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## Service Innovation Model on Memorable Tourism Experiences for Active Elderly Walking Route: A Service Design Perspective

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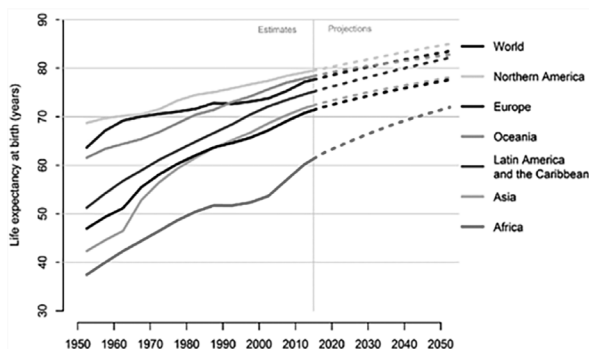
*Memorable Tourism Experience,  
Senior Tourism, Service Design,  
Tourism Activities, Tourist  
Experience*

### ABSTRACT

With the global population aging, a growing number of retired seniors seek meaningful and enriching tourism experiences that align with their interests and life stage. This study investigates the factors contributing to memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) for active elderly, using the MTE scale, which encompasses seven dimensions: hedonism, refreshment, meaningfulness, local culture, involvement, knowledge, and novelty. Focusing on walking routes in Tainan, this research explores how these dimensions shape the experiences of active elderly. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and participant observations, targeting active elderly aged 65 to 74. The findings reveal that knowledge acquisition, cultural immersion, and personal fulfillment are the most valued elements. Sensory engagement and interaction with knowledgeable tour guides were noted as critical factors enhancing the memorability of experiences. Participants expressed a desire for longer, reflective tours that balance cognitive stimulation with physical needs. This study addresses the gap in research on senior tourism, particularly in designing tailored services for active elderly. The research provides insights into the role of service design in creating personalized tourism experiences that meet the aspirations of this demographic. These findings contribute to both the academic understanding of memorable tourism and practical guidelines for the tourism industry to enhance cultural tourism offerings for active retirees

### INTRODUCTION

The global senior population is rapidly expanding, with a significant rise in life expectancy. From 1950 to 2021, the number of people aged 65 and over has tripled, reaching approximately 761 million. Projections estimate this population will grow to 2.1 billion by 2050 (United Nations, 2022), as shown in Figure 1. A demographic shift that has substantial implications for various industries, including tourism. Societies classified as “aging” or “super-aged” are becoming more common, with Taiwan expected to become a super-aged society by 2026 (National Development Council, 2020). These trends indicate an increasing number of seniors, who seek meaningful and enriching travel experiences during their retirement years.



**Figure 1:** Percentage of population aged 60 years or over by region, from 1980 to 2050

Source: United Nations (2017). *World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision*.

This demographic is characterized by higher education levels, financial stability, and a desire for personal fulfillment through travel, for its specific target market of these intellectuals in this study is termed “active elderly”. Understanding the Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) for active elderly is critical, as MTEs have become a benchmark in tourism. However, research on the antecedents and consequences of MTEs remains limited, particularly for senior tourists. This study aims to address this gap by examining the experiences of active elderly in Taiwan, focusing on their aspirations and motivations. The primary objectives are to identify the types of memorable tourism experiences for active elderly, develop these experiences using a service design approach, and assess the effectiveness of the MTE scale in understanding senior tourism. Through a case study of the walking route in Tainan Taiwan, the research explores how service design can enhance tourism offerings, ensuring they align with the needs of the aging population.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A Growing Senior Market in Tourism

Tourism plays a critical role in enhancing the quality of life for seniors, particularly by promoting mobility and leisure activities that contribute to mental well-being (Esichaikul, 2012; Hu *et al.*, 2013). Senior tourism has emerged as a growing market segment, driven by the increasing numbers of elderly individuals who remain healthy, active, and financially stable, often referred to as the “grey market” (Kotler *et al.*, 2017). This demographic controls a significant portion of discretionary income

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and demonstrates strong motivations for travel, largely based on maintaining social connections and seeking personal fulfillment during retirement (United Nations, 2015; Tiago *et al.*, 2016).

Despite the growing importance of this market, the tourism industry has struggled to fully understand the complex motivations and diverse characteristics of senior travelers (Oh *et al.*, 2002). The literature suggests that leisure travel contributes positively to physical, mental, and social well-being among the elderly, which aligns with the broader concept of active aging (Martinson & Berridge, 2015). However, much of the current research remains fragmented, often focusing on general senior mobility rather than the specific memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) that seniors seek during travel (Sedgley *et al.*, 2011).

Furthermore, the existing literature largely overlooks how tourism can challenge ageist biases and promote personal growth for seniors (Buhalis *et al.*, 2012). While many studies have explored leisure as a rite of passage in retirement (Gibson, 2002), there is still a lack of integrative models that examine the antecedents and consequences of MTEs for this demographic. As such, there is a need to further explore how service design can be utilized to enhance MTEs for active elderly, and ensure that tourism products align with their expectations for cultural enrichment, personal growth, and emotional satisfaction.

### Senior Travel Needs and Perception

Research investigating the impact of socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, economic status, and health on seniors' travel motivations reveals that these factors significantly influence preferences and involvement. Nyaupane and Andereck (2008) found that factors such as family size, marital status, and type of activity played a crucial role in shaping senior travel behavior. In addition, Martin (2009) expanded on the psychological aspects of travel, introducing the concept of a driving force that motivates individuals to act. This force arises from unmet needs, moving individuals away from psychological equilibrium or homeostasis. While every individual shares similar needs, the specific needs that drive travel vary based on cultural, social, and personal contexts. For seniors, these motivations often align with desires for self-fulfillment, reconnection with family, or engagement with new environments.

Economic concerns, health, satisfaction, and destination attractiveness are frequently cited as key motivators for senior travel. Guinn (1980) and Fleischer and Pizam (2010) identified motivations such as rest and relaxation, social interaction, physical activity, and learning as central to senior travel preferences. Notably, nostalgia and the desire to revisit familiar places or explore new cultures are strong motivators among older adults (Jang & Wu, 2006; Sangpikul, 2008). These elements of travel allow seniors to escape their routine and engage in experiences that promote cognitive stimulation, emotional well-being,

and social connectivity.

Moreover, studies by Prayag (2012) using a push-pull framework shed light on specific motivations driving senior travelers. Push factors, such as the need for rest, relaxation, and family time, dominate their decision-making process, while pulling factors, such as weather, climate, and scenic attractions enhance the appeal of particular destinations. These results reflect broader patterns within senior travel, where emotional and social benefits intertwine with physical comfort and aesthetic preferences.

Despite the increasing recognition of the economic and social contributions of senior tourism, research suggests that there is still a gap in understanding the full range of senior tourists' needs. For instance, Albayrak, Caber, and Bideci (2016) highlight that insufficient research has focused on the psychological and emotional needs of elderly travelers, particularly in understanding how travel fulfills deeper desires for meaning and value in retirement. This underscores the necessity for further investigation into how senior tourists pursue meaningful experiences that go beyond traditional leisure activities, addressing how they navigate retirement and seek purpose through travel.

In conclusion, while senior tourism is a growing field, there remains a need for further research that delves deeper into aging studies, particularly in understanding how senior tourists perceive and pursue quality of life in their later years. Future studies should aim to explore not only the practical considerations like cost and health but also the emotional and psychological dimensions of senior tourism, including self-discovery, family connections, and the pursuit of personal growth during travel.

### Tourist experiences

Tourist experiences lie at the heart of the tourism and hospitality industry and serve as key drivers for shaping future behaviors and determining satisfaction (Kim, 2014; Huang *et al.*, 2015). A memorable tourist experience can significantly influence future travel decisions, loyalty to destinations, and customer satisfaction, as it is deeply tied to personal emotions, cognitive engagement, and the uniqueness of the destination (Sorensen *et al.*, 2018). The evolution of the concept, particularly from a marketing perspective, reflects the industry's ongoing adaptation to the changing preferences and needs of travelers, as well as the pursuit of creating unique, tailored experiences for diverse groups of tourists (Uriely, 2005).

Tourist experiences are subjective and emotional, varying widely from one individual to another due to personal resources, external conditions, and situational contexts (Walls *et al.*, 2011). Factors such as personal motivations, cultural background, and past experiences play significant roles in shaping how individuals engage with destinations, and how they process these engagements into lasting memories (Ellis & Rossman, 2008; Neuhofer *et al.*, 2012). For example, Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003) note that the interaction between the tourist and the destination

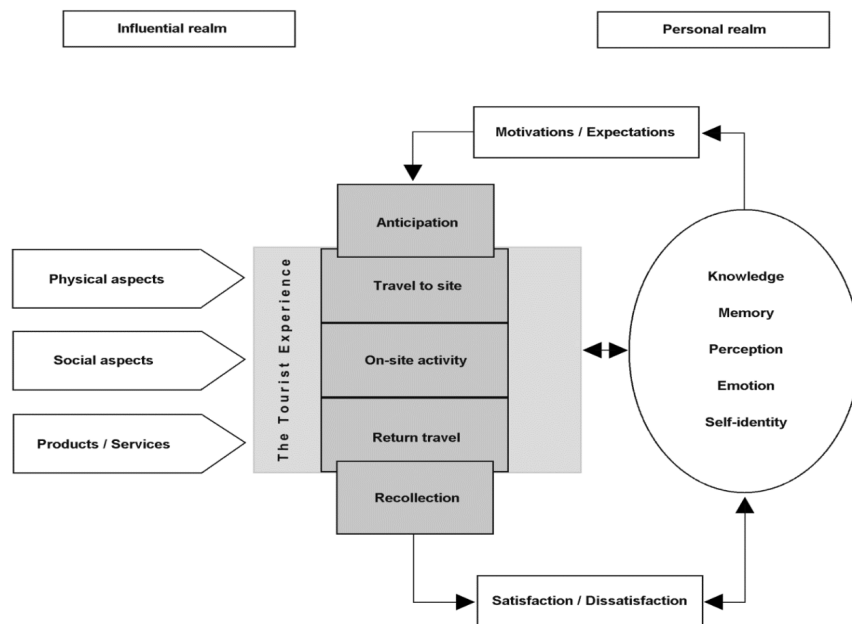
is crucial, as the destination provides the setting for an immersive, sensory experience that enhances the memorability of the trip.

Vogt (1976) and Cohen (2004) argue that tourist experiences are inherently different from everyday experiences, as they represent a break from routine and offer opportunities for self-discovery and identity formation (Selstad, 2007). In the experience economy, crafting unique, memorable events is essential for satisfying the desires of modern consumers, who increasingly seek authentic and meaningful interactions over standard, manufactured experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Schmitt (1999) emphasizes the shift toward engaging experiences that “enchant the senses” and engage tourists emotionally and intellectually

Research highlights the critical role that nostalgia plays in tourist experiences, particularly among older tourists, who may view travel as an opportunity to reconnect with personal memories or engage in experiences that evoke a sense of familiarity (Christou, 2020). This idea aligns with Tung and Ritchie’s (2011) definition of the tourist experience as encompassing affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions, from the planning and preparation

phase to the creation of lasting post-journey memories. According to Chen *et al.* (2020), these experiences are complex, blending subjective elements that influence the overall emotions and attitudes tourists have toward their journeys. The ability of a destination to engage tourists on these multiple levels is vital for maintaining a competitive advantage in the tourism industry (Wang *et al.*, 2020).

Tourist experiences are a multi-faceted phenomenon, affected by personal needs, desires, and motivations, as well as the environmental characteristics of the destination. The industry’s growing emphasis on creating memorable experiences has led to an increasing focus on personalization and authenticity to cater to the evolving desires of tourists, who are more interested in culturally enriching and emotionally engaging encounters rather than standard tourist activities. Figure 2 presents the tourist experience conceptual model of influences and outcomes by Cutler and Carmichael, the research was the first integrated comprehensive assessment of the body of knowledge on the tourist experience over the past decade, tracing diversified angles and measures that had underpinned research on the concept. (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010)



**Figure 2:** The Tourist Experience Conceptual Model of Influences and Outcomes (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010).

**Memorable tourism experience (MTE)**

A Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) is described as an encounter that leaves a positive and enduring impression, one that is recalled long after the event has concluded (Kim *et al.*, 2012). MTEs are vital to the tourism industry as they significantly influence tourists’ future travel decisions (Kim *et al.*, 2010). Memories of past experiences play a crucial role in shaping future behaviors, as travelers often draw from their recollections when planning new trips (Lehto *et al.*, 2004).

The importance of providing memorable experiences is widely acknowledged in tourism literature (Kozak, 2001; Wirtz *et al.*, 2003). Tourist memories of past purchase

experiences serve as a valuable source of information when making decisions about future travel, and these memories influence destination loyalty and choices (Hoch & Deighton, 1989). Raju and Reilly (1979) and Kerstetter and Cho (2004) also supported this view, highlighting that tourists frequently rely on their past experiences when evaluating destinations.

Recently, the tourism industry has placed a growing emphasis on crafting memorable experiences, recognizing their potential to enhance competitiveness and foster tourist loyalty (Wang *et al.*, 2020). These experiences are central to successful tourism products and contribute to destination sustainability (Chen *et al.*, 2020). Extraordinary,

surprising, and emotionally resonant experiences have a profound effect on memory, creating vivid and lasting impressions (Talarico & Rubin, 2003). Marschall (2012) noted that travelers often return to destinations they recall positively, which underscores the importance of creating memorable experiences in retaining tourists. Kim *et al.* (2010) emphasized that only experiences leaving a lasting imprint influence tourists' future decision-making. Kim *et al.* (2012) developed the MTE scale to measure memorable tourism experiences, which includes seven dimensions: hedonism, refreshment, meaningfulness, local culture, involvement, knowledge, and novelty. These dimensions offer a comprehensive framework for assessing the quality and memorability of tourism experiences.

### Seven Dimensions of Memorable Tourism Experiences

**Hedonism:** Hedonism refers to the pleasure and excitement experienced during travel (Dunman & Mattila, 2005). Tourism is often viewed as a hedonic activity, where the central purpose is to seek enjoyment and pleasure. Emotional stimuli play a significant role in memory formation (Bohanek, Fivush, & Walker, 2005), and positive emotions, such as happiness and excitement, are crucial for creating memorable moments (Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

**Refreshment:** Refreshment is another fundamental motivation for tourism, where individuals seek to escape from routine and find relaxation and rejuvenation (Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987). Research consistently shows that leisure trips contribute to well-being and happiness (Uysal *et al.*, 2012). Empirical studies have highlighted escapism and refreshment as significant factors in the memorability of tourism experiences (Kim, 2010; Snepenger *et al.*, 2007).

**Meaningfulness:** The concept of meaningfulness is rooted in the idea of engaging in activities that offer value and significance (Wilson & Harris, 2006). Travelers often seek personal growth and transformation through tourism, viewing travel as a means to enrich their understanding of life (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Meaningful experiences leave a lasting imprint because they are deeply connected to self-discovery and learning (Tarssanen, 2007; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013).

**Local Culture:** Immersing in local culture plays a pivotal role in enhancing the memorability of travel (Kim *et al.*, 2012). Interaction with local communities allows tourists to gain insights into the local way of life and fosters a sense of global citizenship (Carmichael, 2005). Immersion in local culture, whether through volunteer tourism or social interactions, can create deeply memorable experiences (Brown, 2005; Morgan & Xu, 2009; Sthapit, 2017).

**Involvement:** Involvement refers to the extent of a traveler's engagement in an activity, with higher involvement leading to stronger memories (Blodgett & Granbois, 1992). As Pine and Gilmore (1999) noted, the more immersive the activity, the more likely it is to

be memorable. Engaging tourists in meaningful, active participation enhances emotional responses and cognitive engagement, leading to lasting impressions (Bloch & Richins, 1983).

**Knowledge:** Knowledge acquisition is an essential cognitive dimension of tourism, where individuals seek to learn about the destination's history, culture, and geography (Poria *et al.*, 2006). The desire to gain new knowledge and insights is a significant motivation for travel (Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005). Learning experiences during tourism lead to memorable and enriching experiences (Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Chen *et al.*, 2014).

**Novelty:** Novelty refers to the psychological sensation of experiencing something new or different (Farber & Hall, 2007). Tourists often seek destinations that provide novel experiences that deviate from their usual environment (Pearson, 1970; Petrick, 2002). The pursuit of novelty is a key driver of tourism, and studies show that novel experiences are more likely to be remembered (Kim *et al.*, 2012).

### Applying Service Design in Senior Tourism

Senior tourism emphasizes several key factors that contribute to the overall satisfaction and engagement of older travelers. These factors include well-being, health benefits, cultural immersion, emotional satisfaction, and social interaction. As noted by Ali *et al.* (2016), there is a significant relationship between positive travel experiences and healthy aging. Engaging in well-organized and enjoyable tourism activities not only enhances emotional well-being but also improves physical health, thus contributing to the overall successful aging process. These findings suggest that tourism plays an essential role in improving the quality of life for seniors, underscoring the importance of tailored services that meet their specific interests and physical needs.

Patterson (2018) argued that traditional quantitative research often fails to capture the emotional depth and personal significance that senior tourists attribute to their travel experiences. In contrast, qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and case studies, provide deeper insights into the more reflective and cultural aspects of senior tourism. This approach allows researchers to explore the subjective meanings that seniors attach to their travel, moving beyond measurable outcomes to a more nuanced understanding of their experiences.

This perspective aligns with the work of Sedgley *et al.* (2011), who emphasized the need for tourism researchers to prioritize qualitative studies to understand the cognitive and emotional dimensions of senior tourism experiences. Sedgley and colleagues found that seniors do not simply seek out destinations for leisure; instead, they pursue experiences that resonate with their life stories, foster personal growth, and evoke nostalgic memories. For many older adults, travel becomes a means of reconnecting with the past or immersing themselves in new cultures, with the goal of fostering emotional fulfillment and intellectual stimulation. The study by

Sedgley *et al.* (2011) also highlighted that health is a critical factor in seniors' decision-making when planning travel. As a result, tourism providers must consider the physical limitations of senior travelers and offer experiences that ensure comfort, accessibility, and safety. This insight calls for a more interactive and personalized approach to tourism services, where the subjective experiences of older adults are recognized as part of a broader context that includes aging, health, and well-being.

Kim *et al.* (2015) contributed to the discourse by examining the relationship between tourism and quality of life among senior tourists. Their research demonstrated that travel experiences improve seniors' life satisfaction, particularly when activities foster social engagement and community interaction. In this regard, tourism not only provides recreational opportunities but also plays a key role in strengthening social ties and improving emotional well-being. This aligns with the growing recognition that social connectedness and community participation are crucial to enhancing the quality of life in older age.

Building on these perspectives, Qiu and Dai (2020) emphasized the need for service design that aligns with the unique needs of senior travelers, particularly as the aging population continues to expand. They argue that tourism providers must integrate accessibility and comfort into their offerings to accommodate the physical limitations of senior travelers while still delivering enriching and emotionally engaging experiences. Their study calls for

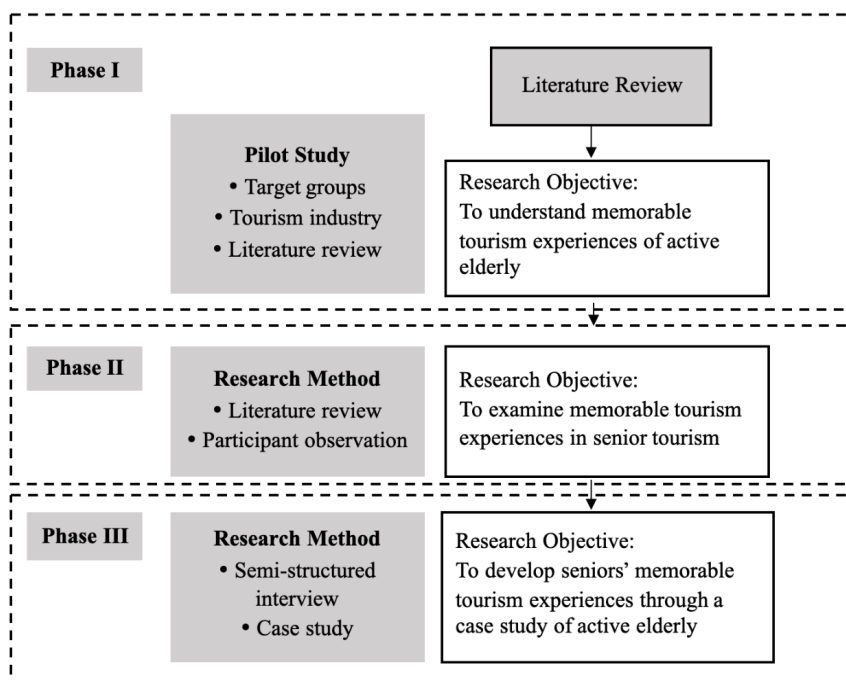
the adoption of inclusive design approaches that prioritize health and safety, especially in the post-pandemic tourism landscape, where seniors may have additional concerns about health risks and vulnerability.

In sum, recent research highlights the importance of customization and accessibility in senior tourism. Seniors are looking for experiences that go beyond traditional leisure activities, seeking deeper cultural connections, emotional engagement, and social interaction, all while requiring safety and comfort. As the senior tourism market continues to grow, it is crucial to consider how these personalized and meaningful experiences can be enhanced and scaled across the industry to meet the diverse needs of this demographic.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Framework

This study explores and enhances the memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) of active elderly, focusing on how these experiences influence their travel activities and perceptions. The research follows a case study approach to investigate current senior tourism practices, how active elderly perceive MTEs, and how these experiences are conceptualized. A multidimensional framework evaluates destination appeal, cultural enrichment, experiential quality, social dynamics, and personal fulfillment to capture the holistic aspects of tourism for this demographic. The research concept is shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3:** Research Framework

Source: *The Researcher*

### Case Background

Active elderly, characterized by financial stability, higher educational backgrounds, and ample time, seek meaningful travel experiences aligned with their aspirations for personal growth. This study explores

the travel choices, expectations, and challenges faced by active elderly, aiming to understand how they navigate tourism options that match their personal and intellectual goals while balancing fiscal responsibility and personal enrichment.

### Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative inquiry through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and case studies to collect data from active elderly aged 65 to 74. These methods provide deep insights into the emotional, cognitive, and social dynamics of active elders' tourism experiences.

### Data Collection

**Population and Sampling:** The study targets active elderly aged 65-74, focusing on those actively retired, financially stable, and interested in travel. Purposive sampling ensures that participants reflect the study's essential characteristics.

**Questionnaires:** Structured questionnaires gather quantitative data on travel motivations, expectations, and preferences. These questions align with the study's objectives, focusing on key aspects of memorable tourism experiences (MTEs).

**Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews offer qualitative

insights into participants' perceptions of MTEs, diving deeper into their travel memories and expectations.

**Participant Observation:** Researchers observe active elderly during selected tours as shown in Figure 4 "Walking Routes in Tainan" to capture real-time behavior and understand how specific destination characteristics influence their experiences.

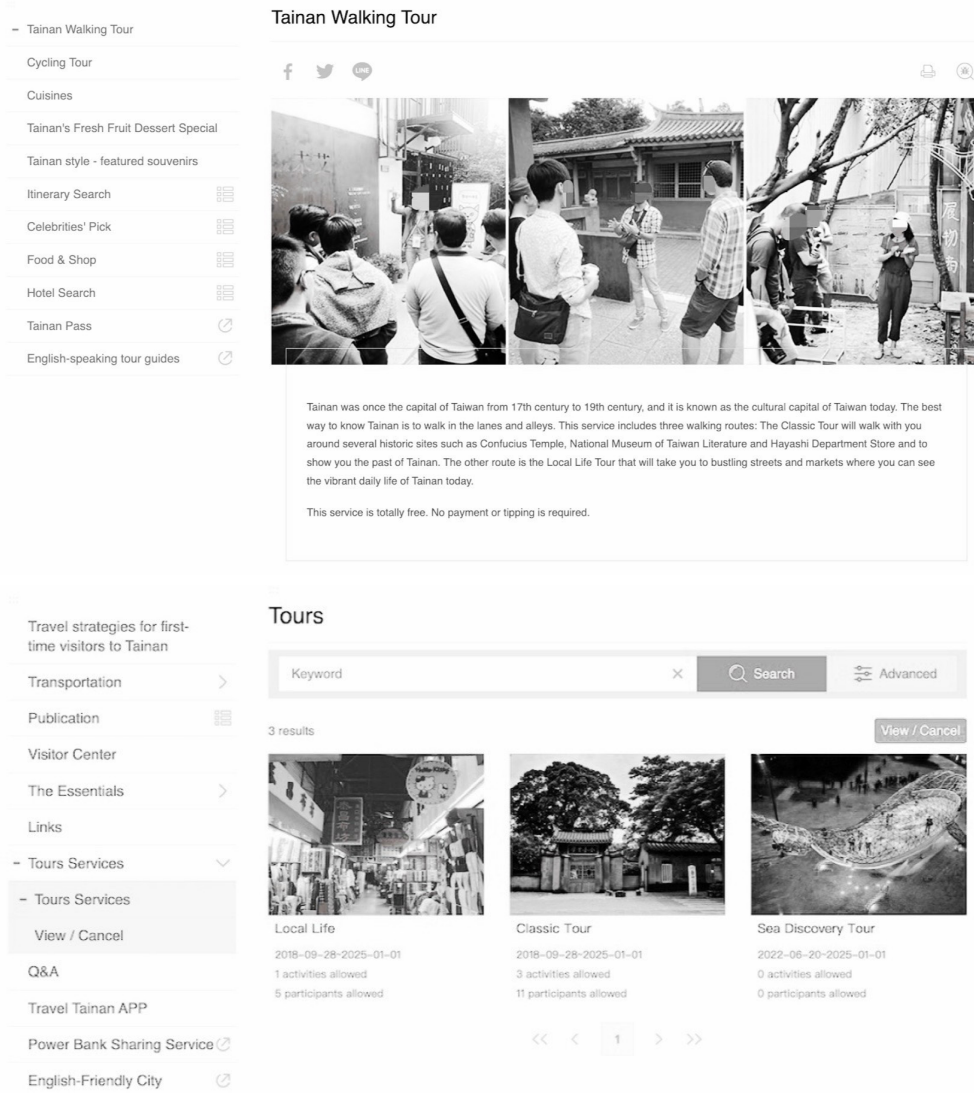
### Phased Data Collection:

**Phase 1:** Administering questionnaires for quantitative data.

**Phase 2:** Conducting interviews for qualitative insights.

**Phase 3:** Engaging in participant observation during tourism activities to explore real-time interactions and engagement.

**Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) Scale:** The standardized MTE scale is applied throughout the data collection phases to assess experiential factors. The scale is adapted to ensure it captures the specific nuances of active elders' travel motivations and expectations.



**Figure 4:** Walking Routes in Tainan  
 Source: Travel Tainan, Tourism Bureau of Tainan City Government (2024)

### Developing service design for active elderly using the Double Diamond Model

The Double Diamond Model provides a structured process to design memorable tourism services for active elderly. The four stages - Discover, Define, Develop, and Deliver which help refine service offerings based on active elders' specific needs and expectations. The Double Diamond Design Process Framework is shown in Figure 5.

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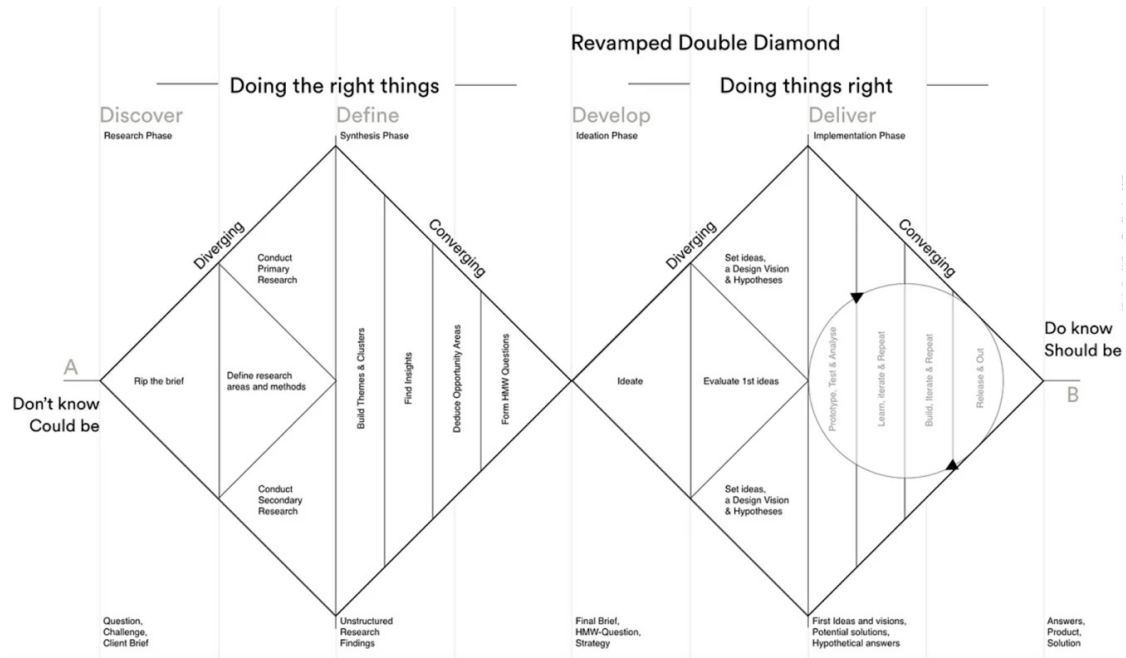


Figure 5: Double Diamond Design Process Framework

Source: Revamped Double Diamond Design Process Framework by Dan Nessler (latest version, Jan 2018)

#### Stage 1: Discover - Understanding the Problem

**User Research:** Using insights from questionnaires and interviews, the knowledge, local culture, and emotional engagement dimensions are explored to determine what active elderly value in their tourism experiences. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage with tour operators, guides, and communities to identify service gaps. **Personas and Journey Mapping:** Develop personas and map the senior tourist journey, highlighting pain points and opportunities for improvement.

#### Stage 2: Define - Clarifying the Problem

**Problem Definition:** Synthesize the discovery phase findings to identify service challenges for active elderly, such as the need for personalization and intellectual stimulation.

**Pain Points:** Address issues like accessibility and the need for better cultural interaction.

#### Stage 3: Develop - Creating Solutions

**Co-Creation Workshops:** Collaborate with stakeholders to brainstorm service improvements, such as customizable tour packages and enhanced tour guide training.

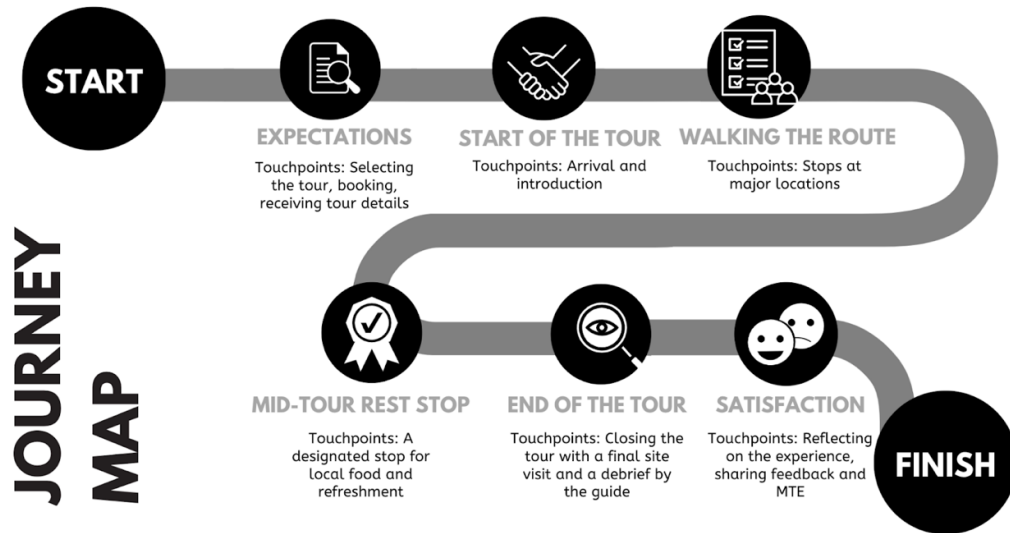
**Service Prototyping and Pilot Testing:** Test prototypes like personalized itineraries and multi-sensory tours with a small group of active elderly.

#### Stage 4: Deliver - Implementing the Solution

**Refinement and Training:** Use feedback to refine the service, ensuring the final design includes personalized experiences and cultural immersion. Implement the service at scale, providing training to tour guides and stakeholders on delivering tailored experiences to active elderly.

#### Journey Map for Active Elderly on Local Walking Tours

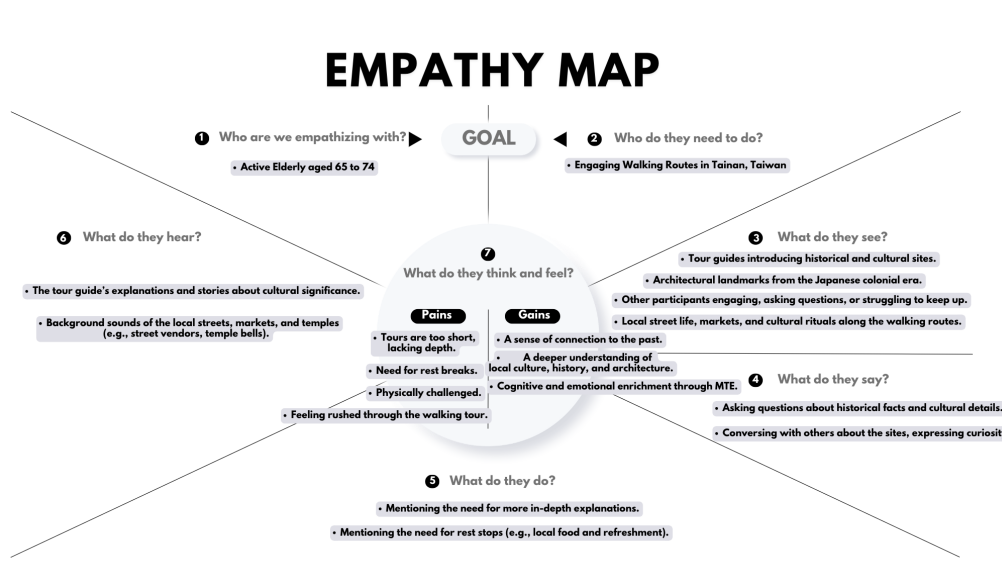
A Journey Map visually represents the active elders' experience during the walking tours, highlighting the stages of their journey, touch points, pain points, and areas for improvement. It covers their entire engagement, from planning the tour to the reflection after the experience. The stages of the journey are expectations, start of the tour, walking the route, mid-tour rest stop, end of the tour and satisfaction. The Journey Map for this research is shown in Figure 6.



**Figure 6: Journey Map**  
Source: The Researcher

Empathy Map for active elderly on Local Walking Tours  
The Empathy Map focuses on understanding the thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and needs of active elderly throughout their journey on the walking tour. This map

highlights how they engage emotionally and cognitively with the experience. The Empathy Map for this research is shown in Figure 7.



**Figure 7: Empathy Map**  
Source: The Researcher

Empathy Map Elements:

What do active elderly see:

- Tour guides introducing historical and cultural sites.
- Architectural landmarks from the Japanese colonial era.
- Other participants engaging, asking questions, or struggling to keep up.
- Local street life, markets, and cultural rituals along the walking routes.

What do active elderly hear:

- The tour guide's explanations and stories about

cultural significance.

- Background sounds of the local streets, markets, and temples (e.g., street vendors, temple bells).

What do active elderly say and do:

- Asking questions about historical facts and cultural details.
- Conversing with others about the sites, expressing curiosity.
- Mentioning the need for more in-depth explanations.
- Mentioning the need for rest stops (e.g., local food and refreshment).

What do active elderly think and feel

Pains are

- Tours are too short, lacking depth.
- Need for rest breaks and local food experiences.
- Feeling physically tired or rushed through the walking tour.

Gains are

• A deeper understanding of local culture, history, and architecture.

• A sense of connection to the past and cultural roots of the place.

- Cognitive and emotional enrichment through MTE.

This comprehensive approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods, employing tools like the Double Diamond Model to develop a service design for enhancing active elders' memorable tourism experiences. The inclusion of journey mapping and empathy mapping ensures that the service meets the intellectual, emotional, and sensory needs of active elderly, with a focus on cultural enrichment, personalization, and reflection. These methodologies lay the foundation for creating tourism experiences that resonate deeply with active elderly, contributing both to academic understanding and practical service improvement.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Data Source and Collection

The data for this study were collected through three primary methods: questionnaires, participant observation, and interviews. These methods were utilized to capture a comprehensive view of the experiences of active elderly who participated in English walking tours in Tainan, Taiwan. The data collection took place in 2024, focusing on understanding the memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) of a financially secure, well-educated senior demographic that values meaningful travel experiences.

The seven key dimensions of MTEs are hedonism, refreshment, meaningfulness, local culture, involvement, knowledge and novelty which formed the basis of the questionnaire and interview design. Each method contributed unique perspectives: questionnaires provided quantitative insights, participant observation offered contextual understanding, and interviews delivered rich qualitative data that highlighted the depth of the participants' travel experiences.

### Findings

**Questionnaire Data:** The knowledge dimension emerged as the most critical factor in shaping MTEs for active elderly, followed closely by local culture and hedonism. This suggests that active elderly prioritize intellectual engagement, cultural immersion, and personal enjoyment in their tourism experiences. Novelty and involvement scored lower but still positive, indicating that while seniors appreciate new experiences and active participation, their focus tends to be on rich, meaningful experiences that resonate with their life stage and personal interests.

**Participant Observation Data:** Observations confirmed

that active elderly engages deeply in

multi-sensory experiences, particularly in settings such as temples and historical sites where they can actively participate in sensory activities like smelling incense and hearing prayers. The quality of tour guide interactions was another critical factor, with participants showing a high level of engagement when guides tailored the tour to their interests. This reinforces the idea that personalized attention, particularly from knowledgeable and charismatic guides, plays a crucial role in shaping memorable experiences.

**Interview Data:** The interviews highlighted the importance of emotional connections, especially in settings that evoke nostalgia or provide opportunities for cultural immersion. Active elderly emphasized the value of historical depth, tailored experiences, and the ability to connect with places on a personal level. In comparison to younger tourists, who may prioritize novelty and adventure, active elderly place greater emphasis on learning, emotional depth, and historical significance.

### Discussion

The results of the study demonstrate that active elderly have distinct expectations for their travel experiences, which focus on a combination of intellectual stimulation, sensory engagement, and emotional connections. The high importance placed on knowledge and cultural immersion highlights the need for well-curated experiences that cater to seniors' lifelong learning interests and their desire for personal growth through travel. While novelty and involvement were valued to a lesser extent, they are still important in creating balanced experiences that keep active elderly actively engaged without overwhelming them. This aligns with the idea that tourism providers need to tailor experiences that balance novelty with comfort and familiarity to suit the preferences of senior tourists. In contrast, younger tourists may seek adventure and excitement, suggesting that tourism providers should design diverse experiences to appeal to both groups.

In summary, this chapter has revealed a clear picture of what constitutes memorable tourism experiences for active elderly. The data indicate that seniors prefer depth over novelty, intellectual engagement over passive experiences, and personal connections over superficial enjoyment. The findings provide valuable insights for both academic research and the tourism industry, emphasizing the importance of offering tailored, enriching experiences that cater to the unique preferences of senior tourists.

### A Service Design for Active Elderly Walking Route

This study presents a Service Innovation Model tailored to create Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) for active elderly participants on walking routes. The model emphasizes the integration of service design principles based on the Double Diamond Model framework, which transitions from understanding customer needs to delivering well-crafted service solutions.

The service design takes into account the specific needs

and preferences of active elderly participants, who value cultural immersion, intellectual engagement, and reflective experiences. Based on comprehensive research findings and stakeholder engagement, the study proposes a service model that enhances tourism offerings for this specific group through three primary themes: personalization, sensory immersion and reflective engagement.

**A new service design for active elderly walking route consists of**

Personalized Itineraries and Thematic Tours: the design introduces customizable tour packages that offer active elderly a selection of tailored itineraries based on their specific interests and preferences. These tours include:

- Cultural Heritage Walks: immersive tours of historically significant sites, led by experts offering deep insights into the history and cultural context.
- Artisanal and Culinary Workshops: hands-on experiences with local artisans or chefs, such as traditional cooking classes or pottery-making, allowing active elderly to engage creatively with the local culture.
- Learning Sessions: engaging intellectual sessions where local historians, architects, or experts provide enriching lectures on local history, art, or politics before site visits.

Sensory Richness and Interactive Experiences: the model emphasizes sensory richness tourism, where sensory immersion - sight, sound, smell, and touch plays a key role in creating memorable experiences.

- Temple Walks: these tours immerse participants in local traditions, allowing them to experience the sights, sounds, and rituals of temple life, such as prayer rituals and incense burning.

- Nature and Market Tours: experiences that engage the senses through interactions with local products, markets, or natural environments. Participants are encouraged to touch, smell, and observe cultural artifacts and natural surroundings.

Reflective and Mindful Tourism: a reflection and mindfulness element is integrated into the service design to offer quiet moments of personal or spiritual reflection. Participants are encouraged to process their experiences, fostering deeper personal connections with the destination.

- Reflection Stops: specific locations on the walking routes are designated for guided reflection sessions or quiet time, such as at temples, historical landmarks, or scenic viewpoints.

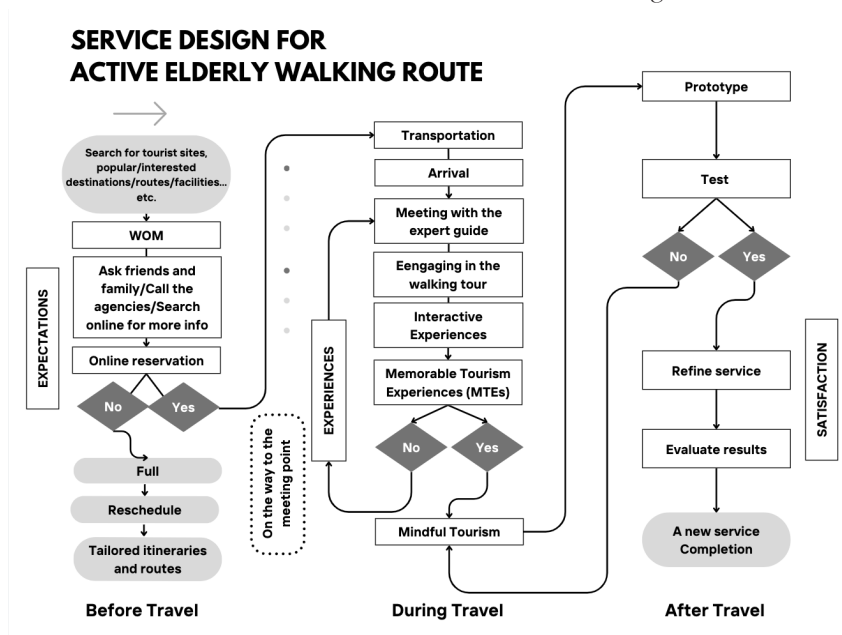
- Journaling or Group Reflection: during or after the tour, participants are provided with moments to share their reflections in a group setting or through journaling, allowing for a more meaningful engagement with the experience.

Cultural Exchange and Personal Interaction: the model prioritizes authentic cultural interaction, creating opportunities for active elderly to engage with local residents through cultural exchanges.

- Local Community Interaction: experiences that involve meeting local artisans, chefs, or historians, providing direct cultural exchange and personal storytelling. This strengthens the connection between the tourist and the local community.

- Homestays or Volunteer Opportunities: active elderly are offered the chance to stay with local families or participate in community service projects, enriching their understanding of the destination and fostering deeper emotional connections.

Dynamic Storytelling and Expert Guides: tour guides are central to this service design. They are trained in dynamic storytelling techniques that personalize and adapt their narrative to the interests of active elderly. This involves creating emotional connections by linking the historical significance of sites to personal stories, allowing participants to relate the experiences to their own life narratives. A Service design for active elderly walking route is shown in Figure 8.



**Figure 8:** Service Design for Active Elderly Walking Route

Source: The Researcher

## CONCLUSIONS

This research applies the Double Diamond Model to develop a service design that enhances memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) for active elderly. By thoroughly understanding the needs and preferences of this demographic, the study focuses on creating tourism experiences that are intellectually stimulating, culturally immersive, and personally meaningful.

Service design elements include personalized itineraries that emphasize cultural heritage, personalized experiences, and intellectual learning, allowing active elderly to select tours that align with their specific interests. The importance of rich sensory, interactive tours is also highlighted, with a focus on experiences such as temple walks, market tours, and historical reenactments. These tours are designed to engage active elderly on multiple sensory levels, enhancing the overall experience.

The role of dynamic storytelling and expert-led narratives is another significant finding, emphasizing the need for tour guides to create personal connections and tailor their storytelling to the interests of the participants. Additionally, the service design incorporates reflective and mindful tourism, encouraging moments of quiet reflection and spiritual engagement during tours.

Lastly, the design includes personal interactions with local communities, offering cultural exchanges that provide authentic engagement with local residents. By combining these elements, the service design aims to create memorable, meaningful tourism experiences that cater specifically to active elderly, ensuring that their travel experiences are both enriching and aligned with their life stage. The integration of these service solutions not only enhances the tourism offering but also provides valuable insights into the evolving needs of senior tourists.

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