going to a nightclubs and attending a concert within a month (as cited in Carr, 1999, p.224). While male visitors in the first cluster tend to follow their traditional role, the other males in the third cluster exhibit low levels of activity participation complying to a previous research, which found that the majority of male British tourists seemed to act passively, be more relaxed, and visit tourist facilities that were built for specific purpose (Laing, 1987). Such a phenomenon is also supported by the result presenting that male visitors tend to prefer personal care activities rather than their female counterparts during a resort vacation in Thailand. Since many men has recently been embracing the concept of personal grooming and self-care (McNeil & Ragins, 2005), they has visited spas and other wellness facilities more and more over a past few years (Mak, Wong, & Chang, 2009). It is thus not surprised to see male resort visitors engage more in wellness-oriented

programs during vacation. However, the effects of gender role on vacation activities and vacation recovery experience need further investigation.

Moreover, resort visitor preferences and behaviors also differ among resort visitors who travel from long-haul, short-haul overseas and those travel domestically, supporting the hypothesis related to differences among visitors coming from different travel distances (H5). Short-haul international visitors are a dominant group in cluster I and II, implying that some of them are active participants seeking a sense of self-mastery through frequently engaging in various types of activities, while others are more of social participants seeking less mastery but more relaxation through social activities. The majority of the long-haul international visitors are distinct in cluster III, showing that they prefer to engage in passive activities requiring fewer physical demands and inducing relaxation. Thai domestic visitors, on the other hand are mostly found in clusters II and III, which suggest that they prefer less challenging activities and are likely to seek a sense of relaxation. According to the results from multiple comparisons, short-haul international visitors tend to participate in many types of vacation activities—particularly in the physical and cultural categories— more frequently than those in the other two groups and perceive more sense of mastery, while domestic and long-haul international visitors are likely to perceive more sense of psychological detachment and relaxation than short-haul international visitors. However, the domestic resort visitors perceive the most sense of psychological detachment and relaxation than the other two groups and involve in social and non-exerting activities less than the long-haul international visitors.

By comparing domestic visitors against short-haul international visitors, the result supports an assumption that foreigners tend to be more active participants and seek to

learn more about destinations than local people (Awaritefe, 2004). Although such an assumption is valid in explaining the behaviors of short-haul international visitors, it cannot be generalized to discuss the behaviors of long-haul international visitors in this study. Nevertheless, the tourists from overseas are generally motivated by “novelty-seeking” to travel out of their home countries either to explore a different culture or to detach themselves from their usual environment in remote destinations (Hirschman, 1984; Lee et al., 2009). According to Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty (2012), a quest for novelty, even though referring to a demand for new experience, does not necessarily mean adventurous experiences. The degrees of novelty seeking thus tend to vary by different tourists (Hirschman, 1984; Lee & Crompton, 1992). In the study by Lee and Crompton, the four aspects of novelty-seeking identified as “thrill,” “change from routine,” “boredom alleviation,” and “surprise” could be used to measure different levels of novelty (as cited in Weaver et al., 2009, p.570). Similarly, Weaver et al. (2009) segmented American tourists based on their degree of novelty and their levels of familiarity to the culture of Japan and Australia, and three tourist groups of “Thrill Seekers,” “Change Seekers,” and “Homebodies” (p. 581-582) were found. Perhaps, the long-haul international visitors may be classified as “Homebodies” since they tend to have the least interest in activity participation, focus on home-based leisure activities, and are likely to be motivated to have a vacation abroad only because they want to be surrounded by a different environment (Kelly, 1990; Perrault, Darden, & Darden, 1977; Weaver et al., 2009). Besides, according to the theory of distance decay (Bull, 1991), tourism demands are likely to decline as travel distances increase which can explain the vacation behaviors of long-haul international visitors. Instead of exhibiting high levels of

novel, the westerners seek to engage in more relaxing activities because they may be affected by a long distance flight and different time zone when traveling to Thailand. Like the long-haul international visitors, domestic resort visitors may be influenced by distance decay, but in the opposite way because they are discouraged to travel abroad. Since travel overseas can be time consuming and a cause of exhaustion, travel domestically can make visitors feel more relaxed which supports the finding that domestic visitors tend to gain a sense of relaxation more than both groups of international visitors.

As to the primary purpose of the trip, the Socializers and Relaxation seekers both include resort visitors with recreation as their primary purpose, while the group of Activity doers consists of resort visitors who are stopping over. To explain such findings, the results from multiple comparisons can be drawn upon. Such results also support the hypothesis (H6) that there is a difference among resort visitors with different primary purposes of the trip. Based on the results from multiple comparisons, the resort visitors with recreation purpose appear to be less active and perceive higher relaxation than those with stopping over purpose. The latter group tends to engage in all factors of vacation activities more than the other two groups, suggesting that they are the most active participants. Kerkvliet and Nowell (1999) also suggested that travel behaviors are found to differ between visitors to a single destination and those visiting to multiple destinations. The resort visitors with stopping over purpose are those who travel to multiple destinations at the same time as defined by Merriam-Webster's Dictionary means "a brief period of time when a person stops at a place during a journey" (Stopping over, 2014). People who visit multiple places are likely to be motivated by a high level of novelty-seeking and enjoy travelling to different places, so they tend to be more willing

to learn about destinations by highly engaging in vacation activities. On the contrary, recreation by its meaning is more associated with physical and mental restoration (Kelly, 1990). Resort visitors with recreation purpose thus tend to seek a peace of mind by engaging in vacation activities less frequent than the stopping over visitors.

Last but not least, when considering the regional locations of the chosen resorts, resorts in the south of Thailand are mostly selected by both active and passive resort visitors, while the Socializers mostly prefer to choose the north & north east location. Since the south of Thailand is known to be a “sun and sea” destination with several secluded beaches and islands and offers water-based and outdoor activities (i.e., scuba diving, jet skiing) (Rawlinson, 2009), it can fulfill the needs of resort visitors who seek rest and relaxation and those who look for more adventurous activities. The results from multiple comparisons also present that resort visitors who go to resorts in the south of Thailand tend to engage the most in *Physical & Outdoor and Personal Care* activities, implying that there are two groups of visitors (active and passive) visiting the south. In contrast, the north and north east of Thailand is an inland area where minority groups mostly reside, so most activities available tend to be cultural and nature based (Rawlinson, 2009). Hence, the resorts located in this area can serve the needs of visitors looking to interact with others at the destination and/or spending time exploring the local town and environment with their travel companions. Besides, the results from multiple comparisons also show that the resort visitors who go to the north and north east resorts mostly participate in online media and entertainment activities, suggesting that some of them may prefer to socialize through the use of social media and involving in nightlife entertainments (e.g., going to a bar, movies, and/or concerts) during their resort vacation.

The differences found among the different regional locations of the chosen resort thus support the study's hypothesis (H3).

### 5.3 Theoretical Contributions and Managerial Implications

#### 5.3.1 Theoretical Contributions

The current study explored the significant roles of various vacation activities available on the multidimensional attributes of vacation recovery experience as perceived among resort visitors in Thailand. Although some previous studies (e.g., De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012 and Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006) have already assessed both vacation activities and recovery in a vacation context, they have not yet drawn a clear connection between these two aspects. Since the more comprehensive relationship between vacation activities and vacation recovery experience deserves more attention, this study is considered to be the first to test such a link in the specified settings of resort destinations in Thailand. The findings from this research also offer several contributions to research scholars as follows:

First of all, a measurement scale of vacation activities, particularly the ones offered in Thailand, was developed and proved to be multidimensional. Only the reliability was tested and found to be acceptable in this study, providing opportunities for future scholars to validate such scales in the same or other types of settings (i.e., boutique/lifestyle hotels in Thailand, resorts in different Asian countries) and in different populations (i.e., hotel guests, volunteer visitors).

Furthermore, the findings suggest that engaging in certain vacation activities could be a factor in facilitating the specific psychological attributes underlying the



recovery process. Recalling a perspective from work psychology, a vacation should not be treated merely as a black box, but it should rather be investigated by drawing the connection between what people do on their vacation and the types of experience they obtain (De Bloom et al., 2009). Applying the concept of recovery experiences to vacation research can expand the limited knowledge of the impact of vacation activities on experiences. Specifically, the mechanism underlying the recovery process which is occurred from engaging in certain vacation activities can be explained by the E-R Model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998) and the COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989). The relationship models found in this study between certain groups of vacation activities and specific dimensions of vacation recovery experience can be adopted for additional investigations.

To the author's knowledge, this is the first time that the multiple components of vacation activities found in this study have been classified under the concept of "resource-providing vacation activities" and "resource-consuming vacation activities" as adopted from previous literature about recovery-related activities (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006, Ragsdale et al., 2011). Combining this concept with an input-output framework derived from the recreation opportunity production process (Brown, 1984) produces a proposed model of activity/input- experience/ output process that can benefit upcoming studies in terms of theoretical framework application and variable re-assessment.

Adding to the above contribution, considering the concept of the recreation opportunity production process, setting is another important factor in facilitating the output of vacation. It is considered to be a second level of input in the recreation process (Pierskalla et al., 2004). In the current study, the resort destination in Thailand is considered as a setting variable, and the setting attributes are determined from the given

information about the resort selection criteria. Three setting attributes derived from the analysis of the descriptive contents can be linked to vacation activities and vacation recovery experience, and the effect of setting should be considered in future vacation research.

Lastly, psychographic variables accompanied by certain sociodemographic variables are used to segment the profile of resort visitors in Thailand into three groups. Psychographics is information gathered on an individual's choices of activities as well as their interests and opinions to determine consumer psychological profiles (Hsu, Kang, & Wolfe, 2002; Kotler, Bowen, & Makens, 1998; Mill & Morrison, 1992). The patterns of vacation activity participation and the dominant attributes of vacation recovery experience were psychographic variables in this study and were used as a core variable to differentiate resort visitors in Thailand. Sociodemographic variables, in this case, just fill in the gap and support the differences among different groups of the resort visitors. The current study introduces a new perspective on consumer segmentation techniques based on psychographic profiles of the preferred activity and vacation recovery experience.

### 5.3.2 Managerial Implications

Taking a vacation is a prime candidate for the macro stage of recovery because it offers higher chances of complete recovery from work than engaging in leisure time during short breaks, evenings, or weekends (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010). Vacation also provides opportunities for individuals to spend time on nonwork activities that are freely chosen and that potentially fuel a process of recovery. By investigating the

role vacation activities play on a vacation recovery experience, resort and destination practitioners can apply the key findings of this study to target the right groups of resort visitors in Thailand.

Since vacation activities available in Thailand were found to be multidimensional, when designing or planning vacation programs, marketers and/or destination planners should promote vacation activities in the form of packages rather than a single activity. However, the five most popular activities (sightseeing/ taking pictures & videos, eating out at restaurants, spending time with family/ friends, shopping, and trying the regional cuisine) should not be ignored when designing activities programs because they are likely to be chosen by the majority of resort visitors. Specifically, sightseeing has been reported as a favorable vacation activity in many previous studies (Xu, 2007). Similarly, sightseeing was perceived as the most important image of Thailand among Thai and foreign travelers, followed by friendliness of local people and food (Henkel et al., 2006). Promoting those top activities in a special package will help resort marketers to target more customers for a particular vacation. In addition, the relationship between vacation activities and a vacation recovery experience should not be neglected, because the findings suggest that several types of vacation activities can contribute to similar attributes of the vacation recovery experience or lead to more than one attribute simultaneously. For instance, engaging in culture-based and outdoor nature-based is conducive to a sense of psychological detachment, relaxation, control, and mastery, implying that consumers may recover more completely by participating in those activities as a package. Bundling up the activity-recovery group that presents a positive association

enhances marketing effectiveness and reduces promotional costs when facing tight budgets (Beritelli & Boksberger, 2005).

Furthermore, it appears that resort visitors seek for vacation recovery experience in a variety of ways. Some prefer to engage in highly cognitive-involved and challenging activities, whereas others are likely to engage in low physical and intellectually intense or socially related activities. Two broad categories of vacation activities proposed in this present study offer some self-guidance for resort visitors who seek to recover from their work and life stresses during their vacation in Thailand. To gain a sense of recovery, resort visitors are advised to engage more frequently in activities considered as “resource-providing vacation activities,” while minimizing or staying away from “resource-consuming vacation activities.” The more visitors participate in low-effort activities, for example, the more sense of psychological detachment, relaxation, and control can be perceived. The reverse outcome can appear when highly involving in work-related and entertainment activities, the chances of obtaining a sense of psychological detachment and relaxation are likely to be declined. By realizing this, resort visitors can plan their trip ahead and with more care to ensure a beneficial vacation. Since some people may claim that they are less happy and have less energy after their trip because of vacation stresses, they can reduce such potential stresses by planning their itinerary beforehand (Achor, 2014).

To be more practical, the findings about the segmentation of resort visitors in Thailand give a bigger picture of which target market the practitioners should go after and with which marketing campaign. Since there are three profound groups of resort guests in Thailand, a resort destination that wants to market active vacation products

(e.g., hiking, water-based sports, and visiting historical sites) that possibly induce a sense of mastery should promote these products to young adult visitors from short-haul overseas (i.e., Singapore, China, and India). These visitors not only seek activities that can enrich their physical and mental state, but they are also interested in activities that can offer socialization opportunities either with their family and friends or other people they meet during the trip (e.g., dining out at restaurants, attending local festivals). On the other hand, promoting less physically and mentally intense activities and, tranquil self-oriented, and light social activities (e.g., a candlelit dinner package, a brief resort tour) can produce a sounder marketing campaign among less active visitors because such activities can bring them a greater sense of relaxation. For domestic visitors, they are found to be more likely to engage in social and relaxing activities, so targeting them with family vacation packages or personal care packages will be more appropriate and can reach more of them. By recognizing different desires among various vacationer profiles, both resort and tour operators in Thailand and overseas can efficiently design and offer appropriate programs and services for their target markets.

Last but not least, the differences found among chosen resort locations in Thailand in terms of preferred activity participation and perceived specific attributes of vacation recovery experience can provide an efficient and creative managerial tool for destination planners such as the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in providing activities and/or programs for the target customers. According to the findings, resort visitors who seek active activity-experience bundles and the other seeking passive activity-experience bundles are likely to visit resort destinations located in the south of Thailand. Visitors who are interested in more social activity-experience bundles prefer to

stay at resorts in the north and north east of Thailand. For example, planning two separate programs or tour packages (e.g. adventurous vs. relaxing activities) for the southern resorts will capture both active and passive visitors. To promote such packages, promotional materials and advertising strategies should highlight favorable activity-experience bundles for specific groups of resort visitors to Thailand. Since information sources are believed to influence an individual's perception of destination image and his/her destination choice (Goodall & Ashworth, 1988), more reliable sources are needed to enhance marketing effectiveness. In this study, majority of resort visitors choose to visit certain resort destinations in Thailand based on recommendations from their family members and/or friends as well as some commercials and online reviews. Heung et al. (2001) stated that personal referrals from relatives and friends were found to be more reliable than from travel agencies. Likewise, destination images were claimed to be altered by word-of-mouth and the use of media (Golledge and Stimson, 1987). Besides, given the preferred attributes of the settings (e.g., beauty of the nature, convenient location, and calmness), these can be incorporated into marketing plans in order to provide suitable environment and ambience of resort destinations as well as delivering salient advertisements that may attract prospective customers. By acknowledging the differences of the settings, their important qualities and marketing channels, destination planners will be able to plan ahead in managing the products and services offered and can implement effective marketing plans within their time and money constraints.

## 5.4 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

### 5.4.1 Limitations

Even though the study does generate findings that are applicable, there are some limitations that should be addressed in order to provide insights for future researchers. First, using convenient samples gathered from a few on-site locations (at the resort destinations, a cultural event, and a private institution) and two online platforms (Facebook and MTurk) may not represent the whole population of visitors to resort destinations in Thailand and may limit the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the use of questionnaires as a study instrument may present some limitations. Since a questionnaire provides self-reported data, the associations among variables might be overestimated because of some biases (i.e., response biases) (Ragsdale, 2011). The responses of perceived vacation recovery experience as an outcome from participating in particular vacation activities might be less objective because other physiological measurements (i.e., sleep hours and performance ratings) were not included in assessing alternative mediators or outcome variables (i.e., well-being, satisfaction).

Second, since the respondents were asked to answer the questionnaire based on their most recent stay at a resort destination in Thailand, their memory of that particular resort might not be accurate, because some responses may have been retrieved from their salient memories of other resort experiences. Some resort visitors were also likely to visit several resorts in different locations during the same trip. Likewise, when travelers face difficulties during their trip, they are likely to forget about their further experiences of

that trip, particularly if those experiences are similar (Loftus & Loftus as cited in Alexander, Bakir, & Wickens, 2010).

Third, the vacation activity items although were adopted from literatures and Tourism industry guidelines, the names of some items were modified to shorten the list of activities. However, some names may be too broad and are hard to be discussed in a specific manner, for example, spending time with family/ friends is not clearly stated and more subjective. Moreover, the list of vacation activities might have not been comprehensive since some resort visitors reflected the activities that were not included on the list (e.g., practice Thai boxing) under their trip purpose. To capture a more complete set of vacation activities in Thailand, an open-ended area should be provided at the end of the activity list as an option for a respondent to specify activities other than the list. In addition, due to the fact that activities are setting specific, several activity factors are not often conceptually grouped (Lehto, Fu, & Li, 2013). Many similar activities can be engaged in different settings such as surfing the internet on wireless devices (e.g., smartphones, iPads) can be done in many places (e.g., a resort, a nightclub, and a movie theatre). Therefore, some activities that should not belong in the same category are grouped under the same component in the current study (e.g., checking/ sending e-mails, going to the movies/ concerts, and going to a bar/ nightclub are all classified under *Online Media & Entertainment* factor). To clarify such dimensions, the settings where particular activities are performed should be taken into a consideration in future studies.

Fourth, the limitation can also be addressed in terms of the use of certain statistical methods. The results of the MLR presented relatively low  $r^2$  in the predicted model between vacation activity factors and each dimension of vacation recovery



experience. For example, the  $r^2$  that explained perceived control was found to be at 4.4%, implying that 4.4% of the variance in perceived control can be explained by participating in *Active Nature Pursuit* and *Online Media & Entertainment* activities. According to Newman and Newman (2000), a low  $r^2$  is commonly expected in social science research because the dependent variables can be affected by many more factors that cannot be inclusively accounted for in one study and because the predicted variables tend to have small effect sizes. Since the measure of vacation activities was newly developed in this study and has not been well validated, this could have influenced the regression model. Nonetheless, such shortcomings do not negate the usefulness of the findings, since every model presents a significant difference at the alpha level of less than or equal to .001. Also, the use of CCA also includes the limitations pertaining to the interpretation of the findings. The overall model of CCA presents the proportion of variance shared by the linear composite of two specific variable sets, instead of the extracted variance from each variable. This may lead to a difficulty in identifying the correlations between the subsets of dependent and independent variables, since no fixed statistical criteria were set to interpret the significant relationships of variables in CCA (Hair et al., 2010). However, the results of CCA are not invalidated by such limitations as long as it can be practically useful.

#### 5.4.2 Suggestions for Future Research

The connection between vacation activities and vacation recovery experience was examined in the present study and revealed many interesting findings as mentioned previously. Since it is for the first time that such a connection has been examined in the

Thailand resort vacation context, a number of recommendations can be given for the future studies.

Although the current study serves as a foundation for the future investigation of recovery as a part of vacation effects, such effects remain unclear. It will be interesting to include factors that can moderate the outcome in future studies, such as individual characteristics (i.e., workaholic, self-esteem), cultural background, and job stressors. The previous research (i.e., Strauss-Blasche, Ekmekcioglu, & Marktl, 2000, Nawijn et al., 2010) also suggests that not all vacation contributes to recovery, depending on how much individuals need to recover and/or what they encounter during vacation (i.e., holiday stress, negative incidents). Furthermore, different features of vacation (i.e., duration, location) should be controlled to enhance the accuracy of their effect on the outcome variable. Considering the vacation outcomes, variables other than vacation recovery experience (i.e., health status, affective states) should be incorporated and observed in future studies. The measurement scale of vacation activities developed in the current study can also be adopted to assess tourist behaviors on different types of vacation (i.e., slow travel, ecotourism), settings (i.e., lifestyle resorts, home-stay), and/or population groups (i.e., backpackers, honeymooners) so that it can be further validated.

Not only do the vacation effects need to be observed during vacation, but also they should be well understood by integrating multiple measurements such as pre- and post-vacation, which will allow us to determine how long the effects will last. To achieve such outcomes, careful and appropriate study designs are needed. For example, a framework for conducting multiple measurements at different times during a vacation period was introduced by Westman and Eden (1997). This framework contained 2 pre-

vacation, 1 during vacation, and 2 post-vacation measurements and has been proved to be comparable in vacation research findings; it may be applicable to future vacation study designs (as cited in De Bloom et al., 2009, p.24). It is also beneficial to follow up the effect of vacation on an individual's recovery in the longer term, which can be done by conducting a longitudinal study to examine the long-term impact of vacation and discover whether it can lead to temporary or permanent changes.

Additionally, it remains unclear whether "being away from home" is a necessary factor in enabling a recovery process. Spending days off at home might aid a process of recovery to the same extent as engaging in a vacation away from home (De Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2010). To clarify this skepticism, the effects of vacation gained during a resort holiday need to be compared with the vacation effects derived from a "staycation" holiday. Engaging in some types of vacation activities (physical, caregiving, and entertaining activities) were found to have a negative impact on certain dimensions of the vacation recovery experience and did not support the results found in the past research. Role ambiguities of such activities should be explored in future studies. Surprisingly, participating in personal care activities (e.g., spa treatments, massages) did not show any significant contribution or association with any dimensions of vacation recovery experience, even though they are considered to be parts of recovery activities as noted by previous research. The role of these low-effort activities as one type of many vacation activities may not be powerful enough to influence a resort visitor's recovery in this case. Alexander, Bakir, & Wickens (2010) also advised that engaging in cultural activities and interacting with others during vacation tended to impact visitor lives rather

than other types of recreational activities (e.g., spas, sports). More attention should be devoted to validating the role of personal care activities in future vacation studies.

The profile of resort visitors in Thailand found in this study may be characterized by the travel motivations, travel distances, and/or cultural backgrounds influencing their choices of activities. Integrating the measurement scales that can assess more of these psychographic variables, such as the novelty-seeking scales and the measure of cultural values, may better explain the discrepancy found among groups of resort visitors.

Ultimately, although this study has left some puzzles to be solved for future researchers, it gives valuable knowledge about vacation behaviors, vacation activity preferences, perceived vacation recovery experience, and the effects that vacation activities have on the specific attributes of vacation recovery experience among resort visitors in Thailand. Such findings suggest that engaging in the right kinds of vacation activities can stimulate a process of recovery through positive underlying recovery attributes. Moreover, the information given about the significant attributes of the chosen resort destinations offers some insights for the resort practitioners in managing the settings/environment that may enhance a resort visitor's positive experiences and fuel recovery as an ultimate outcome of vacation. Not only does the current study deliver meaningful recommendations to industry practitioners, but it also provides a stimulus and a platform for future research. Going on vacation is not merely a matter of fun, but it can help individuals gain rest and recuperation during their time away from work. According to Elizabeth Gilbert (2006), "Life if you keep chasing it so hard, will drive you to death. Time—when pursued like a bandit—will behave like one..."(p.155), meaning that if we never let go of anything, it will be harder to find a better life, and if we do not used our

time wisely, our life will get to be stolen away. Therefore, putting aside work, going on vacation, and participating in our favorite vacation activities may give us back our life and time.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A Survey Instrument**Vacation Experience Survey**

1. What is the name of the resort you are currently staying at (or last visited)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Where is this resort located at (i.e., name of the city or region)? *(Please specify)*  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Is this your first time staying at this resort?     Yes     No
4. How long did you stay at this particular resort? \_\_\_\_\_night(s)
5. In one sentence, could you tell us **the most important reason** why you choose to stay at this resort destination?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the **primary purpose** of this visit? *(Please check one)*  
 Business + Leisure                       Recreation  
 Stop over on the way to another destination  
 Visit friends/ relatives                       Other *(Please specify)* \_\_\_\_\_
7. Would you like to return to this resort destination on another visit?     Yes     No
8. Think about the activities you participated during this resort vacation. For each activity or group of activities listed, please circle the point on the scale which best estimates how much you participated.

During this resort vacation, how much did you participate in...?	Never did	↔	Did some	↔	Did a lot		
Jogging / Walking for exercise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sport club or Fitness exercise (i.e., Swimming [pool], Tennis, Weight lifting)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Flexibility (i.e., Stretching, Yoga, Tai chi)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Swimming for leisure (in river, sea)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Beach volleyball	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Golfing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Surfing / Windsurfing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Jet skiing / Water skiing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Diving (i.e., Snorkeling, Scuba diving)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<b>During this resort vacation, how much did you participate in...?</b>	<b>Never did</b> ←		→ <b>Did some</b>		←		→ <b>Did a lot</b>
Paddling (i.e., Canoeing, Kayaking)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Rafting (i.e., bamboo rafts, rubber rafts)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cycling (i.e., road bikes, mountain bikes)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hiking / Trekking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Horseback riding / Elephant riding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Go to Sauna / Jacuzzi	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wellness (i.e., Spa treatment, Massages)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sun bathing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reading (i.e., books, newspapers, magazines)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Listening to the radio / Watching TV	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Checking / sending e-mail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Playing games (i.e., card games, online games)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Writing postcards	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Spending time with family/ friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Eating out at restaurants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Trying the regional cuisine (i.e., Southern Thai food)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Learning Thai language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meeting other people (i.e., new friends, local people)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Engaging in prays or meditation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Excursion (i.e., by bus, cruise, rail)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shopping (i.e., at the mall, local market)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Jungle Safari, Wild life viewing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sightseeing / Taking pictures & videos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Going to the zoo/ Natural Parks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Going to a bar or night club	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Going to the movies / concerts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Attending cultural events (i.e., watch traditional shows, go to local festivals)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visit historical/ religious sites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting museums / art galleries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. For each of the following statements, please circle the point on the scale where you feel is true for you most of the time in describing your **resort vacation experience**.

During this resort vacation...	Strongly disagree	←	→	Strongly agree
I forget about work.	1	2	3	4 5
I didn't think about work at all.	1	2	3	4 5
I distanced myself from my work.	1	2	3	4 5
I got a break from the demands of work.	1	2	3	4 5
I kicked back and relax.	1	2	3	4 5
I did relaxing things.	1	2	3	4 5
I used the time to relax.	1	2	3	4 5
I took time for leisure.	1	2	3	4 5
I learned new things.	1	2	3	4 5
I sought out intellectual challenges.	1	2	3	4 5
I did things that challenged me.	1	2	3	4 5
I did something to broaden my horizons.	1	2	3	4 5
I felt like I could decide for myself what to do.	1	2	3	4 5
I decided my own schedule.	1	2	3	4 5
I determined for myself how I would spend my time.	1	2	3	4 5
I took care of things the way that I wanted them done.	1	2	3	4 5

**For each of the following questions, please identify yourself:**

10. Birth year (*please specify*): \_\_\_\_\_
11. Gender:       Male     Female
12. Marital status:     Single       Married
13. Which country are you from? (*please specify*): \_\_\_\_\_
14. Who else come with you on this trip?  
 Family     Friends     None     Other \_\_\_\_\_
15. Occupation (*please check one*):  
 Professional       Managerial       Sales  
 Retired, unemployed     Office worker       Agriculture  
 Labor, production       Housewife       Military  
 Educator       Student       Other (*please specify*) \_\_\_\_\_



16. What is the highest level of education you have attained? (*please check one*):
- Elementary school       High School diploma or equivalent vocational training
- Middle School               Bachelor's degree or equivalent vocational education
- Master's degree or higher    Other (*please specify*)\_\_\_\_\_

**-----Thank you for your participation-----**

Appendix B List of the Resorts by Regional Locations

Table B1 Resort Names and Frequencies of Resort Visitors in the South of Thailand

<u>Resort Names</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Resort Names</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Amanpuri	1	.30	Paresa Resort	2	.60
Anantaburin Resort	1	.30	Panvaree Resort	1	.30
Anantara Bo Phut Resort	3	.91	Phi Phi Arobel	1	.30
Banyan Tree Samui	1	.30	Phulay Bay, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve Luxury Resort	3	.91
Beach Republic	2	.60	Pimalai Resort and Spa	5	1.51
Beach Resort & Spa	1	.30	Railay Resort	1	.30
Bo Phut Resort & Spa	4	1.21	Ramada Khao Lak Resort	3	.91
Centra Coconut Beach Resort	35	10.57	Rawi Warin Resort & Spa	1	.30
Diamond Plaza Hotel	1	.30	Renaissance Koh Samui	1	.30
Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket	3	.91	Royal light house villas at Boat Lagoon	2	.60
Flora Ville	1	.30	Samui Beach Village Rentals	1	.30
Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui	3	.91	Sandalwood Luxury Villa Resort	1	.30
Fun villa	1	.30	Serenity Resort & Residences	1	.30
Impiana Resort & Spa Phuket	1	.30	Sri Panwa Villas Phuket	3	.91
Indigo Pearl	1	.30	Star Huts	1	.30
JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa	1	.30	The Khao Lak Orchid Beach Resort	1	.30
Kamalaya Koh Samui	1	.30	The Sarojin Beach Resort in Khao Lak	4	1.21
KC Resort	1	.30	The Shambhala Khaolak Resort	1	.30
Keawsamui Resort	1	.30	The Spa Resort	1	.30
Koh Yao Island Resort	4	1.21	Thipviman Resort	1	.30
Layana Resort	1	.30	Tubkaak Boutique Resort	1	.30
Le Meridien Khao Lak	5	1.51	Twin Lotus Hotel	1	.30
Long Beach Chalet	2	.60	Villa 360 Resort and Spa	1	.30
Mai Samui Beach Resort & Spa	9	2.72	Westin Siray Bay Resort and Spa	1	.30
Novotel Phuket Resort	1	.30	Z Hotel	3	.91
Outrigger Phi Phi Island Resort & Spa	1	.30	Zeavola Resort	1	.30
Pacific Club Resort	1	.30			
			Total (54 Resorts)	130	39.27

Table B2 Resort Names and Frequencies of Resort Visitors in  
the North and North East of Thailand

<u>Resort Names</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Resort Names</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Amora Hotel	1	.30	Sajiburi Khao Yai	1	.30
Arthithaya Resort	1	.30	Sala Khaoyai Resort	1	.30
b2 hotel	1	.30	Simathani Hotel	16	4.83
Baandin Resort	1	.30	Sripattana Hotel	2	.60
Baanrakkan Hotel	1	.30	Starwell Bali Resort	1	.30
Baansuan Resort	1	.30	Suriwongse Hotel	1	.30
Belmont Village Hotel	1	.30	Tara Resort	1	.30
Bhunga Resort	1	.30	Thai Hotel	1	.30
Bhurinun Resort	3	.91	Thanyapura Hotel	2	.60
Bhutawan Resort	1	.30	The Greenery Resort & Spa	1	.30
Bonanza Resort	7	2.11	Un Ar Am Resort	1	.30
Chareonthani Hotel	1	.30	V-One Hotel	12	3.63
Chokchai Ranch Resort	2	.60	White House Resort	1	.30
Doitao Resort	1	.30	<b>Total (53 Resorts)</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>31.42</b>
Dusit Princess Hotel	5	1.51			
Goldenland Resort	3	.91			
Juladit Resort	1	.30			
Khaoyaifahsai Resort	1	.30			
Kinnaree Resort	2	.60			
Kwanruen Resort and spa	2	.60			
Le Meridien Chaing Mai	1	.30			
Leelawalai Resort	1	.30			
Mannarkudi Hotel	1	.30			
Mountainview Resort	1	.30			
Nan Resort	1	.30			
Palio Inn Khao Yai	1	.30			
Parnviman Resort	1	.30			
Pavilla Khao Yai Resort	1	.30			
Pegasus Hotel	2	.60			
Phrae Hotel	1	.30			
Pujaisai Resort	1	.30			
Panjadara Hotel	1	.30			
Putawan Resort	1	.30			
Rachaphruk Grand Hotel	1	.30			
Rianthong Resort	1	.30			
Rimping Village Hotel	1	.30			
Rimtarn Resort	1	.30			
Royal Princess Hotel	1	.30			
Sabai Hotel	7	2.11			

Table B3 Resort Names and Frequencies of Resort Visitors in  
the Central & nearby coastal provinces of Thailand

<u>Resort Names</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Resort Names</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Amonpun Villa Resort	1	.30	Huaikakang Resort	1	.30
Ananda River Hill Resort	1	.30	Ibis Bangkok riverside	1	.30
Anantara Bangkok Riverside Resort & Spa	2	.60	Ibrik Resort	1	.30
Ariyasom Villa	1	.30	Imperial Hotels and Resorts	1	.30
Baan Laksasubha	1	.30	Krathomchaopraya Resort	1	.30
Baanlonsai	1	.30	Lima Coco Resort	2	.60
Baanpanam Resort	1	.30	LK Mansion	1	.30
Baanpangam Resort	1	.30	Lopburi Inn Resort	1	.30
Baanreunpen Homestay	1	.30	Mai Yai Hotel	1	.30
Baansuan Ampawa Resort	1	.30	Mandarin Oriental	1	.30
Baantalaymok Resort	1	.30	Mida City Resort	1	.30
Baanthalaysecream Resort	1	.30	Muaklek Health Spa and Resort	1	.30
Baiyok Sky Hotel Bangkok	1	.30	Mungmee Resort	1	.30
Bangkok Golf Spa Resort	1	.30	Naisaimork Boutique Resort	1	.30
Banyan Hua Hin	1	.30	Nattawan resort	1	.30
Blue Sky Resort	1	.30	Novotel Hua Hin Cha Am Beach Resort and Spa	1	.30
Buritara Resort & Spa Jomtien	1	.30	P Guesthouse	1	.30
Centara Grand Mirage Beach Resort	1	.30	Panviman Amphawa Riverside Resort	1	.30
Chainart Resort	1	.30	Pasak Hillside Resort	1	.30
Chanchaolao Beach Resort	1	.30	Pattavia Resort	1	.30
Chatrium Hotel Riverside	1	.30	Pattaya Bay Resort	1	.30
Chillax Resort	1	.30	Petch Rim Tarn Resort	1	.30
Chonlapreuk Resort	1	.30	Planta Avenue Resort	1	.30
Country Resort	1	.30	Platree Resort	1	.30
Dusit Thani Hua Hin Hotel	7	2.11	Ponnathee Resort	1	.30
Glow Trinity Silom	1	.30	Prikwaan Resort	1	.30
Golden City Rayong Hotel	1	.30	Prince Palace Hotel	1	.30
Good Time Resort	1	.30	Rain Forest Resort	1	.30
Hardson Resort	1	.30	Ramada Suits	1	.30
Hua Hin Resort	2	.60	Rest Detail Hotel	1	.30

Table B3 Continued

<u>Resort Names</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Royal Parkview Hotel	1	.30
Ruamakarm Resort	1	.30
Ruean Phae Royal Park	1	.30
Sampran Riverside	3	.91
Sawasdee Bangkok Inn	1	.30
Sawasdee Hotel	1	.30
Sea Me Spring Too Hotel	1	.30
Shoremuang Resort	1	.30
Southern Star Resort	1	.30
Star Resort	2	.60
Suanpueng Resort	1	.30
The Bayview Pattaya	1	.30
The Berkeley Hotel Pratunam	2	.60
The Country Lake Nature Lodge	1	.30
The Galaxy Resort	1	.30
The Herbs Hotel	2	.60
The Mountain Beach Resort	1	.30
The Peninsula Bangkok	1	.30
The Thai Garden Resort	1	.30
Thungdindum Resort	1	.30
Verunda Lodge Resort	1	.30
Virunda Resort and Spa	1	.30
Yaiya Boutique Resort Hua Hin	1	.30
Total (84 Resorts)	97	29.31