Exploring Thailand's Wellness Economy: Opportunities for Expansion and Major Challenges

Udomsak Seenprachawong[1]

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive analysis of Thailand's wellness industry, examining its value chain, competitive positioning, and potential for growth. By integrating in-depth interviews with 23 key informants and secondary data covering the period from 1999 to 2025, the study identifies Thailand's core strengths—including internationally accredited medical standards, unique cultural offerings, and competitive pricing—as well as opportunities driven by an aging population, rising health awareness, and supportive government policies. Key challenges, such as language barriers, safety concerns, workforce limitations, and inconsistent business reputations, are also highlighted, underscoring the need for strategic planning in a competitive global context. Thailand's initiatives in public–private collaboration, ASEAN regional integration, and innovation across medical services, health products, education, and traditional medicine demonstrate a strong commitment to becoming the region's leading wellness hub. Leveraging its natural and cultural assets, Thailand should aim to offer holistic wellness experiences while strengthen skills, safety, infrastructure, and innovation to attract international travelers and build a sustainable, globally competitive wellness industry.

Keywords: wellness economy, the value chain, ASEAN, medical tourism, wellness tourism, mixed-method

[1] Associate Professor, School of Development Economics, National Institute of Development Administration
Email: sudomsak@yahoo.com

Background and Significance of the Research Problem

The global shift toward preventive health and holistic well-being has significantly expanded the wellness economy, encompassing services such as medical tourism, spa and beauty therapy, traditional medicine, and health-oriented travel experiences. This expansion is driven by rising health consciousness, aging populations, and growing demand for integrative, lifestyle-based healthcare. Within this global context, Thailand has emerged as a prominent player in health and wellness tourism, supported by its rich cultural heritage, high-quality healthcare system, and diverse natural resources. Thailand’s wellness economy therefore holds substantial potential for economic growth and regional leadership. Realizing this potential requires coordinated stakeholder engagement, supportive policies, and strategic innovation. While most existing studies in Thailand focus on specific sectors, such as medical or wellness tourism (Aksornpairoj et al., 2020; Chusri & Lalitsasivimol, 2019; Kaewkitipong, 2018; Pattharapinyophong, 2019), comprehensive research on the country’s overall wellness economy remains limited. A holistic examination is needed to understand its structural dynamics, interconnections, and opportunities for sustainable development.

Research Objectives

This study aims to address two key objectives: (1) to describe the value chain of Thailand’s wellness economy, and (2) to assess the readiness of Thai entrepreneurs to advance the country’s role as ASEAN’s wellness hub. By examining both internal and external factors shaping the sector, the research seeks to provide strategic insights that can enhance Thailand’s competitiveness in the evolving global wellness landscape. The findings are intended to benefit both entrepreneurs and government agencies. Entrepreneurs will gain a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting the sector’s future growth, while government agencies will be better equipped for strategic planning, particularly regarding infrastructure development and human resource preparation for the wellness industry.

Scope of Research

This study utilized secondary data from government reports, ASEAN policy frameworks, and relevant academic literature covering the period from 2013 to 2025. This study classifies wellness-related economic activities according to the framework developed by the Global Wellness Institute, which categorizes the wellness economy into eleven distinct sectors (Global Wellness Institute, 2024). These sectors represent a diverse range of industries that contribute to health, well-being, and quality of life, both directly and indirectly. The categorization is aligned with the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC 2023) and the Thai Standard Industrial Classification (TSIC) codes where applicable, ensuring relevance and consistency in economic data interpretation. This study explores eleven key sectors of the wellness industry (see Table 1), each representing a distinct component of the broader wellness economy.

Table 1 Overview of Wellness Industry Sectors

Sector	Description
Personal Care and Beauty	Skincare, cosmetics, personal grooming, and aesthetic services.
Healthy Eating, Nutrition & Weight Loss	Health-oriented food and beverages, dietary supplements, and weight management services.
Physical Activity	Fitness centers, gyms, recreational sports, physical training, and outdoor activity providers.
Wellness Tourism	Travel services promoting well-being, including spa retreats, detox programs, and cultural wellness experiences.
Traditional & Complementary Medicine	Traditional Thai medicine, herbal remedies, acupuncture, and other alternative treatments.
Public Health & Personalized Medicine	Preventive healthcare, diagnostics, and customized medical treatments.
Wellness Real Estate	Residential and commercial properties with wellness-focused features (e.g., green spaces, clean air).
Mental Wellness	Counseling, mindfulness, art therapy, and emotional support services.
Spas	Massage parlors, holistic treatment centers, and beauty therapy services.
Workplace Wellness	Employee health programs, including screenings, stress management, and corporate fitness plans.
Thermal/Mineral Springs	Resorts and facilities offering hydrotherapy, mineral baths, and thermal wellness experiences.

Research Methodology

The wellness economy spans sectors such as medical tourism, traditional medicine, spa services, fitness, and health-related products. Defined by the Global Wellness Institute (2023) as a multi-sectoral market blending preventive and curative care, wellness emphasizes lifestyle, mental health, and holistic approaches. Research highlights the importance of public-private partnerships, policy frameworks, and innovation in building competitive wellness industries. Factors like service quality, cultural uniqueness, and regional cooperation—especially within ASEAN—further influence global positioning. Thailand's wellness tourism sector is a dynamic ecosystem integrating hospitality, traditional medicine, and modern healthcare (Smith & Puczkó, 2014). Leading resorts like Chiva-Som and Canyon Ranch serve as ecosystem orchestrators, coordinating providers and suppliers to deliver personalized experiences. In the personal care industry, similar ecosystems foster value through ethical sourcing, sustainability, and innovation, enhancing resilience and competitiveness.

This study investigates the supply side of the wellness economy using a mixed-methods approach. Qualitative data were obtained from 23 in-depth interviews conducted between April and June 2024 with entrepreneurs, healthcare professionals, product manufacturers, and policy experts. Key informants—including leading firms and relevant government agencies—were selected through purposive sampling (see Table 2). These insights were supplemented by documentary research drawing on government reports, ASEAN policy frameworks, and relevant academic literature covering data from 1999 to 2025.

The research followed two stages. Firstly, the study employs Moore's (1993) business ecosystem model to analyze the sectoral interconnections within the wellness economy. Moore's framework conceptualizes firms as components of a dynamic and interdependent network comprising diverse stakeholders—such as suppliers, competitors, customers, regulators, and value-adding partners. Within this system, these actors co-evolve through processes of collaboration, adaptation, and mutual value creation oriented toward shared long-term objectives. Secondly, a SWOT analysis was conducted to evaluate Thailand's readiness to position itself as a regional wellness hub, while the TOWS Matrix was applied to formulate strategic initiatives for advancing the country's wellness economy.

Table 2 Key Informants in the In-depth Interviews

Sector	Name of firm/organization	Location
Personal Care and Beauty	Srichan Saha Osot Co., Ltd.	Bangkok
	Na Ha Thai	Bangkok
	Phutawan Herb & Cosmetic Co., Ltd.	Samutprakarn
Healthy Eating, Nutrition & Weight Loss	Chao Phraya Abhaibhubejhr Hospital	Prachinburi
	Thai Food and Spa Business Association	Bangkok
	NatureGift Co., Ltd.	Nakorn
	RS LiveWell (RS Public Co., Ltd)	Pathom
		Bangkok
Physical Activity	Andaman & Thai Gulf Wellness Hotel Association	Phuket
Wellness Tourism	Banyan Tree Phuket	Phuket
	Amataya Wellness	Krabi
	Tourism Authority of Thailand	Ranong
	Thai Medical and Wellness Tourism Association	Bangkok
Traditional & Complementary Medicine	Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine	Nonthaburi
	Chao Phraya Abhaibhubejhr Hospital	Prachinburi
Public Health & Personalized Medicine	Department of health Service Support	Nonthaburi
	Samitivej Sukhumvit Hospital	Bangkok
	Rakxa Integrative Wellness	Samutprakarn
Wellness Real Estate	Origin Healthcare	Bangkok
	Wellness World	Ayutthaya
Mental Wellness	ChivaCare Medical & Physical Therapy Center	Chiangmai
Spas	Six Senses Samui	Suratthani
	Phothalai Wellness & Longevity	Bangkok
Workplace Wellness	Origin Healthcare	Bangkok
Thermal/Mineral Springs	San Kamphaeng Hot Springs	Chiangmai
	Raksawarin Hot Springs	Ranong

Results

Value Chain of Thailand's Wellness Economy

As illustrated in Figure 1, various wellness businesses are intricately linked within Thailand's wellness economy value chain. Base on Moore's framework, Thailand's wellness economy consists of three major sectoral groups: the wellness tourism sector, the medical tourism sector, and other related wellness sectors. Wellness tourists and medical tourists differ in the types of services they utilize. Wellness tourists typically engage with services related to personal care and beauty, health and nutrition, physical activity, spas, and hot springs. In contrast, medical tourists primarily seeking conventional medical treatments often also engage with additional services such as traditional Thai medicine and alternative therapies. To create value in the chain, hospitals may enhance recovery services to meet five-star accommodation standards or partner with hospitality providers to offer patients a more comfortable recovery environment outside clinical settings. Furthermore, medical tourists frequently utilize domestic wellness tourism services, including spas, health massages, and beauty treatments, thereby integrating a wide array of wellness offerings into their overall experience.

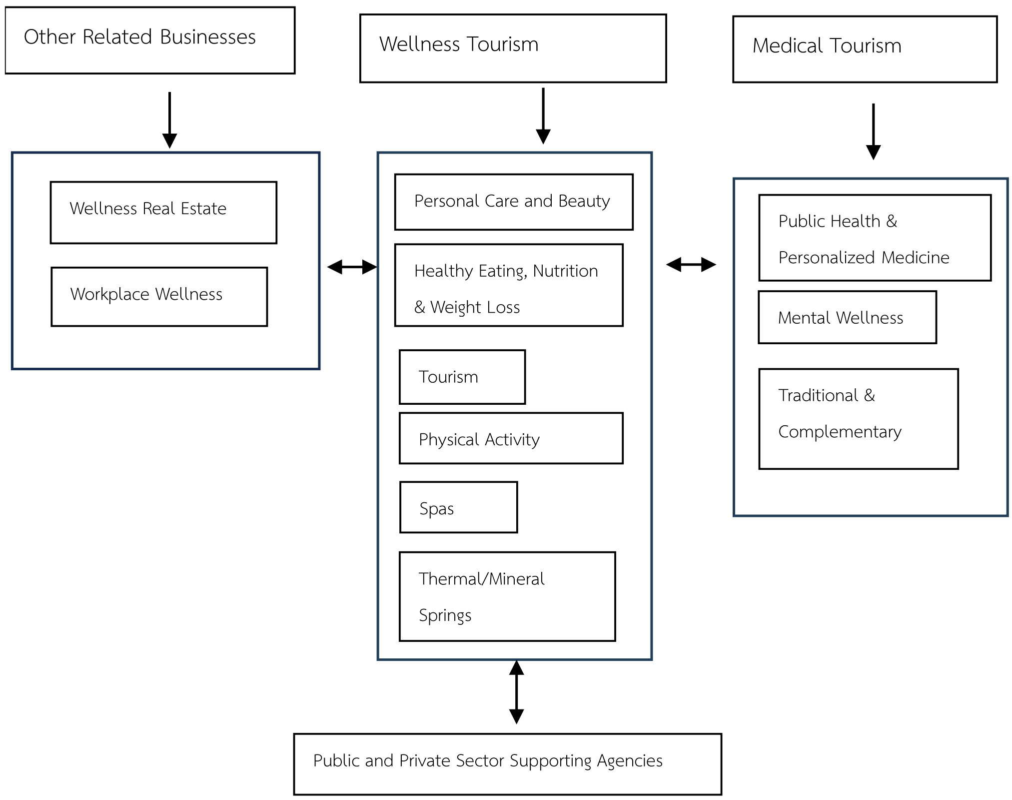

Figure 1 Interconnection of Wellness Businesses in the Value Chain
Source: Based on in-depth interviews with key informants

Thailand's wellness tourism is closely connected to the spa and health industry, which has experienced significant growth driven by urban lifestyle shifts toward balance and quality of life—including nutrition, exercise, and holistic health care (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2013). Popular wellness tourism products and services emphasize treatments and health promotion using local, organic, and natural ingredients. Wellness tourists tend to select destinations that offer specific health-focused products or experiences such as Thai traditional massage, oil massage, spa treatments, herbal steam baths or compresses, health foods and beverages, wellness souvenirs, yoga, meditation, spiritual practices, cycling, mountain climbing, and soaking in hot springs or mineral baths. Top wellness tourism destinations in Thailand include spa shops, hot springs, mineral baths, spa resorts, cruise ships, agro-tourism sites, natural and community-based health tourism venues, aromatherapy, light therapy, and more. Other wellness-related sectors, including wellness real estate and workplace wellness, primarily serve the domestic population. Key public and private agencies—such as the Ministry of Public Health, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, and the Thai Hotel and Spa Association—play supportive roles in facilitating and promoting these sectors.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT table (Table 3) was developed based on insights from key informants (detailed findings by sector are provided in the appendix) and supporting data from secondary sources. The study identifies several strengths contributing to Thailand’s position in the wellness economy. According to the Global Wellness Institute (2024), Thailand's wellness economy has experienced robust growth. In 2022, the top four segments by market value were healthy eating, nutrition & weight loss; wellness tourism; personal care, beauty & anti-aging; and traditional & complementary medicine. Notably, Thailand enjoys a strong global medical reputation, ranking eighth worldwide for cosmetic and surgical procedures. This reputation is supported by the country’s ability to provide high-quality medical care at significantly lower costs compared to many other nations (Table 4), making it an attractive destination for international wellness tourists. The country’s distinctive service culture—rooted in traditional Thai therapies and warm hospitality—enhances its wellness appeal, as does its rich variety of cultural attractions, natural landscapes, and world-renowned cuisine. A well-developed transportation network and internationally accredited healthcare facilities (with 62 JCI-accredited hospitals, the highest in ASEAN) show comparative figure in other ASEAN countries further support accessibility and service quality (Konkai, 2024).

Private sector innovation is evident in multilingual services, digital platforms, and expansion in key cities, while government initiatives—such as the Andaman Wellness Corridor and Board of Investment incentives—aim to position Thailand as a global health hub by 2026 (Ministry of Public Health, 2016). Educational institutions play a key role in supporting the ecosystem, with Prince of Songkla University spearheading the Andaman International Health Center—a flagship project aimed at transforming Phuket into a world-class health hub through education, research, and integrated wellness services (Hfocus, 2022; We are CP, 2022). Integrated models, like the Mövenpick BDMS Wellness Resort, exemplify the potential to merge medical and wellness tourism for greater value creation.

Table 3 SWOT Analysis for Thailand's Wellness Economy

Category	Key Points / Description	Supporting Data / Examples
Strengths	High-quality medical care at competitive costs; distinctive service culture; strong infrastructure; private sector innovation; government support; integrated wellness models.	8th worldwide in cosmetic & surgical procedures; 56 JCI-accredited hospitals (highest in ASEAN); Mövenpick BDMS Wellness Resort; Andaman Wellness Corridor; multilingual services and digital platforms
Weaknesses	Language barriers; safety concerns; underdeveloped wellness resources; fragmented industry leading to inconsistent service quality.	Limited English proficiency among staff; political unrest; under-invested hot springs; small-scale operators with inconsistent standards; illegal/inappropriate spa services
Opportunities	Rising health consciousness; preventive healthcare demand; strong tourism infrastructure; technological advancements; growth in medical and cosmetic tourism; ASEAN regional integration; improved accessibility.	20% of population aged 60+; NCDs caused 76.6% of deaths (2020); online booking platforms; bundled medical-wellness packages; AEC cooperation; expanded international flight routes
Threats	Global economic instability; regional competition; foreign investment and market liberalization; increasing global competition.	Malaysia and Singapore offer advanced medical technologies and long-term patient policies (Malaysia: 180-day medical visitor stays); ASEAN allows 100% foreign ownership in tourism businesses; more countries developing wellness destinations (UMSC, 2025).

Table 4 Cost of Medical Services (USD) by Country

Medical Procedure	USA	Colombia	India	Jordan	Mexico	South Korea	Thailand	Ukraine	Vietnam
Angioplasty	$28,200	$11,700	$5,500 – 6,200	NA	$5,000 – 12,000	NA	$10,938	$4,000	$8,510 – 12,290
Heart Bypass	$123,000	$11,200	$7,000	NA	$15,000 – 35,000	NA	$17,188	$12,000 – 22,000	NA
Hip Replacement	$40,364	$8,000	$7,000 – 14,000	$5,640 – 7,050	$13,500	$25,000	$7,813	$3,500 – 4,500	$6,280 – 9,860
Knee Replacement	$35,000	$8,000	$6,000 – 12,000	$4,230 – 5,640	$12,500	$20,000	$6,563 – 12,500	$3,500 – 4,500	$6,900 – 9,490
Breast Implants	$6,400	$5,000	$7,500	$2,120 – 2,540	$4,200	$5,000	$1,750	$3,650	$3,610 – 5,240
Face Lift	$11,000	$5,200	$7,200	NA	$6,200	$6,000	$2,813	$4,050	$2,320 – 3,220
Liposuction	$5,500	$4,500	$4,800	$2,540 – 3,530	$2,500	NA	$1,875	$270	$5,110 – 6,480
Cataract Surgery (per eye)	$3,500	$2,000	$1,400	$1,060 – 1,200	$2,500	$2,700	$1,800	$600 – 2,000	$1,000 – 1,260

Source: The Medical Tourism Association (2021)

Despite these strengths, several internal weaknesses persist. Language barriers remain a critical issue, as service personnel often lack sufficient English proficiency compared to competitors like Singapore and Malaysia (Jantawong, Sermsook, & Nakplad, 2023). Safety concerns related to political unrest and sporadic violent incidents can deter tourists (Thairat Online, 2016), while underdeveloped wellness resources such as hot springs suffer from limited investment and expertise. The prevalence of small-scale operators leads to inconsistent service quality and intense price competition, sometimes damaging Thailand's professional image—especially where illegal or inappropriate spa services are involved (Board, 2025).

On the opportunity front, rising health consciousness among both domestic and international travelers, particularly among aging populations, has increased demand for wellness tourism. In Thailand, over 20% of the population is aged 60 or older, aligning with the global trend of senior travelers seeking high-quality, health-focused experiences. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which accounted for 76.6% of all deaths in Thailand in 2020, have further fueled domestic interest in preventive healthcare (Ministry of Public Health Thailand, 2021; World Health Organization, 2021). Thailand's strong tourism infrastructure provides a natural foundation for expansion into wellness tourism. Technological advancements have made travel planning more accessible, while the growing popularity of cosmetic procedures has led to bundled medical-tourism packages. Regional integration under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) enhances cooperation and standardization in healthcare services, promoting greater cross-border mobility and competitiveness. Improved infrastructure, more international flight routes, and affordable booking platforms also boost inbound travel.

Nevertheless, external threats must be addressed. Global economic instability can reduce demand for elective medical travel. Regional competitors, such as Malaysia and Singapore, offer advanced medical technologies and English-proficient personnel, along with aggressive national strategies to attract high-end medical tourists. Malaysia’s policy to extend medical visitor stays up to 180 days enhances its appeal as a destination for long-term patients (Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council, n.d.; UMSC, 2025). Additionally, neighboring ASEAN countries now allow 100% foreign ownership in tourism businesses, increasing foreign investment and competition (ASEAN Briefing, 2025; IIPRD, 2024; ASEAN, 1999). As more countries recognize the economic potential of health and wellness tourism, the global landscape is becoming increasingly competitive.

TOWS Matrix

A TOWS matrix has been created to formulate Thailand’s wellness economy development strategies, as shown in Table 5. Thailand can leverage its strong medical reputation and integrated wellness models to attract senior and wellness-conscious tourists, while expanding bundled medical-wellness packages through private sector innovation and digital platforms. By utilizing government initiatives and infrastructure, the country can further enhance ASEAN regional integration and improve inbound travel accessibility. At the same time, highlighting high-quality care, accredited hospitals, and multilingual services helps Thailand remain competitive against regional rivals, while promoting safety, professional standards, and government-backed wellness corridors to mitigate concerns over political unrest or fragmented service delivery. To capitalize on emerging opportunities despite current weaknesses, Thailand should invest in language training and standardized service protocols for international tourists, develop underutilized wellness resources such as hot springs integrated with tourism infrastructure, and strengthen digital health and telemedicine solutions to meet the rising demand for preventive healthcare. Finally, to minimize vulnerabilities and avoid potential threats, consolidating small-scale operators, enforcing service standards, implementing risk management strategies for safety and political stability, and introducing certification and regulations for wellness services will improve consistency, professionalism, and consumer confidence in Thailand’s wellness tourism sector.

Table 5 TOWS Matrix for Thailand's Wellness Economy

SO Strategies	ST Strategies
Use strengths to exploit opportunities	Use strengths to mitigate threats
• Leverage Thailand's strong medical reputation and integrated wellness models to attract senior and wellness-conscious tourists. • Expand bundled medical-wellness packages through private sector innovation and digital platforms. • Utilize government initiatives and infrastructure to enhance ASEAN regional integration and inbound travel accessibility.	• Highlight high-quality care, accredited hospitals, and multilingual services to stay competitive against regional rivals. • Promote safety, professional standards, and government-backed wellness corridors to counter political unrest or fragmented service concerns.
WO Strategies	**WT Strategies**
Address weaknesses to exploit opportunities	Minimize weaknesses to avoid threats
• Invest in language training and standardized service protocols for international tourists. • Develop underutilized wellness resources (e.g., hot springs) integrated with tourism infrastructure. • Strengthen digital health and telemedicine solutions to meet rising preventive healthcare demand.	• Consolidate small-scale operators and enforce service standards to improve consistency and professionalism. • Implement risk management strategies for safety and political instability. • Introduce certification and regulations for wellness services to prevent illegal or inappropriate practices.

Discussion

This study examines the value chain of Thailand's wellness economy and assesses the capacity of Thai entrepreneurs to strengthen the country's position as a leading wellness hub in the ASEAN region. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates in-depth interviews with key industry stakeholders and analysis of secondary data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the sector's structure and dynamics. A SWOT analysis was conducted to identify Thailand's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats influencing the wellness economy. Building upon these insights, a TOWS matrix was developed to formulate strategic directions that leverage national advantages while addressing existing constraints.

Thailand holds a competitive position in the global wellness economy, driven by growth in healthy eating, wellness tourism, personal care, and traditional medicine (Global Wellness Institute, 2024). Its international medical reputation-ranked eighth worldwide for cosmetic and surgical procedures-is reinforced by affordable, high-quality care and 62 JCI-accredited hospitals, the highest in ASEAN. Traditional Thai therapies, warm hospitality, diverse natural landscapes, and renowned cuisine further strengthen the country's distinctive wellness identity. Government initiatives, such as the Andaman Wellness Corridor and Board of Investment incentives, along with private sector innovations and academic engagement from institutions like Prince of Songkla University, support sectoral expansion. Integrated models, such as the Mövenpick BDMS Wellness Resort, illustrate the potential for synergy between medical and wellness tourism. Nonetheless, several internal challenges remain. Limited English proficiency, safety concerns, underdeveloped wellness resources, and fragmented small-scale operations constrain competitiveness. Yet, rising health awareness, an aging population, and the high prevalence of non-communicable diseases present significant growth opportunities, supported by Thailand's strong tourism infrastructure and ASEAN regional cooperation. However, intensifying competition from regional peers such as Malaysia and Singapore, coupled with global economic uncertainty, underscores the need for continuous innovation and strategic investment to maintain Thailand's leadership in the wellness sector.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, strategic recommendations have been developed to position Thailand as ASEAN's leading wellness hub, emphasizing safety, innovation, and global competitiveness. The strategy leverages natural and cultural assets, offers holistic wellness experiences, and strengthens digital marketing and international partnerships. Key initiatives focus on workforce skill development, standardized protocols, enhanced infrastructure, and investment in underutilized wellness resources. Robust safety, governance, and risk management frameworks ensure professional and secure services, while innovation and public-private collaboration are promoted through research, technology adoption, and investment incentives. Together, these measures enhance global competitiveness, attract international wellness travelers, and foster a professional, sustainable, and innovative wellness industry.

Due to limitations in time and budget, the study was constrained in its capacity to conduct many in-depth interviews, which may have restricted the breadth of qualitative insights obtained. Additionally, the study lacked comparative data from other ASEAN countries, limiting the ability to benchmark Thailand's wellness industry against regional peers. To build upon these findings, future research could incorporate an input-output table analysis to systematically examine the forward and backward linkages among the 11 sectors within the wellness industry. Such an approach would provide a more comprehensive understanding of inter-sectoral dependencies, economic contributions, and potential growth opportunities, thereby enabling policymakers and industry stakeholders to design more targeted strategies for developing Thailand's wellness economy in a regional context.

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Appendix: Key Findings from In-depth Interviews by Sector

Sector	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Personal Care and Beauty	• Innovative and sustainable product development. • Collaboration with anti-aging and dermatological experts.	• Complex legal and regulatory frameworks. • Dependence on imported raw materials: Thailand lacks domestic cosmetic base ingredients, leading to full import reliance. • Weak industry collaboration: no consortium model like Korea's *K-Beauty* network. • Absence of herbal clusters: underdeveloped raw material production and supply chain systems.	• Expanding wellness markets in Asia and the Middle East. • Strong potential of Thai brands: Thai kindness and Thai traditional medicine are highly regarded in ASEAN. • Rapid growth in the beauty and skincare market: rising domestic and regional demand for personal care and skincare products.	• Regulatory and licensing constraints: obtaining FDA approval for personal care and functional food products remains a major barrier. • Complex international market access: licensing and efficacy validation for herbal ingredients vary by country, increasing time and costs. • Challenges in global branding: Thai herbal products are often perceived as *OTOP* or local goods, not international-grade cosmetics.
Healthy Eating, Nutrition & Weight Loss	• Rich Thai wisdom in herbal medicine and traditional healing: unique practices such as Thai massage, body element theory (*Thaat Chao Ruean*), and holistic rehabilitation.	• Limited research and development (R&D) capacity: knowledge level of Thai herbal products rated only 4/10. • High dependence on imported raw materials, despite Thailand ranking 8th globally in beauty product exports. • Farmers lack knowledge in herbal cultivation and processing. • Weak clustering among herbal producers: lack of collective mechanisms to ensure quality and reduce costs.	• Growing domestic and international markets for health and herbal products. • Strong government support for research through agencies such as MHESI, ARDA, TCELS, NRCT, and the Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine. • Development of PMUs (Program Management Units) for R&D in herbal-based products covering food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and health services. • Expanding opportunities in health insurance markets: certain diseases (e.g., psoriasis) are now recognized for herbal treatment coverage.	• Legal and regulatory restrictions at both domestic and international levels. • Lack of standardized quality control and international certification for Thai herbal and health food products.

Sector	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Physical Activity	• High number of international tourists utilizing wellness and fitness services. • Existence of a pilot project — *Andaman Wellness Corridor (AWC)* — supported by the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) and the Department of Health Service Support.	• Lack of clarity and integration in strategic direction (no comprehensive *Strategic Roadmap*). • Shortage of skilled personnel and expertise in wellness city management and wellness marketing. • Limited public–private collaboration — some agencies act more as regulators than facilitators.	• Phuket is an ideal destination for *Wellness & Long Stay* tourism due to its geography (beaches, sea) and accessibility for international visitors. • Opportunities to attract *Digital Nomads* and foreign investors through real estate and health benefit incentives.	• Government policy shifts from *Wellness Economy* to *Soft Power* may delay or reduce the continuity of AWC initiatives. • Lack of clear state measures and regulations may discourage or slow private investment. • Fragmented development of the *Wellness Business Ecosystem*-unclear structure and collaboration mechanisms.
Wellness Tourism	• Strong hospitality and service culture (*Hospitality and Soft Power*). • Distinctive Thai wellness practices such as *Thai massage* and *Muay Thai* create differentiation in the market.	• Incomplete integration within the wellness ecosystem — gaps remain in wellness knowledge and standardized practices.	• Expanding *Medical & Wellness Tourism* market with potential to attract more international tourists through comprehensive service offerings. • Collaboration with universities and government agencies to develop training programs and expand wellness expertise.	• Regulatory and standardization challenges — need stronger control over fraudulent wellness services and more consistent service quality standards.
Traditional & Complementary Medicine	• Integration with modern medicine, such as *gene therapy* and the combination of traditional Thai medicine with contemporary practices. • Diversity and uniqueness of Thai medicinal herbs- e.g., *Andrographis paniculata*, *turmeric*, and *Thai bird's nest* - known for high quality and multiple applications (pharmaceuticals, cosmetics). • Strong foundation of traditional Thai medical knowledge and institutional support.	• Lack of systematic and continuous knowledge collection. • Limited human resources and budget constraints.	• Opportunities for exporting herbal and cosmetic products to international markets.	• Safety and international standardization limitations. • Increasing competition from countries such as Korea, Japan, and Indonesia, which possess advanced research centers for herbal and health food products.

Sector	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Public Health & Personalized Medicine	• Utilization of in-depth patient data — including personal history, genetic/genomic information, and lifestyle — to design sustainable health promotion programs. • High-quality medical personnel, serving as a key strength in attracting medical tourists.	• Limited English and foreign language proficiency among Thai staff, potentially affecting service quality for international clients. • Heavy reliance on government policies may cause delays in business operations.	• Advancement in personalized health technologies: integration of genomic data and lifestyle analytics to develop individualized wellness programs.	• High competition in ASEAN, as other countries have developed advanced medical wellness programs. • Limited understanding of wellness business models within the public sector, leading to inadequate legal and investment incentives.
Wellness Real Estate	• Thailand's strong core competencies in healthcare — well-known for executive health check-ups, cancer screening, and age-specific health examinations.	• Wellness businesses remain mostly *bottom-up* with limited strategic direction from the government. • Lack of a fully integrated value chain for wellness real estate and related services.	• Growth in *telemedicine* and *health tech* sectors expanding access to new customer segments. • Rising market demand from the elderly population and health-conscious consumers.	• Absence of coherent national policies and strategic initiatives, leading to an incomplete wellness ecosystem. • Real estate ownership regulations and visa duration policies for foreign tourists affect demand for health and wellness tourism.
Mental Wellness	• Strong service capacity in rehabilitation, prevention, physiotherapy, and production/distribution of health-related products, both domestic and imported.	• Thai consumers tend to prioritize *physical wellness* over *mental wellness*. • Shortage of mental health professionals — only 20–25 new psychiatrists graduate annually, insufficient to meet demand. • Lack of a centralized government body to regulate and promote mental wellness systematically. • Fragmented wellness businesses — mostly individual operators without collaboration or ecosystem building.	• Rising awareness and demand for *mental wellness* and *holistic health* programs. • Potential for collaboration between universities and organizations to expand mental wellness training and service programs.	• Fragmented market growth without strategic direction or integrated ecosystem development, which may hinder scalability and competitiveness.

Sector	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Spas	• High skill level in Thai massage: hotel spas are highly professional.	• Shortage of qualified personnel: spa managers need a bachelor's degree, and staff training takes several months. • Limited English/foreign language skills: most Thai staff have language limitations, which may affect service for international customers.	• Strong international demand for wellness & spa in Thailand, due to Thai expertise in massage and service culture that impresses foreign visitors.	• High dependency on international tourists. • Increasing competition in the high-end spa market.
Workplace Wellness	• Availability of skilled service providers.	• Domestic demand is still low.	• Growing trend in workplace wellness and stress-reduction programs for employees and students.	• Lack of clustering and no government support yet.
Thermal/Mineral Springs	• Capacity to accommodate many tourists. • Government support and marketing efforts. • Local community resources and herbs: traditional healers are skilled in herbal knowledge.	• Lack of standardized wellness personnel: most staff are local and lack wellness service skills. • Limited medical research.	• Linkage with health-focused tourism activities: golf courses, hiking, etc.	• Tourist safety concerns: fainting in hot springs, skipping breakfast, insufficient rest. • Legal and registration constraints for herbs: traditional healers have good recipes but registration is legally challenging.