

Determinants of Dog Parents' Intentions to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations: The Role of the Service Marketing Mix (7Ps), Pet Attachment, and Demographic Factors

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Abstract

Aim/Purpose: This study aimed to explore factors associated with dog-parents' intentions to choose dog-friendly accommodations when traveling.

Introduction/Background: Changing lifestyles and the shift from pet owners to “pet parents” have driven higher spending on pet-related products and services, with dogs emerging as the most popular “pet kids” in Thailand. Traveling with pets is now common, generating strong demand for pet-friendly accommodations. By January 2023, dogs accounted for the largest share of pets in Thailand (40.4%).

Pet attachment plays an important role in shaping dog parents' behavior, particularly in consumption and travel decisions. Strong emotional bonds between dog parents and their dogs encourage the perception of dogs as family members, thereby increasing the likelihood of selecting accommodations that cater to both parents' and their dogs' needs, particularly those with dog-friendly environments and overall well-being.

The service marketing mix (7Ps) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between service strategies and consumer behavior in service industries. In the context of pet-friendly accommodations, effective implementation of this marketing mix enables providers to align their offerings with dog parents' intention to choose such accommodations when travelling.

This study addressed how the service marketing mix, pet attachment, and demographic factors were associated with dog parents' intentions to choose dog-friendly accommodations.

Methodology: The conceptual framework included the service marketing mix, dog attachment, and demographic factors as independent variables to examine dog parents' intentions. A quantitative approach was used, with an online questionnaire distributed to dog parents in Bangkok and metropolitan areas who had traveled with their dogs. The questionnaire was approved by the university ethics committee before distribution. Of 428 responses, 400 complete questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, and multiple regression.

Findings: The results indicated that the service marketing mix (7Ps), dog attachment, and demographic factors of the respondents were partially and significantly associated with dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations when travelling. Physical evidence, process, and promotion varied significantly with dog parents' intentions within the service marketing mix. Regarding the dog attachment variable, dog parents often traveled with their dogs and brought them along when visiting friends and family. They perceived their pets as loyal buddies and felt closer to them than some friends or family members.

The intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations differed across the demographic characteristics of dog parents. Gender was categorized into four groups: male, female, LGBTIQ+, and prefer not to say group. The ‘prefer not to say’ group demonstrated a statistically significant difference in intention compared to the male, female, and LGBTIQ+ groups ($p < .001$).

Age also played a crucial role. Respondents aged 59 or older (retirees) reported significantly higher intention compared to all other age groups. Regarding occupation, dog parents employed in the government or state enterprise sector showed statistically different intentions compared to those working in private companies and those who were self-employed or business owners. Similarly, retirees showed a significantly different level of intention compared to private company employees and self-employed respondents.

In terms of education level, only dog parents with less than a bachelor's degree reported a statistically significant difference in intention compared to those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Considering residential areas, dog parents in Bangkok had different intentions compared to those residing in Nonthaburi, Nakorn Pathom, Pathum Thani, Samut Sakhon, or Samut Prakan. Similarly, dog parents in Nonthaburi, Nakorn Pathom, Pathum Thani, and Samut Sakhon reported significantly different intentions compared to dog parents in Samut Prakan.

Contribution/Impact on Society: This study contributes to the advancement of academic knowledge and to broader societal understanding by examining how dog attachment, together with service marketing mix strategies (7Ps), shape consumers' behavioral intentions. It highlights the importance of integrating pet-friendly considerations into hospitality offerings. The findings provide actionable insights and serve as practical guidelines for designing and delivering dog-friendly accommodations that meet their expectations.

Recommendations: Becoming a dog-friendly hotel can significantly boost sales. To attract this segment, hotels should clearly communicate their dog-friendly policies, including rules on dog type and size, designated pet zones, damage and liability terms, leash requirements, noise control, and applicable fees. Transparent guidelines reduce misunderstanding and create positive experiences for both dog parents and the hotel.

Research Limitation: This study was limited to dog parents residing in Bangkok and its metropolitan areas, which may restrict the generalizability of findings to other regions. Additionally, the research focused exclusively on dogs, excluding other types of pets that may exhibit different patterns of pet parents' behavior.

Future Research: Future studies should broaden the scope to include other provinces and regions in Thailand to capture diverse cultural and lifestyle factors. Expanding the investigation into additional pet categories, such as cats, birds, or exotic pets would provide a more comprehensive understanding of pet attachments across species. Moreover, longitudinal studies could explore how attachment evolves over time and its long-term impact on pet parents' behavior.

Keywords: *Dog attachment, service marketing mix, dog-friendly accommodations*

Introduction

Thailand's pet industry has evolved into a diverse and dynamic sector, encompassing everything from pet-friendly accommodations to themed exotic pet cafés. Public spaces, restaurants, and hospitality venues are increasingly adopting pet-friendly policies, reflecting a growing cultural shift toward integrating pets into daily life. This trend caters not only to local pet owners but also to pet-loving tourists, creating new opportunities for businesses and enhancing Thailand's appeal as a pet-friendly destination (Statista, 2025b; Thai Times, 2025).

Pets are increasingly regarded as family members rather than companions. Many pet owners now identify as "pet parents," and pets are often considered "pet kids." This shift, known as *pet humanization*, has transformed consumer behavior in Thailand. Pet parents tend to spend significantly more on premium products and services, including specialized diets, grooming, healthcare, and luxury accommodation (Irvine & Cilia, 2017; Kim et al., 2025; Thai Times, 2025). A survey on pet ownership by Rakuten Insight in January 2022 found that approximately 71 percent of Thai respondents owned at least one pet; about 18.2 percent of Thais reported not having any pets (Statista, 2025c). Recent studies have indicated that this trend is driven by lifestyle changes, urbanization, and rising disposable

incomes, positioning Thailand's pet industry as one of the fastest-growing markets in Southeast Asia (Thai Times, 2025; The Nation, 2024a). As of January 2023, dogs were the most popular pets in Thailand (40.4%), followed by cats (37.1%) and rabbits (22.6%) (Statista, 2025d).

Thailand's pet market is expected to reach 75 billion Baht in 2024, reflecting a year-on-year growth rate of 12.4%, primarily fueled by this shift in consumer mindset. As a result, average annual spending per pet has soared to approximately 41,100 Baht, compared to just 7,745 Baht for traditional, less-humanized "free-range" pets (Thai Times, 2025).

The growing trend of traveling with pets has created a substantial demand for pet-friendly accommodations, especially in locales where pet ownership is becoming more popular (Gluckman, 2021; The Nation, 2024a). As pet owners transition into "pet parents," their expectations for hospitality services evolve, prioritizing comfort and convenience for their pets during travel (Buhalis & Chan, 2023). Understanding the factors that relate to dog parents' choices of dog-friendly accommodations is essential for the hospitality industry to adapt to this emerging market segment.

Pet parents form a strong emotional bond with their pets, often viewing them as integral family members. This attachment elevates their expectations for products or services; they seek offerings that reflect the same level of care they would provide for their own children (D'Souza et al., 2023; Hoy et al., 2025).

Despite growing interest in pet-friendly tourism, existing research has primarily examined service marketing strategies and pet attachment separately, with limited understanding of how these factors are jointly linked with dog parents' intentions to choose dog-friendly accommodations, particularly in the Thai context. To address this gap, this study focused on dog parents and examined how the elements of the service marketing mix (7Ps), pet attachment, and demographic factors are associated with dog parents' intentions to choose dog-friendly accommodations when travelling with their dogs.

Investigating pet attachment and its relationship with dog parents' behavior provides essential insights into a unique customer segment. The study combined marketing strategies with the emotional bonds between dog parents and their dogs. Integrating dog attachment with service marketing mix strategies enables businesses to create more personalized and appealing offerings. Recognizing this emotional bond provides critical insights for the travel and hospitality industries, helping them design experiences that cater to the needs of dog parents.

Literature Review

The **service marketing mix** (7Ps) is widely recognized as a strategic framework for understanding customer behavior, particularly in relation to satisfaction, purchase intention, and decision-making in service industries (Išoraite, 2021; Kotler, 2000; Zeithaml et al., 1990). The service marketing mix refers to an extended version of the traditional marketing mix, adapted to address the unique characteristics of services. Kotler (2000) defines the marketing mix as a set of controllable variables that a company uses to shape consumer responses. For services, this concept evolved into the 7Ps, namely, product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence, providing a comprehensive framework for designing and delivering service experiences.

Zeithaml et al. (1990) emphasized that these elements are critical for managing customer expectations and perceptions of service quality, which directly affect satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The inclusion of people, process, and physical evidence highlights the intangible and interactive nature of services, making the 7Ps model a foundation in service marketing strategy. From the literature review above, the first hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: The service marketing mix (7Ps) is significantly associated with the intention of dog parents in Bangkok and metropolitan areas to choose dog-friendly accommodations.

Dogs are increasingly regarded as "pet kids," reflecting a deep emotional bond between dog parents and their animals (McConnell et al., 2019). This attachment goes beyond companionship, positioning dogs as family members within the household. Such strong emotional ties are associated with dog parents' lifestyles, shaping their purchasing behavior and willingness to invest in premium

products and services for their pets, including specialized diets, healthcare, grooming, and travel accommodations (Kotler, 2000; Zeithaml et al., 1990; Elgarhy & Mohamed, 2023).

According to Hidalgo-Fernández et al. (2023), the relationship between humans and their dogs, referred to as **dog attachment**, has a positive association with both dog-related and human-related motivations, which in turn are linked to the evaluation of dog-friendly destinations. The level of affection and attentiveness between dog owners and their dogs increases the likelihood that owners will spend more on vacation travel with their pets. Recent research on pet-friendly lodging emphasizes that distinctive attributes of pet-friendly hotels, such as amenities for pets, safety, and convenience, significantly affect customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Kim et al., 2025).

A study by Moral-Cuadra et al. (2025) focused on the profile of tourists travelling with dogs in Spain. The researchers reported that sociodemographic factors were significantly connected to dog owners' tourism attitudes and behaviors when travelling with dogs. Differences in income and academic achievement among dog owners were associated with different behaviors related to traveling with dogs.

Furthermore, Buhalis and Chan (2023) highlighted the growing importance of designing hospitality services tailored to pet owners, noting that pet-inclusive travel experiences are becoming a critical differentiator in the competitive hospitality market. Accordingly, this study specifically focused on dog parents, given the popularity of dogs among pets in Thailand and their relevance to pet-inclusive travel behavior and hospitality service design. From the literature review, the second hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H_2 : Dog attachment is significantly associated with the intention of dog parents in Bangkok and metropolitan areas to choose dog-friendly accommodations.

In research, respondents' **demographic factors** refer to measurable characteristics of a sample or population. Analyzing these profiles is one of the simplest and most cost-effective ways to understand the structure of a population. Demographic factors are determined through questioning or observation, with each respondent clearly categorized. Profile variables include age, gender, income, marital status, household type, and geographical location (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015).

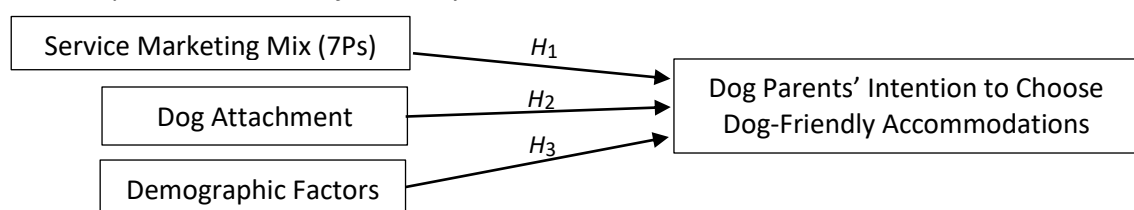
Thailand's population has shifted toward an aging society. By early 2024, approximately 20% of the population (around 13.2 million people) were aged 60 or older (The Nation, 2024b; Statista, 2025a). Thailand's commitment to gender equality and inclusion is reflected in recent legal reforms, such as the marriage equality law enacted in January 2025. These developments have prompted researchers to adopt inclusive demographic measures by expanding gender options in surveys to ensure representation and validity (Hyde et al., 2019; Lindqvist et al., 2021). This demographic transition poses significant challenges for businesses and the service sector.

A study by Hoy et al. (2025) highlighted that travelling with dogs was associated not only with emotional and experiential factors, but also with individual characteristics. However, the relationship between demographic factors and dog-parents' intentions to select dog-friendly accommodations remains insufficiently explored. In this study, the demographic characteristics of dog parents were defined by gender, age, educational level, occupation, monthly income, and residential location. The third hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H_3 : Dog parents in Bangkok and metropolitan areas with different demographic factors have different intentions for choosing dog-friendly accommodations.

The study's conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study



Research Methodology

A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a structured questionnaire to collect data from dog owners. The sample size of 385 was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula, and convenience sampling was applied. The survey was distributed online to participants in Bangkok and surrounding metropolitan areas who had previously traveled with their dogs. A total of 428 responses were received, of which 400 complete questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression to examine relationships among the variables.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections. It began with a screening question to confirm whether the respondent owned a dog. The sections included the screening question, demographic factors, service marketing mix (7Ps), dog attachment, and intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations. The questionnaire was developed and validated to ensure content relevance and clarity. Content validity was assessed using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), evaluated by three experts. The IOC values were calculated, and all items achieved acceptable values (above .05), indicating that they were sufficiently consistent with the study objectives and suitable for use.

The questionnaire was submitted to the university ethics committee for approval prior to distribution. Ethical considerations were clearly explained to participants at the beginning of the survey. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed that they could withdraw at any stage without consequences.

Findings

The demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 1. The sample was predominantly female (42.8%), with males comprising 37.2 percent. Interestingly, 13.2 percent identified as LGBTIQ+, and 6.8 percent chose not to disclose their gender.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Category	Percentage (%)	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	42.8	LGBTIQ+	13.2
	Male	37.2	Prefer Not to Say	6.8
			Total	100
Age	26 or Lower	20.5	43–58	23.8
	27–42	27.7	59 or Higher	28.0
			Total	100
Business	Owners / Self-Employed	24.5		
	Government / State Enterprise	16.0	Retiree	28.5
	Private Company Employee	31.0	Total	100
Education				
	Below a Bachelor's Degree	21.8	Above a Bachelor's Degree	27.5
	Bachelor's Degree	50.7	Total	100
Monthly Income (Baht)				
	15,000 or Less	14.7	45,001–60,000	23.0
	15,001–30,000	19.8	60,001 or More	12.7
	30,001–45,000	29.8	Total	100

The age distribution was skewed toward older respondents. The largest group was those aged 59 or higher (28.0%), followed closely by 27–42 (27.7%), while 43–58 accounted for 23.8 percent, and 26 or lower for 20.5 percent. The occupational profile was diverse, led by private company employees (31.0%) and followed by retired respondents (28.5%). Business owners/self-employed (24.5%) highlighted a meaningful entrepreneurial presence, while government/state enterprise employees (16.0%) comprised the smallest group.

The educational profile was slanted toward higher achievements: 50.7 percent of respondents held a bachelor's degree, 27.5 percent had education higher than a bachelor's, and 21.8 percent were below a bachelor's degree. The results indicated a highly educated sample and a strong

concentration at the bachelor's level. Monthly income (in Baht) was concentrated in the middle bands, with the 30,001–45,000 Baht group forming the largest share (29.8%) and the 45,001–60,000 Baht group close behind (23.0%). Lower-income respondent groups included 14.7 percent at 15,000 Baht or less, and 19.8 percent at 15,001–30,000 Baht, while higher-income respondents ($\geq 60,001$ Baht) made up 12.7 percent.

The largest group of respondents resided in Bangkok (26.7%), followed by Pathum Thani (20.3%) and Nonthaburi (15.2%) (Table 2). The remaining participants lived in Samut Sakhon (15.0%), Samut Prakan (12.0%), and Nakorn Pathom (10.8%).

Table 2 *Percentage of Respondents' Residential Areas*

Province of Residence	Percentage (%)	Province of Residence	Percentage (%)
Bangkok	26.7	Samut Sakhon	15.0
Pathum Thani	20.3	Samut Prakan	12.0
Nonthaburi	15.2	Nakorn Pathom	10.8
Total		100	

The reliability analysis in Table 3 showed that all three variables had strong internal consistency, meaning the items consistently measured the intended concept. The Service Marketing Mix (7Ps), with 21 items and a Cronbach's alpha of .849, indicated a good level of reliability. The Dog Attachment variable, with 10 items and an exceptionally high alpha of .963, demonstrated excellent reliability. Lastly, the Dog Parents' Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodation, with 4 items and an alpha of .891, also demonstrated good reliability, confirming that the scale was dependable for assessing this intention. Overall, these results indicated that the measurement instruments used were reliable and suitable for further analysis (Best, 1977; Cronbach, 1951).

Table 3 *Reliability Analysis Results of the Variables*

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Meaning
Service Marketing Mix (7Ps)	21	.849	Good
Dog Attachment	10	.963	Excellent
Dog Parents' Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodation	4	.891	Good

Multiple regression analysis was applied to analyze the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, Hypotheses 1 and 2. Table 4 displays the model summary between the Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) and dog parents' intention (H_1). The Service Marketing Mix was a strong predictor of dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodation. The correlation between predicted and observed variables was $R = .719$, showing a positive association. The model explained 51.7% of the variance in dog parents' intention ($R^2 = .517$), and the Adjusted $R^2 = .509$ suggested this explanatory power was robust and the model's explanatory strength was genuine. The standard error of the estimate (.417) indicated that the model's prediction errors were less than half a scale point, suggesting a good level of accuracy and an adequate fit to the data.

Table 4 *Model Summary: Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) and Dog Parents' Intention*

Model Summary				
Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Service Marketing Mix (7Ps)	.719 ^a	.517	.509	.417

a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Marketing Mix (7Ps)

b. Dependent Variable: Dog Parents' Intention

The multiple regression analysis (Table 5) revealed that three elements of the service marketing mix were statistically significant positive predictors: Promotion ($p < .05$), Process ($p < .01$), and

Physical Evidence ($p < .001$). The standardized coefficients showed that Physical Evidence had the strongest relative impact, followed by Process and Promotion.

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis Results: Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) and Dog Parents' Intention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.060	.176		6.014	.000***		
Product	-.035	.068	-.034	-.523	.602	.283	3.528
Price	.025	.069	.027	.359	.720	.222	4.50
Place	-.34	.071	-.037	-.484	.629	.211	4.734
Promotion	.191	.075	.193	2.545	.011*	.213	4.687
People	.048	.081	.051	.593	.553	.169	5.903
Process	.244	.093	.253	2.634	.009**	.134	7.475
Physical Evidence	.287	.080	.301	3.572	.000***	.173	5.775

a. Dependent Variable: Dog Parent's Intention

Note. $p < .05^*$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$

Physical Evidence included dedicated dog zones where dog parents and their dogs could spend quality time together, engaging activities designed for dogs, and well-maintained facilities that emphasized cleanliness and provided essential amenities. Process emphasized clear and transparent pet policies, including guidelines on the weight and number of dogs allowed, while ensuring safety facilities such as secure fencing and life jackets for water-based activities. Promotions focused on accessible online information, partnerships with pet-related initiatives such as the "Amazing Happy Paws Thailand" campaign organized by the Tourism Authority of Thailand, and exclusive holiday promotions to attract and engage dog parents. The tolerance values were all above .01 and VIF values remained well below the critical threshold of 10 (Best, 1977; Hair et al., 2010). This indicated that multicollinearity was not a serious issue in the model. Overall, the model demonstrated an acceptable level of predictor independence. The regression equation is presented below:

$$Y = 1.060 + .287(\text{Physical Evidence}) + .244(\text{Process}) + .191(\text{Promotion})$$

The Hypothesis 2 testing results are presented in Tables 6 and 7. The model summary in Table 6 indicated that dog attachment was a significant predictor of dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodation. The standard error of the estimate (.468) meant that approximately 60% of the variance remained unexplained, suggesting that additional factors may also have been associated with dog parents' intentions.

Table 6 Model Summary: Dog Attachment and Dog Parents' Intention

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Dog Attachment	.631 ^a	.398	.383	.468

a. Predictors: (Constant) Dog Attachment

b. Dependent Variable: Dog Parents' Intention

Table 7 shows that dog parents highly valued the experience of traveling with their dogs, viewing these pets as loyal to their dog parents, sometimes even more loyal than certain people (DA7, DA6). They often brought their dogs along when visiting friends and family (DA3), reinforcing the bonds they shared. Many dog parents believed that their emotional connection with their dogs surpassed the closeness they felt toward some friends and even certain family members (DA9, DA10). This deep

sense of attachment highlighted the integral role that their dogs play in their lives, shaping decisions about leisure activities and travel. The overall tolerance values were above .01 and the VIF values were below 10, indicating that multicollinearity was not an issue in the model (Best, 1977; Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, the regression estimates could be considered stable and reliable. The regression equation is presented below:

$$Y = 1.835 + .237(\text{DA7}) + .144(\text{DA6}) + .121(\text{DA3}) + .112(\text{DA9}) - .125(\text{DA10})$$

Table 7 Multiple Regression Analysis Results: Dog Attachment and Dog Parents' Intention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.835	.212		8.673	.000***		
DA1: A family is not complete without a dog.	.002	.042	.003	.048	.962	.368	2.718
DA2: Having a dog improves health.	.057	.057	.067	.993	.321	.367	2.722
DA3: I take my dog to visit family and friends.	.121	.019	.276	6.495	.000***	.858	1.165
DA4: Dogs are members of my family	-.105	.071	-.108	-1.477	.140	.289	3.458
DA5: I have a photo of my dog on my mobile phone or in my wallet.	.054	.061	.058	.883	.378	.361	2.771
DA6: Dogs are more loyal than some people.	.144	.057	.166	2.523	.012*	.356	2.811
DA7: I travel to places together with my dog.	.237	.042	.331	5.691	.000***	.457	2.190
DA8: Dogs are lifelong companions.	.092	.057	.116	1.601	.110	.294	3.403
DA9: I feel closer to my dog than some friends.	.112	.037	.321	3.005	.003**	.135	7.383
DA10: I feel closer to my dog than some family members.	-.125	.036	-.361	-3.495	.001***	.145	6.883

a. Dependent Variable: Dog Parents' Intention

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Hypothesis 3 examined the differences between the independent variables, demographic factors, and the dependent variable, which was the intention of dog parents to choose dog-friendly accommodations. The independent variables were measured using nominal and ordinal scales. The statistical method employed was a One-way ANOVA (F -test) at a .05 significance level. When significant differences were identified, pairwise comparisons were conducted using the Least Significant Difference (LSD) method.

Tables 8 through 19 present the results of Hypothesis 3 testing across each demographic sub-measure. A one-way ANOVA (F -test) was conducted to examine the relationship between three or more sub-measures of the independent variable with the dependent variable, dog parents' intention to choose a dog-friendly accommodation. When a significant result was observed, the LSD method was applied to further examine pairwise differences.

Table 8 presents significant results for gender differences in dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations ($p < .001$). Gender was categorized into four groups: male, female, LGBTIQ+, and prefer not to say. Among these, the 'prefer not to say' group reported the highest intention ($\bar{x} = 4.94$). The results of the LSD analysis are shown in Table 9, indicating that only the 'prefer not to say' category showed significant pairwise differences compared to male, female, and LGBTIQ+ groups ($p < .001$).

Table 8 Mean Differences by **Gender** of Dog Parents' Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Gender	<i>n</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Male	149	4.35	.587	8.274	***
Female	171	4.39	.603		
LGBTIQA+	53	4.38	.603		
Prefer Not to Say	27	4.94	.200		

Note. *** $p < .001$ **Table 9** Pairwise Differences of Dog Parents' **Gender** on Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Gender	$\bar{x}$	Male	Female	LGBTIQA+	Prefer Not to Say
		4.35	4.39	4.38	4.94
Male	4.35	-	.639	.762	***
Female	4.39		-	.979	***
LGBTIQA+	4.38			-	***
Prefer Not to Say	4.94				-

Note. *** $p < .001$

Table 10 presents significant results for dog parents in the Bangkok metropolitan area, categorized by age, regarding their intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations ($p < .001$). The age of 59 or older reported the highest intention ($\bar{x} = 4.65$).

Four age groups were analyzed using LSD method, with results displayed in Table 11. The findings indicated that only dog parents aged 59 or older showed a significantly different intention compared to all other age groups ($p < .001$).

Table 10 Mean Differences by **Age** of Dog Parents' Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Age	<i>n</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	Sig.
26 or Lower	82	4.34	.552	8.751	***
27–42	111	4.28	.687		
43–58	95	4.34	.646		
59 or Higher	112	4.65	.386		

Note. *** $p < .001$ **Table 11** Pairwise Differences in Impact of **Age** on Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Age	$\bar{x}$	26 or Lower	27–42	43–58	59 or Higher
		4.34	4.28	4.34	4.65
26 or Lower	4.34	-	.494	.997	***
27–42	4.28		-	.471	***
43–58	4.34			-	***
59 or Higher	4.65				-

Note *** $p < .001$

Tables 12 and 13 present the *F*-test and LSD analysis results of dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations, categorized by occupation. The mean differences of occupation showed significant differences ($p < .001$). Table 12 shows that retirees had the highest intention ($\bar{x} = 4.64$), which was significantly higher than that of private company employees ($\bar{x} = 4.30$) and business owners/self-employed respondents ($\bar{x} = 4.23$).

The results of LSD analysis in Table 13 reported that government/state enterprise employees ($\bar{x} = 4.48$) also showed significantly different intentions compared to private company employees ($p = .038$) and business owners/self-employed respondents ($p = .007$). Retirees showed no statistically significant differences from government/state enterprise employees ($p = .083$). However, private company employees and business owners/self-employed respondents reported statistically pairwise differences from retirees ($p < .001$).

Table 12 Mean Differences by Occupation of Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Occupation	<i>n</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Government / State Enterprise	64	4.48	.385	11.043	***
Private Company Employee	124	4.30	.752		
Business Owner / Self-Employed	98	4.23	.598		
Retiree	114	4.64	.385		

Note. *** $p < .001$

Table 13 Pairwise Differences of Occupation on Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Occupation	$\bar{x}$	Government / State Enterprise Employee	Private Company Employee	Business Owner / Self- Employed	Retiree
		4.48	4.30	4.23	4.64
Government / State Enterprise	4.48	-	.038*	.007**	.083
Private Company Employee	4.30		-	.397	***
Business Owner / Self-Employed	4.23			-	***
Retired	4.64				-

Note $p < .05^*$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$

Tables 14 and 15 present the means and pairwise differences in dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations, categorized by educational level. Table 14 displays the mean differences, showing that dog parents with a Bachelor's degree reported the highest intentions ($\bar{x} = 4.42$), followed by those with education above a Bachelor's degree ($\bar{x} = 4.40$), and those below a Bachelor's degree ($\bar{x} = 4.28$), with a statistically significant difference ($p = .029$).

Pairwise differences by educational level were further analyzed using the LSD method, and the results are presented in Table 15. Only dog parents with education below a Bachelor's degree showed a significant difference compared to those with education above a Bachelor's degree ($p = .008$).

Table 14 Mean Differences by Educational Level of Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Educational Level	<i>n</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Below a Bachelor's Degree	87	4.28	.656	3.562	.029*
Bachelor's Degree	203	4.42	.640		
Above a Bachelor's Degree	110	4.40	.416		

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 15 Pairwise Differences of Education Level on Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Educational Level	$\bar{x}$	Below a Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Above a Bachelor's Degree
		4.28	4.42	4.40
Below a Bachelor's Degree	4.28	-	.070	.008**
Bachelor's Degree	4.42		-	.208
Above a Bachelor's Degree	4.40			-

Note $p < .01^{**}$

Tables 16 and 17 present the mean scores and pairwise differences in dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations based on monthly income. The analysis indicated that monthly income was significantly associated with intention ($p < .001$), with dog parents earning 60,001 Baht or more reporting the highest intention ($\bar{x} = 4.75$).

Pairwise differences across dog parents' monthly income were analyzed. The results showed that dog parents with monthly incomes of 60,001 Baht or more reported statistically significant differences from all other income groups (Table 17). Additionally, dog parents with a monthly income of 15,000 Baht or less showed a significantly different level of intention compared to those in the 45,001-60,000 Baht income group ($p = .028$). Dog parents earning 30,001-45,000 Baht also exhibited a statistically significant difference in intention compared to the 45,001-60,000 Baht income group ($p = .018$).

Table 16 Mean Differences by *Monthly Income* of Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Monthly Income (Baht)	<i>n</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
15,000 or Less	59	4.26	.815	7.246	***
15,001–30,000	79	4.43	.500		
30,001–45,000	119	4.28	.574		
45,001–60,000	92	4.47	.394		
60,001 or More	51	4.75	.642		

Note. *** $p < .001$

Table 17 Pairwise Differences of *Monthly Income* on Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Monthly Income (Baht)	$\bar{x}$	15,000 or Less	15,001–30,000	30,001–45,000	45,001–60,000	60,001 or More
		4.26	4.43	4.28	4.47	4.75
15,000 or Less	4.26	-	.079	.820	.028*	***
15,001–30,000	4.43		-	.067	.680	.002**
30,001–45,000	4.28			-	.018*	***
45,001–60,000	4.47				-	.006**
60,001 or More	4.75					-

Note. $p < .05^*$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$

Table 18 shows that residential areas were significantly associated with dog parents' intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations ($p < .001$). To further examine pairwise differences, the LSD method was applied (Table 19).

Table 18 Mean Differences by *Residential Areas* of Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Residential Area	<i>n</i>	$\bar{x}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Bangkok	107	4.19	.686	8.101	***
Nonthaburi	61	4.43	.455		
Nakorn Pathom	43	4.40	.875		
Pathum Thani	81	4.39	.431		
Samut Sakhon	60	4.53	.392		
Samut Prakan	48	4.79	.454		

Note. *** $p < .001$

Table 19 Pairwise Differences of *Residential Areas* on Intention to Choose Dog-Friendly Accommodations

Residential Area	$\bar{x}$	Bangkok	Nonthaburi	Nakorn Pathom	Pathum Thani	Samut Sakhon	Samut Prakan
		4.19	4.43	4.40	4.39	4.53	4.79
Bangkok	4.19	-	.009**	.038*	.017*	***	***
Nonthaburi	4.43		-	.825	.699	.341	***
Nakorn Pathom	4.40			-	.909	.278	***
Pathum Thani	4.39				-	.162	***
Samut Sakhon	4.53					-	.016*
Samut Prakan	4.79						-

Note. $p < .05^*$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$

The results indicated that dog parents in Bangkok had different intentions compared to those residing in Nonthaburi, Nakorn Pathom, Pathum Thani, Samut Sakhon, and Samut Prakan. Similarly, dog parents residing in Nonthaburi, Nakorn Pathom, Pathum Thani, and Samut Sakhon reported significantly different intentions to dog parents in Samut Prakan.

Discussion

The findings indicated that older adults, particularly those aged 59 and above, are more likely to own dogs and travel with them, seeking experiences that enhance both their own well-being and that of their “pet kids.” This trend reflects the growing role of pets as family members and companions, especially among aging populations who value emotional support and social connection during leisure activities (Wei et al., 2024). The view of pets has evolved, upgrading their status to be more like humans. For many, self-fulfillment comes from treating their pets as family members. A study by D’Souza et al. (2023) confirmed that pet parents perceive their pets as possessions and as part of their extended selves. This concept of the extended self is directly related purchase intentions of pet fashion clothing and accessories, which serve as a unique way to symbolize the self.

The service marketing analysis results align closely with the findings of Buhalis and Chan (2023), who examined the design requirements for dog-friendly hospitality services, focusing on dog parents in Hong Kong. Through interviews with hotel managers, they developed a comprehensive service blueprint to accommodate both guests with dogs and those without. Their study highlighted that dog parents have high expectations and often treat their dogs as family members, attributing human-like needs to them.

The study by Wei et al. (2024) demonstrates that pet attachment extends beyond an emotional bond, as it is closely associated with behavioral intentions and travel decisions. High levels of attachment are linked to how pet parents perceive value in travel experiences and are associated with stronger engagement in pet-inclusive services. This behavioral impact creates clear business opportunities for tourism and hospitality providers. By designing experiences that cater to emotionally attached pet parents, businesses can enhance customer satisfaction, increase loyalty, and stimulate demand for premium offerings such as pet-friendly accommodations, activities, and amenities. In essence, pet attachment acts as a catalyst for both consumer behavior and market growth in the pet tourism sector.

Apaolaza et al. (2022) found that pet parents with stronger emotional attachment to their pets were significantly more likely to purchase fashion clothing for them. This relationship is reinforced when owners see pets as more human-like when the pet contributes to the parents’ sense of self-expansion. The deeper the bond and the perception of pets as family members, the greater the motivation to invest in fashion items that express care and identity.

Unlike the study by Veas-González et al. (2025), the results indicated that emotional attachment was not found to have a significant direct effect on pet owners’ intention to travel with their pets. The finding suggested that, despite strong emotional bonds, practical considerations such as perceived benefits, novelty, and prestige may play a more influential role in shaping travel decisions. Consequently, emotional attachment alone may be insufficient to predict behavioral intention in the context of pet-friendly tourism.

The demographic factors of dog parents are associated with their intentions, including the residential area factor. The gender group that selected ‘prefer not to say,’ although representing a small percentage, showed the highest and most distinct intention to choose dog-friendly accommodations. Retirees reported the strongest statistically significant intention overall. Volsche (2021) found that pet parents in the United States have increasingly invested in their pets as if they were children, with a growing emphasis on pet well-being comparable to that of humans.

Becoming a dog-friendly hotel can significantly boost sales (Apse, 2022). To attract this segment, hotels should clearly communicate their dog-friendly policies, including rules on dog type and size, designated pet zones, damage and liability terms, leash requirements, noise control, and applicable

fees. Transparent guidelines reduce misunderstanding and create positive experiences for both dog parents and the hotel.

Hoy et al. (2025) found that travelers consider their dogs' well-being and enjoyment to be crucial factors when selecting dog-friendly services. The study also revealed that the process of acquiring information is significantly associated with both motivation and behavioral intentions. This aligns with Elgarhy and Mohamed (2023), who found that service marketing mix elements are associated not only with behavioral intention, but also with customer satisfaction and loyalty in the tourism industry. Together, these findings suggest that integrating emotional consideration and pet attachment with strategic marketing practices can enhance both the decision-making process and long-term customer relationships. For dog-friendly accommodations, this highlights the importance of delivering high-quality service experiences that prioritize the well-being of both pet parents and pet kids.

Conclusion

Dog parents in Bangkok and surrounding metropolitan areas choose dog-friendly accommodations based on physical evidence, process, and promotion within the service marketing mix, as well as their emotional attachment to their dogs. This attachment is reflected in behaviors like traveling with their dogs and bringing them along when visiting friends and family. Many dog parents perceive their dogs as more loyal than some friends or relatives, which strengthens this bond. As a result, their travel intentions are closely tied to their desire to include their dogs on their journeys.

The shift in population demographic characteristics is associated with dog parents' intentions. Retirees demonstrated the strongest intention to travel with their dogs. Thailand's inclusive approach to gender diversity has created opportunities to engage LGBTIQ+ individuals and those who prefer not to disclose their gender, expanding the potential customer base. Segmentation potential and current customers enable the service sector to tailor offerings to meet their expectations. Residential areas, particularly in major cities such as Bangkok and Samut Prakan, show significant differences, which impact the physical evidence and promotional strategies of the services provided.

This research offers valuable implications for both marketing strategy and consumer behavior studies by demonstrating how emotional bonds are associated with decision-making. The findings highlight that integrating business practices with the strong emotional ties individuals have to their dogs can create meaningful value for the service industry. By acknowledging these connections, businesses can design more personalized and engaging experiences for dog parents.

Future research should examine pet attachment beyond dogs, including other pets such as cats, rabbits, and birds, and consider demographic factors like the gender and age of pet parents, as well as their willingness to spend on their pets. The geographic scope should be expanded to include additional provinces across Thailand. Moreover, adopting a qualitative approach would provide deeper insights and richer details into pet parents' behaviors and preferences.

Author Contributions

Suttigeart Siripriwan: Conceptualization, methodology, project administration, data curation;
Sayamol Nongbunnak: Conceptualization, writing – original draft, writing – review & editing, supervision; **Simran Kayastha:** Writing – review & editing.

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