Causal Relationships among Media Exposure, Attitudes and Decision-Making Behavior in the Selection to Watch News Programs via Online Social Media of Elderly Consumers

Narong Anurak[1*]

[1] *Assistant Professor Dr., College of Communication Arts Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University; Email:* narong.an@ssru.ac.th

Corresponding Author: narong.an@ssru.ac.th

ABSTRACT

This research aims (1) to examine the model fit of the causal relationships among media exposure, attitude, and decision-making behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers, and (2) to study the influence of media exposure, attitude, and decision-making behavior in in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers. The sample consisted of 440 elderly individuals who watched news programs through online channels, selected using accidental sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires and analyzed with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results indicated that the hypothesized model was suitable and demonstrated a good fit with the empirical data, with $\chi^2/df = 2.981$, CFI = 0.936, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.067, and SRMR = 0.061. Furthermore, the findings revealed that media exposure had a positive influence on attitude (H1); media exposure had a positive influence on the decision-making behavior in selecting news programs via social media among elderly consumers (H2); and attitude had a positive influence on the decision-making behavior in selecting news programs via social media among elderly consumers (H3).

Keywords: Media Exposure, Attitude, Decision-Making Behavior, News Programs, Social Media, Elderly Consumers

INTRODUCTION

Social media plays a significant role in modern human communication. It serves as a platform for self-expression through the dissemination of ideas, the exchange of opinions, the reporting of various activities, and other forms of communication (Ramasut, 2015). As a medium, it is accessible everywhere, easy for people in modern society with internet access to reach, and the number of users is continuously increasing (Guinchard, 2009). The most popular online activity among these individuals is the use of social media (Electronic Transactions Development Agency, 2020). Thailand is currently entering an aged society era. In 2017, the global population of elderly people (aged 60 and over) reached 962 million. In Thailand, the population aged 60 and over was 11 million, accounting for 17.00% of the total population (Institute for Population and Social Research, 2018). This suggests that in the future, the number of people aged 60 and over will grow significantly, making them a majority group in the country. Consumption by this elderly group is therefore extremely important for the future purchase of goods and services, and businesses will increasingly target these elderly customers. Hence, the purchasing behavior and decision-making process for goods or services are highly significant. In current consumer decision-making, technology is extensively used as a tool for information seeking. This is particularly true for mobile phone technology via the internet, which virtually puts the world in one's hand (Positioning Magazine, 2019).

Elderly people aged 60 and over commonly use social media, with LINE being the most popular at 50.00% for checking news and communicating, and Facebook at 16.00% for viewing news, social updates, communication, and following various pages. Regarding exposure to advertising among the elderly, 19.00% reported exposure via LINE and 18.00% via Facebook.

This aligns with a study by the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (2019), conducted in collaboration with the National Statistical Office and the Public Relations Department, which surveyed the public's listening/viewing of programs on the Radio Thailand and Television of Thailand in 2024 to gather data for developing radio and television media to disseminate government news and policies. The survey summarized that, among the sample population, the highest proportion of people received news information through television (74.70%), followed by Facebook (57.50%), LINE (30.40%), websites (25.80%), and TikTok (20.30%), respectively. Regarding television viewing, 84.90% reported watching programs from television stations, and 15.10% did not. Viewing was reported via mobile phones/tablets with internet access (8.60%), smart TVs via internet signal (8.20%), and other means like desktop/laptop computers (0.40%). However, 68.50% of the population watched news programs, followed by soap operas (53.20%), news and entertainment programs (41.80%), entertainment programs (40.30%), and sports programs (28.50%), respectively.

Currently, many countries are transitioning into an Aging Society, which is a society where the proportion of elderly individuals, or the population aged 60 and over, is continuously increasing. Thailand is also soon transitioning into an aging society, with the population aged 65 and over already at 10% or more than 7 million people. The Department of Older Persons, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, projects that Thailand will fully enter the Aged Society phase in 2024–2025, and by 2040, the proportion of the elderly will significantly increase to 32.1%, making Thailand a Super Aged Society. This is due to Thai people living longer on average and a declining birth rate (Thai Health Report, 2019).

A review of relevant literature and research indicates that attitude toward internet use has a direct influence on internet use behavior and an indirect influence via motivation for internet use (Promma, Semheng, & Rakpao, 2012). Exposure to news and communication is a crucial tool for an individual's decision-making in various activities and for other benefits in life. Individuals do not absorb all information that passes through them; they selectively use different media types according to their needs, choosing only the parts they deem beneficial. This also depends on the medium's ability to fulfill the individual's preset objectives. If the content aligns with the objective, it can lead to a positive attitude toward that medium (Theeraphan, 2016). This is consistent with Sonchan and Sonchan's (2021) work, which found that media exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic led to an attitude of risk prevention among the public, and with Tanyajaroen's (2021) study, which found that media exposure behavior among TikTok application users was related to their attitude toward the application in terms of thought, feeling, and behavior.

Based on the aforementioned information, the researchers aim to study the causal relationship and influence of media exposure, attitude, and decision-making behavior in selecting news programs via social media among elderly consumers to gain a deeper understanding of users' attitudes and to keep pace with the changes in contemporary society.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the model fit of the causal relationships among media exposure, attitude, and decision-making behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers.
2. To study the influence of media exposure, attitude, and decision-making behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Media Exposure

Exposure to news and communication is considered an essential tool for an individual's decision-making in various activities, as well as for other benefits in life. Individuals do not absorb all information that passes through them; instead, they selectively use different types of media according to their own needs. They choose to perceive only certain parts that they believe are useful to them. Furthermore, it depends on whether the medium can serve the objectives they have set in mind. In addition, as Kerdpitak et al. (2022) emphasized, organizational agility enhances responsiveness and performance; similarly, media agility allows news providers to dynamically adjust to audience behaviors and technological shifts, thereby influencing how individuals engage with and select media.

This process is governed by the Selective Process of the receiver, which determines how information is perceived. This process varies according to an individual's experience, attitude, beliefs, and needs, ultimately leading to differences in how each person exposes themselves to mass media news.

The different meanings of media exposure can be categorized into three types:

1. Information Seeking refers to the act of an individual actively searching for information when they desire similarity with others regarding a specific subject or general matters.
2. Information Receptivity refers to an individual being receptive to news to learn information they are interested in. If the news is relevant to them, they will pay special attention to reading, watching, or listening to it.
3. Experience Receptivity refers to an individual exposing themselves to news because they want to take an action or simply for emotional relaxation.

Klapper (1960) proposed the concept of human selectivity in receiving messages, stating that individuals have their own process for selective perception of news. This Selective Process consists of four steps:

1. ***Selective Exposure:*** Individuals choose to expose themselves to media and news from various sources based on their interests and needs, to solve problems or satisfy their own requirements.
2. ***Selective Attention:*** In addition to choosing to be exposed, individuals also choose to pay attention to news that aligns with their pre-existing attitudes and beliefs. Simultaneously, they try to avoid receiving news that contradicts their original attitudes or beliefs, as receiving inconsistent news causes them discomfort.
3. ***Selective Perception or Selective Interpretation:*** Once an individual is exposed to news from a source, the receiver will interpret the received message according to their own understanding, attitudes, experiences, beliefs, needs, and motivations at that time.
4. ***Selective Retention:*** After choosing to pay attention, perceive, and interpret the message in a direction consistent with their attitudes and beliefs, individuals further choose to remember the content of the message that they want to retain as an experience, while often failing to remember things they are not interested in or that contradict their thoughts.

Attitude

Attitude is an important factor that influences behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011; Smith et al., 2008; Al-Rafee & Cronan, 2006) and can predict significant behaviors. Schermerhorn, Osborn, Uhl-Bein, & Hunt (2001) and Ajzen & Fishbein (1974) categorized the components of attitude into three main elements: Cognitive Component or Beliefs, Affective Component or Feelings, and Behavioral Component, as follows.

1. Cognitive Component or Beliefs consists of the beliefs, knowledge, or information one holds about an object or person. For example, some consumers believe that high-quality news media should present content directly and honestly.
2. Affective Component or Feelings refers to the emotions or feelings toward a product or brand, and how consumers evaluate the product and/or service based on their level of liking or disliking, or how good or bad it is, according to individual emotions or feelings. For example, watching news programs through various channels such as smartphones, digital TV, or Facebook.
3. Behavioral Component (Response Tendencies or Conative Component) is the tendency to act toward a specific object, including actions that have already occurred. In marketing research, this component is often referred to as the consumer's intention to purchase the goods and/or services.

Attitudes serve different functions, leading individuals to exhibit varied and diverse behaviors. The four main functions of attitude are as follows (Shavitt & Nelson, 2002):

1. Adaptive Function suggests that exhibiting certain attitudes may lead to direct outcomes. For instance, consumers with an attitude regarding news viewing will have differing attitudes in selecting news viewing channels. Thus, attitude helps consumers achieve satisfaction and avoid undesirable outcomes by serving as a guide to maximize personal benefit and minimize harm.
2. Ego-Defensive Function helps protect one's self-image from situations that cause psychological damage or conflict with pre-existing information. This is manifested as a defense mechanism, which may involve degrees of bias and distortion of reality, but which people are ready to employ to maintain their self-image.
3. The Value-Expressive Function is important to the individual because it allows them to express values that are part of their conceptual framework, showcasing their true nature and who they are, and expressing important attitudes about others.
4. The Knowledge Function helps in understanding the environment and people around us, enhancing the ability to interpret or evaluate the things surrounding us.

Buying Decision-Making

Chatraporn Samerjai (2007) defined Decision Making as the process of choosing to perform a particular action from various available alternatives. Sroytrakul (Tuiyanont) Atthamanart (2007) stated that Decision Making refers to the selection of a feasible alternative to successfully achieve a predetermined goal.

Decision making is a process of considering available options from multiple choices, resulting in the selection of a viable alternative. Therefore, decision-making is a function that highlights individual differences. The person making the decision must possess principles and rationale, along with a good attitude and judgment, as the decision is a method that can lead to the fulfillment of defined goals. According to Worapot Butsarakamwadee (2008), decision-making is significant for the following reasons:

1. ***Multiple Alternatives***: When there are multiple choices, decision-making may require an individual's personal discretion. Having many alternatives can lead to potential errors, thus necessitating the use of appropriate tools or criteria to assist in the decision process.
2. ***Abundance of Information:*** If an individual frequently relies on personal discretion for decision-making, it can lead to mistakes and a lack of thoroughness, as it's impossible to fully and completely consider all available information.
3. ***Conflict Reduction:*** Since individuals have different educational backgrounds and experiences, if a decision is made without relying on common principles or tools, the resulting decisions may differ, leading to potential conflicts.
4. ***Risk or Uncertainty Reduction:*** Personal decisions made without rules or tools increase risk or uncertainty. Therefore, using the correct and appropriate tools for decision-making can reduce the chance of erroneous decisions.

From the importance of decision-making mentioned above, it can be concluded that decision-making is crucial. Specifically, making a good decision by using appropriate tools or criteria leads to quality practices, can solve problems, and helps reduce conflicts.

Buying Decision-Making Process

The consumer buying decision-making process is the sequence of steps a consumer follows when making a purchase. Surveys of many consumers in the buying process have shown that consumers go through a five-step decision process, consisting of:

1. Problem or Choice Recognition: The stage where a need or a situation with available choices arises.
2. Consideration and Evaluation of Alternatives: Seeking ways to satisfy the recognized need, which may involve effort and information analysis.
3. Selection of the Best and Least Problematic Alternative.
4. Decision Making based on the Chosen Alternative.
5. Post-Decision Evaluation: This is the final step where the consumer evaluates the benefits gained from each alternative

Hypothesis Development

Exposure to news and communication is considered an essential tool for an individual's decision-making in various activities, as well as for other benefits in life. Individuals do not absorb all information that passes through them; instead, they selectively use different types of media according to their own needs. They choose to perceive only certain parts that they believe are useful to them. Furthermore, it depends on whether the medium can serve the objectives they have set in mind. If the content in the medium aligns with the preset objectives, it can result in a positive attitude toward that medium (Theeraphan, 2016). This is consistent with the work of Sonchan and Sonchan (2021), which found that media exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the public developing risk prevention attitudes during the outbreak. Similarly, the work of Theodorakioglou et al. (2023) found that continuous media exposure led to consumers having a better attitude toward banner advertisements and an increased interest in the ads. Hasanah et al. (2021) found that media exposure on Twitter (X) could influence the language attitudes of university students.
Furthermore, Janekitivorapong (2017) found that exposure to hate content had a positive correlation with Thai adolescents' attitudes toward using hate speech via Facebook in the Bangkok area. Moreover, Tanyajaroen (2021) found that the media exposure behavior of TikTok application users was related to their attitude toward using the application across the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Based on the literature review, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Media exposure has a positive influence on attitude.

News that significantly penetrates the receivers' minds serves as an indicator or determinant of communication success, and it leads the receiver to acquire knowledge, attitude, and behavior. Businesses must actively create

media exposure behavior among consumers to induce decision-making behavior in selecting services (Rattanaseleevong, 2016). This is consistent with the work of Pimlapat (2023), which found that media exposure behavior influences the decision to participate in esports events. Similarly, Rattanaseleevong (2016) found that exposure to advertising media affects the decision to play games on mobile phones. This is because if those advertisements are personally beneficial or manage to generate interest, they will lead to the decision-making behavior of playing online mobile games. Advertising helps create awareness and promotes the decision to choose a game. Furthermore, the work of Manan et al. (2022) found that public cooperation behavior increased when they received news about COVID-19 from various media. Tey et al. (2022) found that students' media exposure behavior affects their career choice decisions within their field of study, confirming that the power of media is more significant than teaching, and media exposure helps students develop a better understanding of various environments. Additionally, Tawada (2017) found that media exposure was correlated with the purchasing decision behavior for products featuring Masked Rider characters on the packaging. Based on the literature review, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 2: Media exposure has a positive influence on the decision-making behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers.

Human behavior generally begins with having an attitude toward something. Attitude serves as the driver leading to an individual's actions. Humans typically do not act contrary to their own attitudes. Therefore, attitude is a highly important concept in social psychology and communication because knowing the direction of an individual's or a group's attitude toward something allows relevant parties to plan and execute actions toward that individual or group more accurately and effectively. Attitude can influence the behavior of using various media. For example, the work of Sattapon (2015) found that attitude influenced the LINE application usage behavior among the Baby Boomer generation, including the number of months used, daily usage duration, primary purpose or motivation for use, and features used. This aligns with the work of Janekitivorapong (2018), which found that attitude toward the use of hate speech was positively correlated with the behavior of using hate speech among Thai adolescents in the Bangkok area via Facebook. In modern society, whether in real life or online, the use of profanity is common. Adolescents often imitate and follow trends, such as following media or friends, to gain acceptance, as the expectations of peers are something they adhere to, even if they know it is negative. Similarly, the work of Aziz et al. (2020) found that attitudes derived from parents, teachers, and friends influence students' intention to choose a career. Yusnita (2021) found that attitude toward HIV infection had a positive effect on preventive behavior. Moreover, Tanyajaroen (2021) found that TikTok application users' attitude was related to the decision to use the TikTok application across the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of usage. Based on the literature review, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 3: Attitude has a positive influence on decision-making behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers.
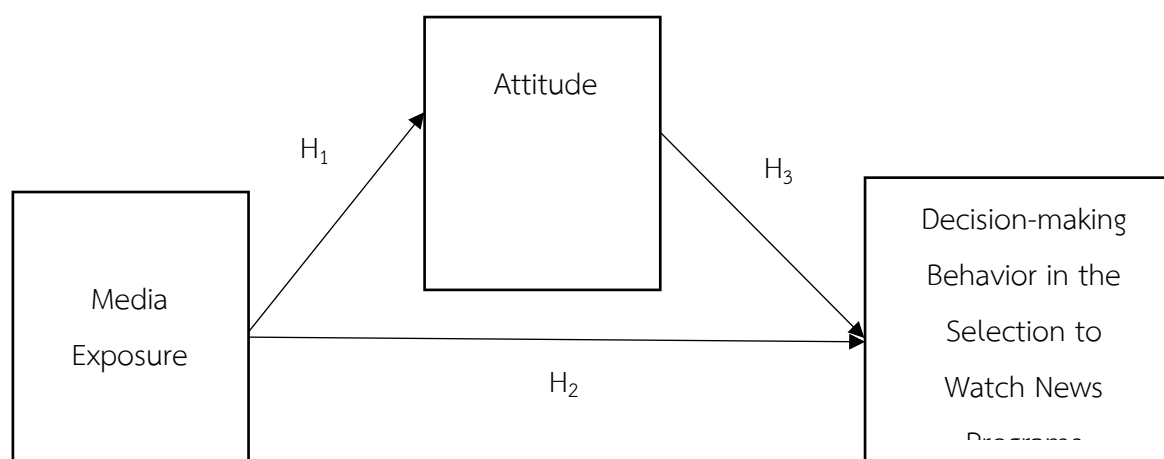

Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sample

The population comprises elderly consumers who watched news programs via online channels in Bangkok Metropolis. The sample consisted of elderly consumers who watched news programs via online channels. The sample size was calculated based on the ratio of observed variables to latent variables. Given that the number of parameters was 44, a sample size of at least 10 times the number of parameters was required (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010), yielding a minimum sample size of 440 individuals. Accidental Random Sampling was employed. The researchers received 440 completed and valid questionnaires.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for this research was a questionnaire, divided into four main sections: Part 1: Demographic information of the respondents, using a Checklist (multiple-choice) format, Part 2: Opinions on Media Exposure, Part 3: Opinions on Attitude, Part 4: Opinions on Decision-Making Behavior in selecting news programs via social media, and Part 5: Suggestions/Comments. Parts 2–4 used a 5-level Rating Scale questionnaire format, where 5 = Highest, 4 = High, 3 = Moderate, 2 = Low, and 1 = Lowest.

The quality testing procedures for the instrument were as follows: 1. The developed questionnaire was presented to experts to assess its suitability, linguistic accuracy, and content coverage of the research, 2. The questionnaire was revised according to the experts' suggestions, 3 The questionnaire was analyzed for quality (The Item Objective Congruence Index or IOC values for the questionnaire items ranged between 0.60-1.00) before the final version was prepared, 4. The research protocol was submitted for Ethical Approval for Human Research, and 5. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with 30 individuals from the population who were not part of the final sample to estimate the reliability, resulting Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranged between 0.712-0.895, which is higher than the standard threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978), indicating that the scale indicators for the variables are acceptably correlated. For Data collection for this research, it was conducted using online questionnaires.

Statistics Used in Research

The statistics used in the research included Descriptive Statistics: Frequency and Percentage for analyzing the demographic data of the respondents plus Mean and Standard Deviation for describing the data obtained from Parts 2–4 of the questionnaire, and Inference Statistics: Data inspection prior to Structural Equation Model analysis, Structural Validity check, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the research framework using the STATA software program.

Results

General Information and Descriptive Statistics

Regarding the general information of the respondents, the majority were female, held a bachelor's degree, and had a monthly income between 15,001 – 30,000 Thai Baht. For the research variables—Media Exposure (ME), Attitude (AT), and Attitudes in watching news programs products (ARNP)—the mean scores generally fell between 4.19-4.26, indicating a high level of agreement. The variable with the highest mean score was Decision-Making in the Selection to Watch News Programs via Online Social Media (ARNP), with a mean of 4.26 and a standard deviation of 0.64. While the variable with the lowest mean score was Attitude (AT), with a mean of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.71.

Data Distribution results showed that the Skewness index ranged from 0.688 to 0.849 (all values below 3), and the Kurtosis index ranged from 0.162 to 0.336 (all values below 10). This indicates that the data for all variables followed a normal distribution (Curran & Finch, 1997). An analysis of the correlation coefficients found that all paired coefficients were below 0.80, suggesting no multicollinearity issues. Furthermore, the inspection of Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values confirmed this: all variables had a VIF value less than 5.00 and a Tolerance value greater than 0.20 (Hair et al., 2010), indicating that no multicollinearity problems were present.

Construct Validity was assessed as follows. First, Convergent Validity analysis exposed that the factor loadings for all scale indicators were found to be greater than 0.60 (Hair et al., 2010), and the Composite Reliability (CR) values for all variables were higher than the threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all variables were greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010; Henseler et al., 2015). These results confirm that all scale indicators are valid and demonstrate adequate internal consistency in measuring the variables (as shown in Table 1). Second, Discriminant Validity analysis revealed that the correlation values between all latent variables were less than the square root of the AVE for the respective variable (Fornell-Larcker criterion). This indicates that the measurement indicators for each group are distinct in measuring the variables, confirming that there is no common variance problem (as shown in Table 2).
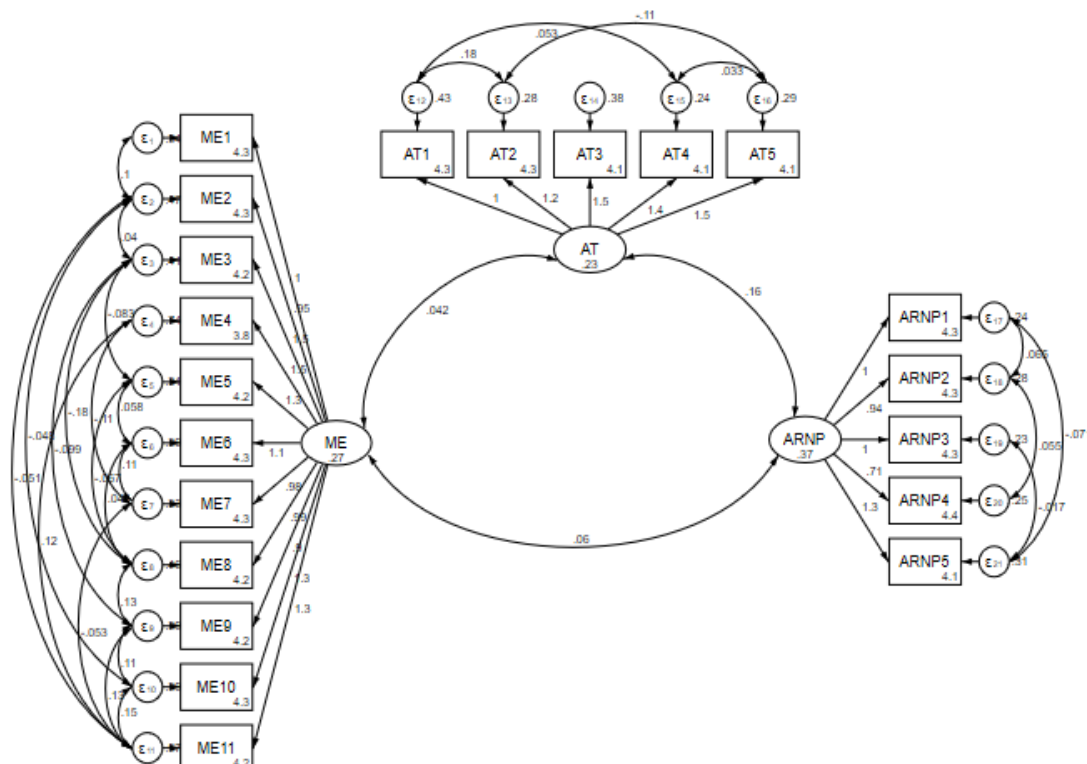
Table 1 Convergent Validity

Observed Variable Indicators	Factor Loading	CR	AVE	α
Media Exposure (ME)		0.919	0.511	0.899
I am interested in watching news through online media because the program has diverse and convenient access channels (ME1).	0.742			
Accessing online news viewing channels is not complicated/is easy (ME2).	0.802			
I can access the programs anywhere, anytime (ME3).	.639			
My interest in watching news through online media is due to people close to me (relatives/friends) (ME4).	0.617			
I am interested in studying or learning how to use social media for the purpose of watching news (ME5).	0.673			
I am interested in seeking news to compare information from various news viewing channels (ME6).	0.650			
My interest in watching news through social media stems from my own personal interest (ME7).	0.713			
I am interested in watching news through social media to use it as a topic for discussion with others (ME8).	0.692			
I am interested because the news presentation format or the program hosting style is interesting (ME9).	0.784			
I am interested in the news content presented through the social media channels of various news programs (ME10).	0.755			
I am interested because the program content is creative, fun, and enjoyable (ME11).	0.767			
Attitude (AT)		0.910	0.669	0.874
Receiving news information through online media leads to a better understanding of various situations (AT1).	0.793			
I receive news information through easy-to-understand presentations, such as video clips or visual storytelling rather than just information narration (AT2).	0.835			
I feel that the dissemination of news information via social media requires the use of famous personalities (AT3).	0.808			
The content of news information via social media is accurate and up-to-date/current (AT4).	0.865			
The news information received via social media will be part of planning my life (AT5).	0.786			
Decision-Making in the selection to watch news programs via online social media (ARNP)		0.907	0.662	0.868
I choose to watch news programs through online media because of the communication and interaction between the administrators and the followers (ARNP1).	0.829			

I choose to watch news programs through online media because the information is accurate, useful, and comprehensive (ARNP2).	0.852			
I choose to watch news programs through online media because of the reviews and comments from other people (ARNP3).	0.826			
I choose to watch news programs through online media because the information is constantly being updated (ARNP4).	0.766			
I choose to watch news programs through online media because of the number of followers on the platform (ARNP5).	0.792			

Table 2 Discriminant Validity

Variables	ME	AT	ARNP
ME	**0.715**		
AT	0.145	**0.818**	
ARNP	0.190	0.445	**0.814**

The First-Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) conducted on the model of the relationship among Media Exposure, Attitude, and Decision-Making Behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers yielded the following model fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.981$, CFI = 0.936, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.067, and SRMR = 0.061. The standard criteria for model fit are as follows: χ^2/df should be less than 3; CFI and TLI indices should be greater than 0.95 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988); and RMSEA and SRMR indices should be less than 0.08 (Little, 2013). Based on the obtained fit indices, it can be concluded that the hypothesized model of the relationship among Media Exposure, Attitude, and Decision-Making Behavior in selecting news programs via social media among elderly consumers demonstrates an acceptable fit with the empirical data (As shown in Figure 2).

Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Structural Equation Modeling Results

The researchers conducted a Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis to examine the model fit with the empirical data. The results of the initial analysis showed that the structural model did not have an adequate fit with the empirical data, with fit indices of $\chi2$ /df= 5.556, CFI=0.829, TLI=0.807, RMSEA=0.102, and SRMR= 0.074. The researchers therefore proceeded with Model Modification. After modifying the model, the final, appropriate model demonstrated a good fit with the empirical data, yielding the following fit indices: $\chi2/df$ = 2.981, CFI = 0.936, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.067, and SRMR = 0.061 (As shown in Figure 3).
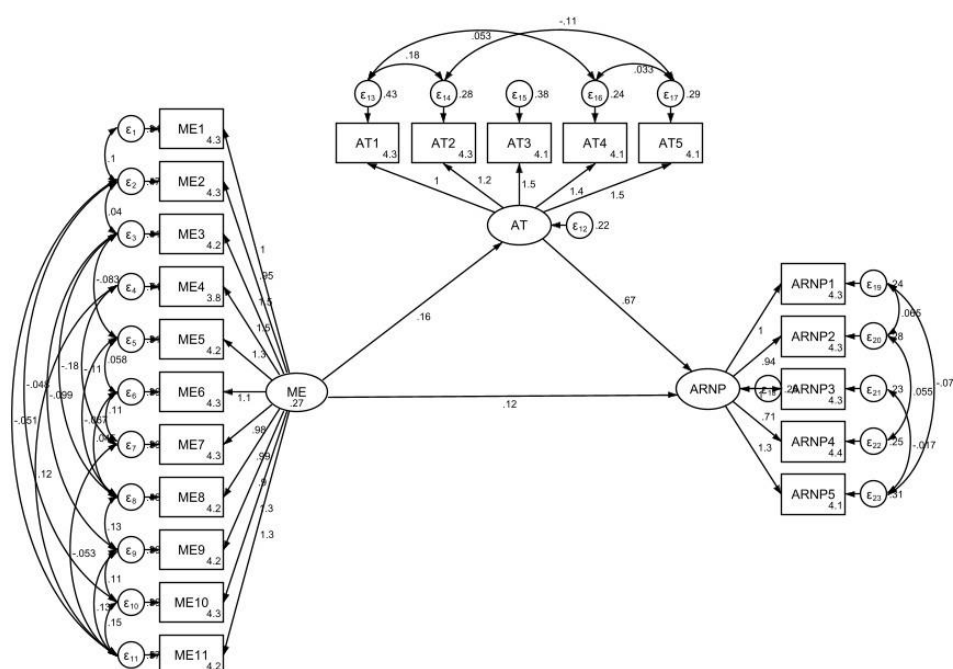

Figure 3: Hypothesis Testing Results

The analysis of the structural equation model confirmed and supported all the proposed research hypotheses. Hypothesis 1, which stated that Media Exposure has a positive influence on Attitude, was supported. The test revealed that Media Exposure has a positive and statistically significant influence on Attitude (β= 0.156, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 2, proposing that Media Exposure has a positive influence on the Decision-Making Behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers, was also supported. The findings showed a positive and statistically significant influence of Media Exposure on this Decision-Making Behavior (β= 0.117, $p < 0.05$). Finally, Hypothesis 3, which posited that Attitude has a positive influence on the Decision-Making Behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers, was strongly supported. Attitude was found to have a powerful positive and statistically significant influence on the Decision-Making Behavior (β= 0.670, $p < 0.05$). The Causal Influence Analysis further clarified the relationships: Media Exposure was found to have a direct influence on both Attitude and the Decision-Making Behavior of the elderly consumers. Attitude also exhibited a direct influence on the Decision-Making Behavior. Importantly, the results showed that Media Exposure also exerts an indirect influence on the Decision-Making Behavior, with the variable Attitude acting as the mediator.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The study's results indicate that the majority of the sample were female, held a bachelor's degree, and had a monthly income between 15,001 – 30,000 Thai Baht. The respondents agreed most strongly with the items related to Decision-Making Behavior in in the selection to watch news programs via online social media and least strongly with the items related to Attitude. This finding suggests that to influence the Decision-Making Behavior

in selecting news programs via social media, businesses or content providers must first ensure that the public engages with the media (Media Exposure). This engagement will subsequently lead to a positive attitude toward the program.

The researchers summarized and discussed the findings based on the research objectives using a Baseline Model as detailed below:

For Objective 1: to examine the model fit of the causal relationships among Media Exposure, Attitude, and Decision-Making Behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers, the researchers performed a Structural Equation Model analysis and conducted Model Modification. The final, appropriate model demonstrated a good fit with the empirical data, with fit indices of $\chi^2/df = 2.981$, CFI = 0.936, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.067, and SRMR = 0.061.

For Objective 2: to examine the influence of Media Exposure and Attitude on the Decision-Making Behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers. The results supported all three hypotheses:

For Hypothesis 1: Media Exposure has a positive influence on Attitude, it was found that Media Exposure has a positive and statistically significant influence on Attitude. This finding aligns with the work of Sonchan and Sonchan (2021), who found that media exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic led to risk prevention attitudes; Theodorakioglou et al. (2023), who found that continuous media exposure improved consumer attitude toward banner ads; Hasanah et al. (2021), who found that media exposure on Twitter (X) affected university students' language attitudes; Janekitivorapong (2017), who found that exposure to hate content correlated positively with attitudes toward using hate speech on Facebook among Thai adolescents; and Tanyajaroen (2021), who found a relationship between media exposure behavior and attitude toward using the TikTok application across cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions.

For Hypothesis 2: Media Exposure has a positive influence on the Decision-Making Behavior in selecting news programs via social media among elderly consumers, it was found that Media Exposure has a positive and statistically significant influence on the Decision-Making Behavior. This is consistent with Pimlapat (2023), who found that media exposure behavior influences the decision to attend esports events; Suppanat Rattanasereewong (2016), who found that advertising media exposure affected mobile gaming decisions by creating awareness and promoting choice; Manan et al. (2022), who found that public cooperation increased with exposure to COVID-19 news; Tey et al. (2022), who showed that student media exposure affected career choice decisions, highlighting the importance of media power; and Tawada (2017), who found media exposure was related to the purchasing decision for products featuring Masked Rider characters.

For Hypothesis 3: Attitude has a positive influence on the Decision-Making Behavior in the selection to watch news programs via online social media of elderly consumers, it was found that attitude has a positive and statistically significant influence on the Decision-Making Behavior. This aligns with Janekitivorapong (2017), who found that attitude toward hate speech correlated positively with the behavior of using hate speech on Facebook among Thai adolescents, noting that young people often imitate media or peers for acceptance; Aziz et al. (2020), who found that attitudes conveyed by parents, teachers, and peers influenced students' career intentions; Yusnita (2021), who found that attitude toward HIV infection positively affected preventive behavior; and Tanyajaroen (2021), who found that TikTok users' attitude was related to their decision to use the application across cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions.

Causal Relationship Summary

The causal influence analysis further demonstrated that Media Exposure has both a direct and an indirect influence on the Decision-Making Behavior in selecting news programs via social media among elderly consumers, with the variable Attitude serving as the mediator.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

These recommendations are for entrepreneurs or relevant agencies, such as marketing and media production entities, to acknowledge the importance of Media Exposure behavior and Attitude, which serve as strategies or tools for organizations to compete effectively. It also provides knowledge about key factors influencing the Decision-Making Behavior in selecting news programs via social media. Therefore, organizations should focus on creating news content that reaches the emotional connection of the recipients to achieve success in communication, leading to the acquisition of knowledge, attitude, and behavior in the audience. Businesses must first generate media exposure behavior among consumers to induce the decision-making behavior in selecting their services. The findings of this research help organizations understand which factors influence the Decision-Making Behavior in selecting news programs via social media. This positively impacts the organization by enabling them

to accurately plan investments in developing marketing strategies, create a competitive advantage, and build profit and stable financial sustainability for the organization.

Furthermore, mass media agencies and content producers should design news formats and presentations that are suitable for the elderly, such as using easy-to-understand language, concise information, and utilizing online platform features that help the elderly access information more conveniently.

The government and related organizations should also promote Digital Literacy training for the elderly, enabling them to better distinguish fake news and access reliable news more easily.

FUTURE RESEARCH

For future research, it is recommended to conduct further studies using Qualitative Research methods (such as In-depth Interviews or Focus Groups) to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind the elderly's news consumption behavior and to examine the true motivations for selecting online news. Additionally, a Longitudinal Study should be conducted to monitor the long-term changes in the elderly's news viewing selection behavior and analyze how these behavioral trends evolve over time.

REFERENCES

Armstrong, G., & Kotler, P., (2015). *Principles of Marketing-Global Edition*. London: Pearson.

Aziz, S., Afaq, Z., Muhammad, L., & Khan, B. (2020). The role of media, word of mouth, and subjective norms in determining attitude and intentions to purchase family takaful schemes. *Journal of Islamic Business and Management*, 10(1).

Bagozzi, R. P., & Yi, Y. (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, *16*, 74-94.

Campbell, D. T., & Fiske, D. W. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological bulletin*, *56*(2), 81.

Elderly Affairs. (2021, June 21). [in Thai: *Khrongkan Phukao*]. https://www.dop.go.th/th/know/15/926

Electronic Transactions Development Agency. (2020). *Report on the Survey of Internet User Behavior in Thailand, 2019.* [in Thai: *Raingan phon samruat phruettikam phu chai internet nai prathet thai, 2562*]. Electronic Transactions Development Agency, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society.

Ferrell, O.C., & Hartline, M.D. (2011). *Marketing management strategies.* Australia: South-Western Cengage Learning.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2013). *Multivariate data analysis: Pearson new international edition PDF eBook.* Pearson Higher Ed.

Hasanah, U., Nurhayani, I., & Chojimah, N. (2021). The Influence of Twitter Media Exposure on the Language Attitude of Students at Brawijaya University. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 9(1).

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, *43*, 115-135.

Janekitivorapong, P. (2017). *Media exposure, attitudes, behavior, and media literacy of using hate speech among Thai teenagers in Bangkok via Facebook* [Master's thesis, Thammasat University]. Thammasat University Institutional Repository.

Kerdpitak, C., Kerdpitak, N., Aunyawong, W., & Pongpeng, T. (2022). Bringing the hierarchical, rational, and development culture on firm agility to business performance of Thailand's entrepreneurship. *Res Militaris, 12*(2), 721-732.

Kerdyoo, S. (2015). *Attitude, behavior, and media literacy of baby boomers using line application* [Master's thesis, Thammasat University]. Thammasat University Institutional Repository.

Leesatruphai, C., & Rattanaphisit, C. (2014). Confirmatory factor analysis of conversational communication skills of late adolescents in Bangkok. *Journal of Behavioral Science*, *20*(2), 171–187.

Little, J. (2013). Multilevel confirmatory ordinal factor analysis of the Life Skills Profile-16. *Psychological assessment, 25*(3), 810.

Manan, K. A., Tajuddin, S. N. A. A., Ali, R., Bahari, K. A., Ahmad, Z. A., & Downing, K. (2022). Media exposure, attitude, anxiety and practices among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Public Health Science*, *11*(2), 589-600.

Nunnally, J. C. (1978). Psychometric Theory. New York : McGraw-Hill.

Promma, P., Semheng, S., & Rakpao, L. (2012). *A causal relationship study of factors affecting internet usage behavior of undergraduate students at Suan Dusit Rajabhat University* [Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University]. Srinakharinwirot University Institutional Repository.

Ramasut, P. (2015). *"Harmful speech" and the online world* [in Thai: *Kham phut thi pen an tarai lae lok online*]. Foundation for Education, Democracy and Development (Kobfai Publishing Project).

Rattanaseleevong, S. (2016). *The exposure to game advertising with decision-making behavior of online games on mobile phones* [Master's thesis, Bangkok University]. Bangkok University Institutional Repository.

Sonchan, S., & Sonchan, W. (2021). Media exposure, attitudes, and risk-prevention behaviors of the elderly people towards the situation of the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). *Community Research Journal*, *16*(1), 64–77.

Tanyajaroen, P. (2021). *Exposure behavior of attitudes and decision to use the TikTok application* [Master's thesis, Dhurakij Pundit University]. Dhurakij Pundit University Institutional Repository.

Tawada, M. (2017). *Media Exposure and Consumer Attitudes towards the Decision to Buy Product Containing Maskrider on Packaging* [Master's thesis, Bangkok University]. Bangkok University Institutional Repository.

Tey, T. C. Y., Moses, P., & Cheah, P. K. (2022). Media exposure and students' attitude as mediators between subjective norms and choice intention for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers. International Conference on Computers in Education.

Theeraphan, P. (2016). *Media exposure, knowledge, attitude, and service-using behavior of people in the Bangkok Metropolitan area toward "PromptPay", a new system of fund transfer and receipt service* [Master's thesis, Thammasat University]. Thammasat University Institutional Repository.

Theodorakioglou, F., Hatzithomas, L., & Boutsouki, C. (2023). The impact of sequential versus simultaneous media exposure on online advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 29(2), 101-117.

Yusnita, M. (2021). Relationship between Social Media Exposure and Adolescents' Knowledge, Attitude and Behaviour to HIV/AIDS Prevention. *Jurnal Komuni*