

Factors Influencing Consumption Patterns of the Elderly in Thailand's Northeastern Region

Wannapa Naburana

Received : May 8, 2025 Revised : December 16, 2025 Accepted : December 24, 2025

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the consumption behavior of elderly individuals in Thailand's Northeastern region, a demographically significant yet underrepresented area in aging research. Specifically, the study explores how demographic characteristics—such as gender, age, and occupation—and the components of the service marketing mix (7Ps) influence spending behavior and purchasing decisions. By applying the Engel–Kollat–Blackwell (EKB) decision-making model as the theoretical foundation, the research seeks to provide a regionally grounded and marketing-centered understanding of the factors shaping elderly consumers' choices.

The results, based on quantitative data from 400 elderly participants, reveal that demographic variables, particularly gender and age, have a statistically significant influence on both the type of products/services consumed and the frequency of spending. Occupation, however, shows no significant relationship. Among the 7Ps, only the “People” element—representing interpersonal service interactions—has a significant effect on both spending frequency and purchase decisions. Other elements such as Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Physical Evidence, and Process showed no statistically significant impact, although Promotion and Product approached significance. These findings suggest that emotional and relational aspects of service are more influential than logistical or design-oriented factors for this population.

The study contributes to both theoretical and practical domains. Theoretically, it expands the application of the EKB model within an aging, rural consumer segment in Thailand, offering insight into age- and region-specific decision-making behaviors. Practically, the findings provide evidence-based recommendations for businesses and policymakers to develop inclusive service designs and marketing strategies tailored to the needs and preferences of elderly consumers in Northeastern Thailand, a population segment that is growing rapidly as the country moves toward becoming a super-aged society.

Keywords: Elderly Consumers, Spending Behavior, Service Marketing Mix (7Ps), Northeastern Thailand

¹ Lecturer, School of Management Technology, Institute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology

* Corresponding author e-mail: w.naburana@sut.ac.th

1. Introduction

In recent years, countries around the world have begun to experience profound demographic changes, with one of the most notable shifts being the rapid growth of aging populations. This global trend toward becoming an aging society is particularly evident in the 21st century, affecting not only healthcare systems and labor markets but also reshaping social and economic structures. According to the United Nations (2019), many nations are now entering what is termed an “aged society,” where at least 10% of the population is aged 60 or older. Once this demographic reaches 20%, the country is considered a “completely aged society,” and if it surpasses 28%, it enters the category of a “super-aged society.” Thailand is no exception to this global phenomenon. The proportion of elderly citizens began rising noticeably in 2005, when 10.4% of the population was aged 60 or above. Since then, the elderly population has continued to grow steadily at an average annual rate of around 5% (Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development Institute: TGRI, 2021). Demographic projections for Thailand indicate a rapidly aging population trajectory. According to the National Statistical Office (NSO), Thailand is expected to enter a “super-aged society” by 2031. Meanwhile, recent data show that as of early 2024, approximately 14.02 million Thais were aged 60 or above, representing about 20% of the total population (NSO, 2024). Among them, 42.1% are male (approximately 5.90 million), and 57.9% are female (approximately 8.12 million). These figures reflect that Thailand has already crossed the threshold into an “aged society”. The shift from around 20% in 2024 to a projected 28% by 2031 suggests a steep increase within a relatively short window (TGRI, 2021). Regionally, the provinces with the largest elderly populations include Nakhon Ratchasima, Chiang Mai, Ubon Ratchathani, Khon Kaen, and Samut Prakan. These figures highlight not only the demographic transformation underway in Thailand but also the urgent need for responsive policies and innovations that can support the well-being and active participation of its aging population.

As of 2024, Thailand's elderly population (aged 60 and above) stands at 14,027,411 individuals, which represents approximately 20% of the total national population (National Statistical Office, 2024). This group consists of 5,904,327 males and 8,123,084 females, revealing a notable gender imbalance where elderly women significantly outnumber men—a trend consistent with global patterns in aging demographics. Regionally, the Northeastern Region has the highest elderly population in the country, totaling 4,218,846 individuals (1,801,307 males and 2,417,539 females), making it a critical area of focus for aging-related policies and services. This is followed by the Central Region with 3,778,750 elderly (1,561,905 males, 2,216,845 females) and the Northern Region with 2,913,885 elderly (1,238,314 males, 1,675,571 females). The Southern Region accounts for 1,659,190 elderly (701,759 males, 957,431 females), while Bangkok, the capital, is home to 1,456,740 elderly individuals (601,042 males and 855,698 females), indicating a substantial aging population in urban centers as well. At the provincial level (excluding Bangkok), Nakhon Ratchasima tops the list with 575,128 elderly residents, including 245,841 males and 329,287 females. Chiang Mai ranks second with 451,761 seniors (192,729 males, 259,032 females), followed by Ubon Ratchathani with 401,029 elderly (170,956 males, 230,073 females), Khon Kaen with 395,680 (169,211 males, 226,469 females), and Samut

Prakan with 386,458 elderly (158,261 males, 228,197 females). The data clearly illustrate the concentration of elderly populations in major provincial hubs, particularly within the Northeastern and Northern regions, where traditional family structures, rural-to-urban migration of younger populations, and limited access to services may amplify the socioeconomic challenges of aging. The female predominance among the elderly further emphasizes the need for gender-responsive health care, financial planning, and community support systems tailored to older women.

As Thailand moves toward becoming a super-aged society, the Northeastern region stands out as one of the areas with the highest concentrations of elderly citizens, particularly in provinces such as Nakhon Ratchasima, Chiang Mai, Ubon Ratchathani, Khon Kaen, and Samut Prakan (National Statistical Office, 2024). This demographic trend is more than just a statistic. It signifies a structural shift in Thailand's socio-economic landscape with far-reaching implications for consumer markets, healthcare, and service industries. The elderly population now represents a major consumer segment whose spending patterns are concentrated in essential product and service categories, including food and beverages, healthcare and wellness products, personal care, and local retail services (Assarut et al., 2023; Jirukkakul & Nonthapot, 2023). These categories not only address fundamental needs but also influence the broader economy through steady and value-driven consumption. As older adults become more prominent as consumers with distinct preferences and decision-making behaviors, their impact on market demand, service design, and public policy continues to grow (Prapaipanich et al., 2022). In particular, their spending behaviors are shaped by health awareness, convenience, service quality, and accessibility, factors that intersect closely with the 7Ps of service marketing mix: product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Dai & Suo, 2024). Understanding these dynamics is especially crucial in the Northeastern region, where cultural traditions, economic constraints, and rural-urban divides create unique consumption patterns among older adults (TGRI, 2021).

Although scholarly interest in elderly consumer behavior has grown in recent years, empirical studies focusing specifically on the rural elderly population in Thailand's Northeastern region remain limited. Much of the existing literature has concentrated on urban settings or provided national-level generalizations, thereby overlooking regional disparities in cultural values, access to goods and services, and socioeconomic conditions. Furthermore, there is a lack of research that systematically integrates demographic characteristics with the full spectrum of the service marketing mix (7Ps) to explain spending patterns among older adults.

2. Research Objectives

This study seeks to address a large gap in the literature regarding elderly consumer behavior by concentrating on a demographically important yet under-researched population of older individuals living in rural Northeastern Thailand. The research aims to achieve the following objectives: (1) To examine the consumption patterns of senior adults in Northeastern Thailand, considering their demographic attributes like gender, age, and occupation. (2) To investigate the impact of marketing-related factors—specifically the

elements of the 7Ps service marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence)—on consumer spending behavior. This study seeks to advance theory through a regional application of the Engel–Kollat–Blackwell (EKB) consumer decision-making model by integrating demographic variables with the complete range of the 7Ps, while also offering practical insights for developing inclusive marketing and policy interventions aimed at the aging population in rural Thailand.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Consumer Behavior and Aging

Consumer behavior encompasses the psychological, social, and emotional processes individuals undergo when selecting, purchasing, using, and disposing of goods and services to fulfill their needs and aspirations. These behaviors are dynamic and shaped by internal and external factors, including age, lifestyle, culture, income, and access to information. Among elderly consumers, aging introduces new variables that reshape their decision-making processes and consumption preferences in significant ways. As people age, their physical abilities, health conditions, and cognitive functions often change, affecting not only what they buy but also how they engage with the marketplace. For instance, older adults may prioritize functionality, comfort, health benefits, and simplicity over aesthetic or trend-driven features (Wongleedee et al., 2023).

The psychological aspect of aging also plays a role; many seniors become more risk-averse and value trust, familiarity, and clarity in brand communication. Their preferences tend to be influenced by long-term habits, past experiences, and emotional connections with certain brands or product categories.

Income remains a significant determinant of consumer behavior among the elderly. Many older adults in Thailand rely on fixed or limited incomes from pensions or savings, which heightens their price sensitivity and limits their willingness to engage with new or premium products. Notably, over 40% of Thai seniors have savings below 50,000 baht, and more than half are still in debt, underscoring the financial constraints that influence their consumption decisions (The Nation Thailand, 2024). Consequently, elderly consumers often seek value-based purchasing, favoring affordable yet reliable options. Additionally, social context—such as whether they live independently, with family, or in care facilities—can shape the types of products and services they demand. Life experiences, particularly those shaped by cultural and generational values, also guide older consumers' behaviors. In Thailand, where family-centric values are prominent, many senior citizens still participate in household decision-making and contribute financially to their children or grandchildren. This generational responsibility can influence not only the quantity but also the purpose of their spending, often shifting focus from self-oriented consumption to family-oriented purchases (Assarut et al., 2023). In summary, the consumer behavior of the elderly cannot be generalized based on age alone. It must be understood as an outcome of intersecting factors such as biological aging, financial security, cognitive changes, emotional needs, and cultural values that together define how seniors perceive value and make purchasing decisions in the marketplace.

3.2 Influence of the Service Marketing Mix

The service marketing mix, encompassing the 7Ps Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence, and Process plays a critical role in shaping the purchasing behavior of senior citizens. Understanding how these elements affect elderly consumers is essential for designing age-appropriate marketing strategies that can truly meet their needs and preferences. Recent studies have demonstrated that components such as process, promotion, place, product, and people significantly influence customer satisfaction, particularly among older demographics. Notably, process and people factors have been identified as having the most substantial impact on satisfaction levels in the healthcare sector, which is highly relevant to senior consumers (Ghabban, 2025).

Product attributes are a fundamental consideration. For elderly consumers, factors such as ease of use, safety, and health-related benefits are particularly important. For instance, seniors tend to favor products that are clearly labeled, easy to handle, and promote well-being. A study in Nong Khai Municipality, Thailand, found that cleanliness, quality, and suitability of healthy food products were key factors influencing elderly purchasing decisions (Jirukkakul & Nonthapot, 2023).

Price sensitivity is another major determinant of behavior. Due to fixed incomes and economic constraints, elderly consumers often seek value-for-money, discounts, and bundled offers. Jirukkakul and Nonthapot (2023) noted that economic considerations such as product affordability and price fairness were among the most influential factors affecting the purchasing decisions of senior citizens in the region.

Place or distribution strategies must ensure convenience and accessibility. Many seniors prefer physical stores located near their homes or benefit from delivery services when mobility is limited. Moreover, ensuring that retail environments are age-friendly and easily navigable can enhance the shopping experience and reduce potential stress (Dai & Suo, 2024).

Promotion strategies should emphasize trust, clarity, and relevance. Older adults respond well to traditional media such as television, radio, and printed materials. Clear, concise messages using large fonts and culturally appropriate content are more effective than fast-paced digital advertisements. Additionally, word-of-mouth recommendation from peers and family members continue to influence their choices, especially in communities where interpersonal relationships hold significant weight (Chen et al., 2024).

People, particularly service staff, significantly affect the satisfaction and loyalty of elderly consumers. Interactions with courteous, patient, and attentive staff enhance trust and comfort. Training frontline personnel to understand the unique needs of elderly customers can improve service quality and encourage repeat visits (Dai & Suo, 2024).

Physical Evidence includes all tangible cues that help build consumer trust, such as store cleanliness, signage, packaging, and service environments. For seniors, a clean, organized, and well-marked physical setting provides reassurance and reduces confusion during shopping (Ghabban, 2025).

Process refers to the steps involved in delivering products or services. For the elderly, streamlined and simple procedures are especially important. Minimizing wait times, helping, and designing

user-friendly service flows can help seniors feel more confident and satisfied with their shopping experience (Ghabban, 2025).

In summary, the extended 7Ps of the service marketing mix offer a comprehensive lens for understanding and influencing the consumer behavior of older adults. Businesses that adopt a senior-centric approach in their marketing design can expect improved engagement, loyalty, and long-term success in an aging market.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Population and Sample Selection

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the spending behavior of elderly individuals residing in Northeastern Thailand. The target population consisted of individuals aged 60 years and above, reflecting the demographic segment most affected by Thailand's transition into an aging society. A total sample size of 400 respondents was determined to ensure robust statistical power and representativeness. A probability sampling technique was employed, utilizing a cluster sampling approach to achieve regional representation across the five major sub-regions of Northeastern Thailand. The clusters were defined as follows:

1. Nong Khai representing Upper Northeastern Region Group 1,
2. Sakon Nakhon representing Upper Northeastern Region Group 2,
3. Maha Sarakham representing the Central Northeastern Region,
4. Nakhon Ratchasima representing Lower Northeastern Region Group 1, and
5. Ubon Ratchathani representing Lower Northeastern Region Group 2.

From each province, 80 participants were selected using simple random sampling, yielding a balanced and representative sample of 400 elderly individuals across the region. Data were collected between March and April 2024 using a structured questionnaire designed to capture demographic characteristics, spending behaviors, and perceptions of service marketing mix factors. The questionnaire underwent a rigorous development process, including expert validation (Index of Item-Objective Congruence) and pilot testing to ensure clarity and relevance. The instrument demonstrated high internal reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.954, indicating strong consistency and validity of the measurement items.

4.2 Theoretical Framework

This study integrates three key frameworks to explain elderly consumer behavior in Thailand's Northeastern region. First, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) explains how attitudes and perceived social norms shape behavioral intentions, which is particularly relevant for older consumers influenced by cultural and family expectations. Second, the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) Model outlines a five-stage decision-making process: problem recognition, information search, evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase, which in this study is extended to include the effects of health, income, and marketing communications on elderly decision-making (Assarut et al., 2023). Finally, the extended 7Ps Service Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence, and Process) provides the structural basis

for examining how marketing strategies influence older adults' consumption patterns (Booms & Bitner, 1981; Dai & Suo, 2024; Ghabban, 2025). Together, these frameworks offer a multidimensional view of how internal cognition and external marketing environments jointly shape the spending behaviors of elderly consumers in underserved rural areas.

4.3 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics including percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize the general characteristics of the respondents and to illustrate patterns in their spending behaviors. Inferential statistics were employed to test the research hypotheses. The Chi-square test was used to examine the relationship between demographic variables and the spending behaviors of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region of Thailand. Additionally, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to assess the influence of service marketing mix factors (7Ps) on the spending behaviors of senior citizens. All hypotheses were tested at a 95% confidence level, with a statistical significance threshold set at $p < 0.05$.

5. Research results

This study on "Factors Influencing Consumption Patterns of the Elderly in Thailand's Northeastern Region" presents findings summarized in four main parts:

Part 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

The analysis of demographic characteristics revealed that the majority of respondents were female, accounting for 70.25% of the sample. Nearly half of the participants (49%) were aged between 60–64 years. In terms of current or previous occupations, 34.50% of the respondents identified as farmers.

Part 2: Spending Behavior of the Elderly

The analysis of elderly spending behavior showed that the most commonly purchased goods and services were related to food, representing 74.25% of responses. A significant portion of elderly individuals (49.50%) reported making purchases primarily for family members. Furthermore, 85% of the respondents indicated that they were able to access goods and services independently. In terms of spending frequency, 36.75% reported making purchases more than six times per month. Regarding average expenditure, 40.25% stated they spent less than 500 baht per transaction. When asked about the most influential factor in their purchasing decisions, 69% of the respondents identified themselves as the primary decision-makers. Notably, 64.25% had never made online purchases for goods or services.

Part 3: Influence of Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) on Spending Behavior

The analysis of service marketing mix factors (7Ps) revealed that the overall influence on elderly spending behavior was at a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.84$). Among the individual components, Price, People, and Process had the strongest influence ($\bar{x} = 4.06$), followed by Physical Evidence ($\bar{x} = 3.90$), Place ($\bar{x} = 3.79$), Product ($\bar{x} = 3.71$), and Promotion ($\bar{x} = 3.33$). These findings suggest that seniors prioritize fair pricing, quality human interaction, and simplified service processes when making purchasing decisions.

Part 4: Inferential Analysis of Factors Affecting Spending Behavior

To test the hypotheses regarding the factors influencing the spending behavior of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region of Thailand, the researcher developed a behavioral model and conducted inferential statistical analyses across three key dimensions:

1. Type of Products and Services: This dimension explored which categories of goods and services were prioritized by elderly consumers when making purchases.

2. Spending Frequency: This aspect measured how often the elderly in the Northeastern region engaged in spending activities, expressed as the number of purchases per month.

3. Average Spending per Transaction: This dimension focused on the typical amount of money spent per purchase by elderly individuals, measured in Thai baht.

These dimensions were analyzed to determine how demographic factors and elements of the service marketing mix influenced each specific aspect of spending behavior.

Hypothesis 1 : Personal demographic factors specifically gender, age, and occupation have a significant influence on the spending behavior of elderly individuals residing in the Northeastern region of Thailand.

Table 1 presents the results of the hypothesis test examining the relationship between **Gender** and the spending behavior of elderly respondents in the Northeastern region.

Elderly Consumption Behavior Regarding Products and Services	Pearson Chi-Square		
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
1. Type of Products and Services	16.955	5	0.005*
2. Spending Frequency	11.733	3	0.008*
3. Average Spending per Transaction	5.009	5	0.415

*p < 0.05

Based on the results shown in Table 1, gender was found to have a statistically significant relationship with two aspects of elderly spending behavior. First, gender influenced the type of products and services elderly individuals chose to prioritize (Asymp. Sig. = 0.005). Second, gender was significantly related to the frequency of spending on goods and services (Asymp. Sig. = 0.008). However, no statistically significant relationship was found between gender and the average amount spent per transaction (Asymp. Sig. = 0.415). These findings suggest that while gender plays a role in determining what and how often elderly individuals spend, it may not influence how much they spend per purchase.

Table 2 presents the results of the hypothesis test examining the relationship between **Age** and the spending behavior of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region.

Elderly Consumption Behavior Regarding Products and Services	Pearson Chi-Square		
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
1. Type of Products and Services	32.347	15	0.006*
2. Spending Frequency	28.145	9	0.001*
3. Average Spending per Transaction	11.209	15	0.738

*p < 0.05

The findings from Table 2 indicate that age is significantly associated with two key aspects of spending behavior among the elderly in the Northeastern region. First, age has a statistically significant influence on the type of products and services that elderly individuals prioritize (Asymp. Sig. = 0.006). Second, it significantly affects the frequency with which they spend on goods and services (Asymp. Sig. = 0.001). However, the relationship between age and the average spending per transaction was not statistically significant (Asymp. Sig. = 0.738). These results suggest that age plays a meaningful role in shaping what elderly individuals purchase and how often they spend, but not necessarily how much they spend each time.

Table 3 presents the results of the hypothesis test examining the relationship between **Occupation** and the spending behavior of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region.

Elderly Consumption Behavior Regarding Products and Services	Pearson Chi-Square		
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
1. Type of Products and Services	35.815	25	0.074
2. Spending Frequency	23.222	15	0.080
3. Average Spending per Transaction	56.806	25	0.000*

*p < 0.05

According to the results shown in Table 3, occupation was found to have a statistically significant relationship with only one aspect of spending behavior among the elderly: the average amount spent per transaction (Asymp. Sig. = 0.000). In contrast, no significant relationships were found between occupation and the type of products and services purchased (Asymp. Sig. = 0.074), or the spending frequency (Asymp. Sig. = 0.080). These findings suggest that while occupational background does not strongly influence what or how often elderly individuals spend, it does significantly impact how much they are likely to spend per purchase.

Hypothesis 2: Service Marketing mix factors (7Ps) including product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process have a significant influence on the spending behavior of elderly individuals residing in the Northeastern region of Thailand.

Table 4 presents the results of the hypothesis test examining the relationship between service marketing mix factors (7Ps) and the spending behavior of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region of Thailand, specifically in terms of the type of products and services they choose to prioritize.

Service Marketing Mix Factor (7Ps)	Statistical Test	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Product	Between Groups	3.179	5	0.636	1.326	0.252
	Within Groups	188.924	394	0.480		
	Total	192.102	399			
Price	Between Groups	1.001	5	0.200	0.456	0.809
	Within Groups	173.159	394	0.439		
	Total	174.160	399			
Place	Between Groups	3.966	5	0.793	1.836	0.105
	Within Groups	170.254	394	0.432		
	Total	174.220	399			
Promotion	Between Groups	9.158	5	1.832	2.345	0.041*
	Within Groups	307.770	394	0.781		
	Total	316.927	399			
People	Between Groups	0.457	5	0.091	0.204	0.961
	Within Groups	177.024	394	0.449		
	Total	177.482	399			
Physical evidence and presentation	Between Groups	2.139	5	0.428	0.773	0.570
	Within Groups	218.016	394	0.553		
	Total	220.155	399			
Process	Between Groups	2.431	5	0.486	1.015	0.409
	Within Groups	188.737	394	0.479		
	Total	191.167	399			

*p < 0.05

According to the results in Table 4, among the seven components of the service marketing mix, only the promotion factor was found to have a statistically significant effect on the type of products and services prioritized by elderly consumers in the Northeastern region (Sig. = 0.041). This finding suggests that promotional strategies such as discounts, advertising, and communication channels play an influential role in shaping the product and service choices of older adults in this demographic. The other six factors (product, price, place, people, physical evidence, and process) did not show statistically significant relationships in this aspect.

Table 5 presents the results of the hypothesis test examining the relationship between service marketing mix factors (7Ps) and the spending behavior of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region of Thailand, specifically in terms of the frequency with which they purchase products or services.

Service Marketing Mix Factor (7Ps)	Statistical Test	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Product	Between Groups	1.793	3	0.598	1.244	0.293
	Within Groups	190.309	396	0.481		
	Total	192.102	399			
Price	Between Groups	0.134	3	0.045	0.102	0.959
	Within Groups	174.026	396	0.439		
	Total	174.160	399			
Place	Between Groups	0.007	3	0.002	0.005	1.000
	Within Groups	174.214	396	0.440		
	Total	174.220	399			

Service Marketing Mix Factor (7Ps)	Statistical Test	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Promotion	Between Groups	5.510	3	1.837	2.335	0.073
	Within Groups	311.417	396	0.786		
	Total	316.927	399			
People	Between Groups	2.212	3	0.737	1.666	0.174
	Within Groups	175.270	396	0.443		
	Total	177.482	399			
Physical evidence and presentation	Between Groups	1.426	3	0.475	0.861	0.462
	Within Groups	218.729	396	0.552		
	Total	220.155	399			
Process	Between Groups	0.981	3	0.327	0.681	0.564
	Within Groups	190.186	396	0.480		
	Total	191.167	399			

*p < 0.05

Based on the analysis in Table 5, none of the seven elements of the service marketing mix (7Ps) showed a statistically significant influence on the purchase frequency of elderly consumers in Northeastern Thailand. This finding suggests that traditional marketing elements alone may not strongly drive purchase frequency in this demographic, and other behavioral or contextual factors may be more influential.

Table 6 presents the results of the hypothesis test examining the relationship between service marketing mix factors (7Ps) and the spending behavior of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region of Thailand, specifically in terms of the average amount spent per transaction on products and services.

Service Marketing Mix Factor (7Ps)	Statistical Test	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Product	Between Groups	8.441	5	1.688	3.622	0.003*
	Within Groups	183.661	394	0.466		
	Total	192.102	399			
Price	Between Groups	4.363	5	0.873	2.025	0.074
	Within Groups	169.797	394	0.431		
	Total	174.160	399			
Place	Between Groups	2.609	5	0.522	1.198	0.309
	Within Groups	171.611	394	0.436		
	Total	174.220	399			
Promotion	Between Groups	21.900	5	4.380	5.849	0.000*
	Within Groups	295.027	394	0.749		
	Total	316.927	399			
People	Between Groups	6.143	5	1.229	2.825	0.016*
	Within Groups	171.338	394	0.435		
	Total	177.482	399			
Physical evidence and presentation	Between Groups	2.825	5	0.565	1.024	0.403
	Within Groups	217.330	394	0.552		
	Total	220.155	399			
Process	Between Groups	2.637	5	0.527	1.102	0.359
	Within Groups	188.530	394	0.479		
	Total	191.167	399			

*p < 0.05

The results in Table 6 indicate that three components of the service marketing mix Product, Promotion, and People have a statistically significant influence on the average amount spent per transaction by elderly individuals in the Northeastern region. Specifically, the Product factor (Sig. = 0.003), Promotion factor (Sig. = 0.000), and People factor (Sig. = 0.016) were all significant at the 0.05 level. These findings suggest that the types of products offered, the effectiveness of promotional strategies, and the quality of human interaction and service delivery all play a meaningful role in influencing how much elderly consumers are willing to spend per purchase. Other factors Price, Place, Physical Evidence, and Process did not show statistically significant effects in this context.

6. Discussion

This study offers valuable insights into the consumption behaviors of elderly individuals in Northeastern Thailand, with a particular focus on how demographic variables and the service marketing mix (7Ps) influence their spending behavior. The results reveal that gender and age are significant predictors of elderly consumption behavior. Specifically, women were more likely to shop frequently and prioritize a broader range of goods and services. This observation echoes prior research suggesting that elderly women view shopping as more than a necessity; it also serves as a form of social and emotional engagement (Jirukkakul & Nonthapot, 2023; Yoon et al., 2009). Age, likewise, played a key role, particularly in purchase frequency. The decline in spending activity among those aged 70 and above can be attributed to age-related challenges such as limited mobility, reduced health, or lower levels of digital literacy (Wongleedee et al., 2023). Interestingly, occupation significantly influenced the average amount spent per transaction but had no notable effect on the type or frequency of purchases. This finding aligns with behavioral economic theories, suggesting that individuals with more stable incomes such as retirees from formal employment tend to exhibit greater confidence in discretionary spending due to better financial security (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). It also reflects deeper social norms where elders from formal job sectors are more likely to maintain active lifestyles and broader social networks that support diverse consumption.

From a marketing perspective, the 7Ps framework proved partially relevant. Of the seven components, Product, Promotion, and People were found to have a statistically significant impact on the average spending per transaction. Elderly consumers demonstrated a strong preference for products that align with their health needs and lifestyle limitations such as easy-to-use, safe, and accessible goods (Guido et al., 2022). Promotion, particularly in the form of visible and easy-to-understand discounts or loyalty programs, also had a notable influence. This supports the idea that senior consumers prefer marketing messages that are simple, direct, and delivered through familiar channels such as printed media or television (Yoon et al., 2009). The People factor representing service staff was particularly important. Elderly consumers valued polite, respectful, and empathetic service, especially when communication was culturally appropriate and in the local dialect. These interpersonal qualities foster trust and enhance the shopping experience,

thereby influencing spending levels. This reinforces the role of gerontological marketing, which highlights emotional connection and trust as key to engaging older consumers (Ghabban, 2025).

Surprisingly, other elements of the 7Ps namely Price, Place, Physical Evidence, and Process did not show a statistically significant influence on either the frequency of spending habits of elderly consumers. This result may indicate that in the context of elderly individuals in Northeastern Thailand, practical concerns such as pricing strategies, physical proximity of stores, or even the design of service processes are secondary to emotional, habitual, and relational considerations. This aligns with findings from Yoon et al. (2009), who emphasized that older consumers tend to rely more on affective and routine-based decision-making due to cognitive aging processes. Similarly, research by Guido et al. (2022) observed that elderly consumers prioritize interpersonal interaction and emotional reassurance over functional service attributes. The low influence of 'Place' may also reflect strong embeddedness in local markets, where the elderly shop at familiar and trusted outlets, reducing sensitivity to physical distance or layout.

Moreover, although Promotion showed near significance in influencing spending frequency, it did not meet the threshold for statistical significance. This suggests that while promotional strategies such as discounts or loyalty rewards may attract attention, they may not consistently alter entrenched behavioral patterns among older consumers. This is consistent with work by Wongleedee et al. (2023), which found that media-based and digital marketing have limited influence unless accompanied by trust-building elements and community-based reinforcement. In fact, habitual shopping, social routines, and cultural familiarity may play larger roles in determining how often the elderly engage in consumption activities—areas that require further qualitative and behavioral investigation (Yoon et al., 2009; Guido et al., 2022). When compared to international studies or research in urban Thai contexts, these findings highlight clear contextual and cultural differences. Rural elderly populations often face distinct constraints and have different motivations than their urban counterparts, including tighter family bonds, traditional purchasing habits, and reduced access to digital marketplaces (Chen et al., 2024; Yoon et al., 2009). By interpreting these nuances through the lens of the EKB model and Theory of Reasoned Action, this study adds depth to our understanding of elderly consumer behavior in underserved regions.

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to the needs of elderly consumers, particularly in rural settings. Demographic variables especially gender, age, and occupational background interact meaningfully with selected service marketing mix factors to shape purchasing behavior. Marketing that focuses on product relevance, simple promotions, and empathetic service will likely prove most effective. These insights not only inform academic discourse but also provide practical direction for businesses and policymakers preparing for Thailand's transition to an aging society.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the factors affecting the spending behavior of elderly individuals in the Northeastern region of Thailand by analyzing both demographic variables and service marketing mix elements

(7Ps). The research revealed that personal factors particularly gender, age, and occupation have a significant influence on various aspects of consumer behavior among older adults. Specifically, gender significantly affected both the types of products and services prioritized and the average spending per transaction. Female seniors exhibited more frequent and emotionally-driven purchasing patterns than their male counterparts. Age was associated with differences in both product priorities and spending frequency, with older age groups showing reduced spending due to declining health and mobility. Occupational background also played a role, with those employed in formal sectors tending to spend more per transaction than retirees or individuals from informal employment backgrounds. In terms of the service marketing mix, while most elements did not have a significant impact, Product, Promotion, and People emerged as key influencers. These factors shaped both the selection of goods and services and the amount spent per purchase. Elderly consumers valued product variety, ease of use, promotional clarity, and empathetic service personnel especially those who could communicate clearly and build trust. The results underscore the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to meet the unique psychological, economic, and lifestyle needs of senior citizens in this region. Businesses, public health entities, and service providers must recognize these nuanced behaviors in order to design more inclusive and effective service models.

8. Limitation

While this study offers valuable insights into the consumption behavior of elderly individuals in Thailand's Northeastern region, it is not without limitations. First, the study employed a cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to infer causality between variables. Longitudinal research would be more effective in capturing behavioral changes over time. Second, the sample was limited to respondents in the Northeastern region, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different cultural, economic, or infrastructural conditions. Third, the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as recall bias or social desirability bias, especially among elderly respondents who may have memory limitations or wish to portray themselves positively. Lastly, the study primarily used quantitative methods and did not include qualitative insights, which could have provided richer context and deeper understanding of the psychological and cultural factors shaping elderly consumer behavior.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Marketing Strategy for Business Operators

Business operators targeting the elderly demographic should develop age-sensitive marketing strategies that emphasize product credibility, simple and transparent promotional offers, and high-quality service experiences. Specifically, product design and messaging should highlight health benefits, ease of use, and reliability factors particularly valued by older consumers. Promotional campaigns should avoid complexity and instead focus on visible, easy-to-understand offers such as discounts and bundle deals. Furthermore, frontline staff must be empathetic, culturally aware, and capable of clear communication, especially in local

dialects. Leveraging traditional communication channels such as radio, community centers, and local television will further enhance outreach among elderly consumers in the Northeastern region.

9.2 Policy Implication

Government agencies and local administrative bodies should consider the implementation of a “Senior-Friendly Business Certification” program to elevate service standards for elderly consumers. This certification would recognize businesses that demonstrate senior-focused practices, including accessible store layouts, fair pricing, responsive customer service, and well-trained staff. Such a policy would not only encourage the private sector to invest in age-inclusive service design but also increase consumer trust and engagement among the aging population. As Thailand transitions into a super-aged society, such initiatives will be vital in ensuring that older adults remain active participants in the economy.

10. Future Research

Future research could address the limitations outlined above by adopting a mixed-methods approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative data collection. In-depth interviews or focus group discussions with elderly individuals could provide nuanced understanding of motivations, emotional drivers, and cultural influences behind consumption decisions. Longitudinal studies should also be considered to track how consumption behavior evolves with age, health status, and exposure to digital technologies. Moreover, comparative studies across different regions of Thailand or between urban and rural settings would offer valuable insights into how geographic, economic, and infrastructural variables shape elderly consumer behavior. Researchers may also explore the intersection of aging and digital engagement, especially as more elderly consumers begin to adopt online shopping and digital payment platforms, highlighting the need for age-friendly digital marketing and service design strategies.

References

- Assarut, N., Eiamkanchanalai, S., & Surasiengsunk, S. (2023). Elderly segmentation, acculturation to global consumer culture, and consumption pattern in Thailand. *Creative Business and Sustainability Journal*, 45(1), 39–58. https://cbsreview.cbs.chula.ac.th/Article/Download_Article.aspx?c=1&file=pqOGS3emQla0OvXN0EYFzA%3D%3D
- Booms, B. H., & Bitner, M. J. (1981). Marketing strategies and organization structures for service firms. In J. H. Donnelly & W. R. George (Eds.), *Marketing of Services* (pp. 47–51). American Marketing Association.
- Chen, Y., Mohd Tajuddin, R. B., Zainol, A. S., Suxia, Y., & Zijie, C. (2024). Toward understanding elderly consumers' impulse buying in the digital marketing: A conceptual paper. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 8(12). <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8120282>

- Dai, C., & Suo, L. (2024). The influence of 7Ps on brand loyalty of elderly tourists in Hunan Province of China to travel agencies operating tours into Thailand. *Journal of Modern Learning Development*, 9(12), 156–171. <https://so06.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/jomld/article/view/275886>
- Department of Older Persons. (2023). *Situation of the Thai older persons 2023*. Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. https://www.dop.go.th/download/statistics/th1738230377-2563_1.pdf
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Addison-Wesley.
- Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development Institute. (2021). *Future living arrangements and trends of the Thai elderly 2021–2031*. TGRI.
- Ghabban, M. (2025). The impact of marketing mix (7Ps) on customer satisfaction in the healthcare sector: A study of demographic and professional correlations. *International Journal of Healthcare Information Systems and Informatics*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJHISI.369155>
- Guido, G., Ugolini, M., & Sestino, A. (2022). Active ageing of elderly consumers: Insights and opportunities for future business strategies. *SN Business & Economics*, 2(1), Article 18. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43546-021-00180-4>
- Jirukkakul, N., & Nonthapot, S. (2023). The effects of economic factors and lifestyle on the healthy food consumption of the elderly in Nong Khai Municipality, Thailand. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8(2), e0587. <https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i2.587>
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management (15th ed.)*. Pearson Education.
- National Statistical Office. (2024). *Survey of the older persons in Thailand 2023*. Ministry of Digital Economy and Society. https://www.nso.go.th/nsoweb/nso/survey_detail/iM?set_lang=en
- Prapaipanich, N., Luengaram, J., Mokkasak, P., & Phiolueang, I. (2022). A study of the impacts of aging society on gross domestic product growth in Thailand. *Srinakharinwirot Research and Development Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 14(28), 28–43. <https://so04.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/swurd/article/view/262875>
- Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2009). *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, and happiness*. Penguin Books.
- The Nation Thailand. (2024). *Aged Thai society will need more than just retirement lottery*. Retrieved from <https://www.nationthailand.com/news/policy/40039867>
- Wongleedee, K., Vanpetch, Y., & Prachyangprecha, S. (2023). The effects of senior citizens' consumer behavior on health, financial, media information & digital literacy. *The EUrASEANs Journal on Global Socio-Economic Dynamics*, 3(40), 51–56. [https://doi.org/10.35678/2539-5645.3\(40\).2023.51-56](https://doi.org/10.35678/2539-5645.3(40).2023.51-56)
- Yoon, C., Cole, C. A., & Lee, M. P. (2009). Consumer decision making and aging: Current knowledge and future directions. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 19(1), 2–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2008.12.002>