Music–Based Relaxation in Community Wellness Tourism: Effects on Elderly Tourists' Experience and Well–Being in Thailand

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Abstract

This study aimed to 1) develop music relaxation activities for community–based wellness tourism and 2) evaluate their impact on elderly tourists' experiences and well–being. A mixed–methods approach was employed: 1) music activity development utilized focus group discussions with 16 stakeholders from wellness tourism communities in Bang Luang Market Community and Ban Hua Ao Community, Nakhon Pathom Province. Participants were selected through non–probability purposive sampling based on expertise in wellness tourism or music therapy. Data analysis employed content analysis, and 2) activity evaluation was conducted with 400 elderly tourists. The research instrument comprised a questionnaire assessing tourists' experiential outcomes and well–being post–participation in community–based wellness tourism activities. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations.

Findings revealed that: 1) The developed music relaxation activity, titled "Retreat," applied music psychology principles with a tempo of 76 BPM corresponding to normal heart rate, employed consonant sounds avoiding tension, and featured an ABA' structure in G major with a 4/4 time signature. A "4 Pitched Percussion" instrument was created from brass with four pitch levels (G–D and G–D separated by one octave), designed using only common tones harmonizing with all chords, enabling participation without musical knowledge. 2) Tourists reported high overall satisfaction with the music and relaxation activities, with the mental dimension rated most positively, followed by environmental, physical, and spiritual aspects. Across well–being outcomes, activities had a strong impact on holistic wellness, particularly enhancing hedonic well–being, alongside notable improvements in eudaimonic, physical, and social well–being.

The research contributed the CALMS model—comprising Common Tone Stability, Appropriate Tempo, Low Dissonance Design, Merging Community Wisdom, and Shared Participation—as a novel theoretical framework for music-based wellness tourism.

Keywords: Music-Based Relaxation; Community Wellness Tourism; Elderly Tourists' Experience; Well-Being

Introduction

Wellness tourism has gained increasing global attention as travelers seek experiences that promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being. This form of tourism extends beyond leisure, emphasizing personal renewal, health enhancement, and lifestyle transformation through travel. In recent years, it has evolved into a significant component of the global tourism economy, with destinations worldwide developing specialized wellness programs that integrate natural resources, health services, and cultural practices. Thailand possesses strong comparative advantages in this field due to its rich cultural heritage, indigenous healing wisdom, and long-standing reputation as a wellness destination. However, most existing wellness activities—such as massage, herbal therapy, and yoga—primarily emphasize the physical dimension, while emotional and psychological well-being remain less addressed (Jaiwilai et al., 2023). As wellness consumers increasingly seek holistic and meaningful experiences, there is a growing need to incorporate creative and emotional dimensions into wellness tourism design.

Among various holistic approaches, music therapy has emerged as a scientifically validated method that supports health and well-being across physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual domains (Hanser, 2019). Empirical studies indicate that music can reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and induce relaxation while enhancing emotional regulation and cognitive performance (Yu et al., 2018). The World Health Organization (WHO) has also recognized the arts and music as integral components of public health and social cohesion (Fancourt & Finn, 2020). Neuropsychological research further explains that music stimulates dopamine and endorphin release, which are associated with pleasure, motivation, and stress reduction (Djohan et al., 2022). Active and passive forms of music participation—such as listening, performing, or composing—have been shown to improve mood, enhance social connection, and foster resilience, particularly among older adults (Daykin et al., 2018; Lapena et al., 2022).

Nakhon Pathom Province, located near Bangkok, provides a fertile context for exploring this integration. The province is recognized for its strong community structures, Buddhist cultural heritage, and vibrant creative industries, making it suitable for the development of music–based wellness experiences. However, few initiatives have effectively combined local wisdom with contemporary creative practices. Developing music–based relaxation activities tailored to local contexts can therefore add emotional and experiential value to wellness tourism, promote community engagement, and contribute to sustainable regional development.

This study therefore aims to develop and examine music–based relaxation activities that reflect Nakhon Pathom's local identity while enhancing tourist satisfaction, emotional rejuvenation, and social connection. Theoretically, the research contributes to the growing body of literature linking wellness tourism and creative practices by introducing music therapy as a holistic and culturally grounded approach. Practically, it provides a replicable model for community–based wellness development that integrates traditional culture with innovative musical design, offering new pathways toward sustainable tourism experiences in Thailand and beyond.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research was;

1. to create music relaxation activities for community – based wellness tourism in Thai communities;

2. to assess tourists' experiences and well–being resulting from participation in music relaxation activities in Thailand.

Literature Review

Wellness Tourism Activity: Music for Relaxation Activities

Music for Relaxation in wellness tourism emphasizes music therapy as a central element for improving mental health and emotional well–being, aligning with wellness tourism's pursuit of balanced living across physical, mental, and emotional dimensions (Smith & Kelly, 2006). The Compositional Elements of Relaxation (CER) comprises 16 research–supported musical attributes that contribute to relaxation experiences, including accentuation, articulation, dynamics, familiarity, melodic shape, meter, performance expertise, recording quality, repetition, register, rubato, tempo, texture, timbre, tonality, and transition (Conrad et al., 2023). When properly controlled, these factors create peace and comfort for audiences.

Music Therapy (MT) uses music to meet individual needs for calming and well-being enhancement, gaining recognition for stress alleviation and emotional state improvement (Scheve, 2004). MT can be integrated with retreat and spa services, providing relaxation and therapeutic benefits for tourists seeking rejuvenation (Sylchuk & Kyrpichenkova, 2023). This systematic treatment process utilizes music-related activities such as singing, playing instruments, and listening to develop mental capacity, physical health, emotional regulation, and intellectual enhancement through behavioral modifications (Suntornvijitr, 2018; Sirirutraykha, 2006). The two primary MT types are listening and playing, most frequently used in Europe (Atiwannapat, et al., 2016). Music therapy effects include psychological equilibrium maintenance, tension and stress relief, concentration improvement, and psychiatric treatment assistance through emotional identification and positive emotion cultivation (Sirirutraykha, 2006). Recent trends show growing interest in music-related relaxation activities within health enhancement contexts (Li et al., 2024), with wellness tourism developing new service innovations that combine music as a therapeutic tool with traditional wellness activities (Sylchuk & Kyrpichenkova, 2023).

Tourism Experience

Tourism experience is a multifaceted concept crucial for destination attractiveness and competitive advantage, shaped by personal interactions, cultural elements, and environmental factors (Ortiz et al., 2024). There are four main components (Kongtaveesawas et al., 2022) as follows: 1) Physical experience involves sensory encounters (vision, taste, smell, hearing), service delivery, amenities, cleanliness, and safety; 2) Mental experience encompasses transformative encounters, mental recharging, engagement, and learning; 3) Spiritual experience refers to mind/spirit satisfaction through meaningful experiences, mindfulness, concentration, understanding, and memory creation; 4) Context experience includes stakeholder contacts, environmental conditions, tourist density, and activity types.

Moreover, Kim and Lee (2022) stated that tourism experiences encompass sensory, social, cultural, and emotional dimensions that collectively shape tourist perceptions and memories. Sensory components include visual elements, gustatory experiences, auditory dimensions, and olfactory/tactile elements creating rich, embodied experiences. Social and cultural interactions foster memorable encounters through authentic participation in local traditions, providing deeper cultural understanding. Emotional and cognitive dimensions added psychological depth, with strong emotions creating lasting memories and higher satisfaction, potentially influencing personal and cultural identity formation. However, negative factors like overcrowding, cultural

misunderstandings, or unmet expectations can detract from experiences, requiring careful tourism management including visitor flow control, cultural sensitivity training, and expectation management to create authentic, accessible, memorable, and sustainable experiences.

Tourist Well-being

Tourist well-being is a multidimensional construct comprising financial, physical, social, eudaimonic, and hedonic dimensions (Lui & Fernando, 2018). Financial well-being reflects stability and satisfaction in managing personal resources; physical well-being relates to health maintenance and body satisfaction; and social well-being emphasizes trust, openness, and participation in communal activities. Eudaimonic well-being involves self-actualization, personal growth, and a sense of purpose (Haybron, 2016), whereas hedonic well-being focuses on pleasure, happiness, and life satisfaction. High well-being levels are associated with greater tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty, and revisit intentions.

Integrating wellness tourism and music therapy theories provides the conceptual foundation for this study. Wellness tourism offers a proactive, holistic health approach, while music functions as a therapeutic and experiential tool aligning with preventive and transformative travel goals. Guided by the Compositional Elements of Relaxation (CER) framework (Conrad et al., 2023), which defines sixteen relaxation-inducing musical attributes, this research examines how structured music activities enhance tourists' sensory engagement, mindfulness, and emotional balance. The integration of CER with well-being and experience theories (Kongtaveesawas et al., 2022; Lui & Fernando, 2018) establishes a theoretical foundation for evaluating the psychological and emotional effects of music-based relaxation within wellness tourism settings.

Conceptual Framework

This study was grounded in an integrated wellness tourism and music therapy framework, combining community-based experiential learning with principles of compositional music design for relaxation. The framework connects three core dimensions: (1) Development of Music Relaxation Activities, (2) Tourist Experience, and (3) Tourist Well-being. This model integrates concepts from music therapy theory (Ghetti, 2016), tourist experience frameworks (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), and well-being theory (Dodge et al., 2012), illustrating the transformation of sensory-aesthetic engagement into holistic wellness benefits within community-based tourism.

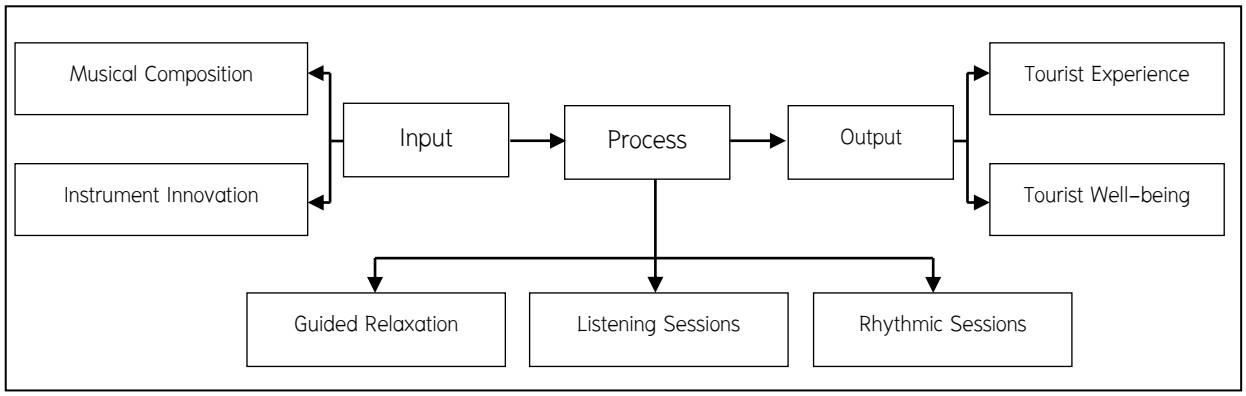

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

The research design for exploring wellness tourism music relaxation activities consists of two phases:

Phase 1.1: Development of Musical Relaxation Activities This phase utilized focus group discussions with stakeholders from wellness tourism communities in Bang Luang Market Community and Ban Hua Ao Community, Nakhon Pathom Province. Participants were selected through non-probability purposive sampling based on expertise and experience in wellness tourism or music therapy. Two focus groups were conducted: **Session 1** included 8 community leaders and residents from both communities, while **Session 2** comprised 4 tourism academics and 4 music academics, totaling 16 participants. Group sizes of 7–8 participants were maintained to ensure manageability while preventing dominant individual influence

Research tool included focus group discussion guidelines that underwent content validity assessment by three expert validators, whereby all items achieved an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) exceeding 0.67, moderators, note takers, and general assistants. Data analysis employed content analysis involving data selection scope formulation, main theme identification, coding system design, data grouping, meaning analysis, and conclusion drawing.

Phase 1.2: Evaluation of Wellness Music Tourism Activities This phase involved 400 elderly tourists who had previously visited local communities in Nakhon Pathom Province. The sample size was determined using Cochran's (1977) sampling formula. Participants listened to music therapy and tested researcher-designed musical instruments for 4 minutes in groups of

maximum 20 participants, then completed assessment forms evaluating their experience and well–being.

The research instrument was a questionnaire measuring tourist experience and well–being after participating in community–based wellness tourism activities, validated by three professionals (requiring average scores >0.5) and pilot–tested with 30 elderly tourists (achieving reliability coefficients >0.70). Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics including mean, and standard deviation, with 5–point Likert scale interpretations: 4.50–5.00 (very high), 3.50–4.49 (high), 2.50–3.49 (moderate), 1.50–2.49 (low), and 0.00–1.49 (very low) wellness levels (Boonchom, 2002).

Research Results

Objective 1. The development of music relaxation activities

The development of wellness –oriented music activities was divided into two components: (1) the development of musical compositions for activities, and (2) the development of musical instruments for activity implementation.

1.1 Development of Musical Compositions for Relaxation

The instrument selection process for musical composition comprised three key factors: 1) Selection of instruments producing natural, non–synthesized sounds, including acoustic guitar, piano, voice, and double bass. Instruments generating natural sounds exert positive effects on humans by fostering a sense of connection with nature and promoting relaxation. 2) Selection of instruments encompassing the complete frequency spectrum (high, medium, and low ranges), thereby demonstrating musical completeness. The instrumentation comprised: (1) Acoustic Guitar, composed to perform in the high–to–medium frequency range, functioning to establish harmonic foundations, melodic lines, and rhythmic patterns; (2) Piano, composed to perform in the medium frequency range, serving to harmonize with other instrumental groups and achieve cohesive integration; (3) Voice, composed to perform in the medium frequency range, representing the instrument most naturally aligned with human nature and most effectively conveying emotions in an accessible manner; and (4) Double Bass, composed to perform in the low frequency range, establishing foundational support and stability for the overall sonic structure. The selection of instruments covering the complete high, medium, and low frequency spectrum creates musical balance and emotional completeness. 3) Selection of diverse instruments to create instrumental

tone color within the composition. The diversity of instrumental timbres enhances emotional dimensionality and facilitates positive emotional restoration.

Composition of "Retreat"

The musical composition "Retreat" was developed to create an atmosphere conducive to listener relaxation during participation in "music for relaxation" activities. The composition was inspired by the concept of retreat—traveling, seeking tranquility, mental respite, or engaging in seclusion for meditation and spiritual development. The composition can be utilized for relaxation listening alone, or listeners may simultaneously play instruments while engaging with the piece. The instruments employed are newly developed percussion instruments specifically designed for performance with this composition. For the "Retreat" composition, exclusively acoustic instruments were selected to generate the most natural tone quality possible. The instruments employed to create instrumental tone color in the composition comprised:

1) Acoustic Guitar (2 instruments): Composed to perform in the high–to–medium frequency range, functioning to establish harmonic foundations, melodic lines, and rhythmic patterns.

2) Piano: Composed to perform in the medium frequency range, serving to harmonize with other instrumental groups and achieve cohesive integration.

3) Voice: Composed to perform in the medium frequency range, representing the instrument most naturally aligned with human nature and most effectively conveying emotions in an accessible manner.

4) Double Bass: Composed to perform in the low frequency range, establishing foundational support and stability for the overall sonic structure.

Additionally, the newly developed percussion instrument "4 Pitched Percussion" may be incorporated into the performance to enhance relaxation for activity participants. This instrument comprises three components: (1) mallets, (2) wooden rails, and (3) four metal bars (as illustrated in Figure 2.

Table 1 Musical Instruments Used for the Song "Retreat"

Sequence	Musical Instrument	Quantity (Units)	Function
1	acoustic guitar	2	Primary tone color creation
2	piano	1	Harmonic accompaniment
3	voice	1	Melodic enhancement
4	double bass	1	Low-range support
5	4 pitched percussion	1	Audience participation

Figure 2 The 4 Pitched Percussion Instrument

The composition "Retreat" employs an **ABA' ternary form structure** (Table 2) with a moderate **Andante tempo**. This tempo designation was deliberately selected to facilitate listener relaxation, as it corresponds to the natural pace of ambulatory movement and resting heart rate. The composition utilizes a **4/4 meter** (common time), enabling intuitive rhythmic participation through clapping or beat-keeping. Composed in the **key of G major**, this tonal selection optimizes the technical execution of acoustic guitars—the primary instruments employed for melodic and harmonic content. The G major key facilitates performance accessibility while permitting full utilization of open string positions across all six strings (E, A, D, G, B, E), thereby maximizing tonal quality and acoustic resonance. The total duration of the composition is approximately 2 minutes and 30 seconds.

Table 2 Structural Framework of the Composition "Retreat"

Structure	Thematic Material	Measures	Rehearsal Marks
Section A	Principal Theme A	1–16	A–B
Section B	Contrasting Theme B	17–24	C
Section A'	Modified Theme/ Concluding Theme	25–43	D–E

In composing melodies designed to induce relaxation, the composer systematically employed consonant intervallic relationships, encompassing harmonic intervals such as the major sixth (M6) and perfect octave (P8), alongside melodic intervals including the minor third (m3) and minor sixth (m6).

Rhythmically, the melodic material features sustained, uncomplicated note values—specifically whole notes, half notes, and dotted half notes—to facilitate a relaxed listening experience.

The harmonic framework employs chord progressions characterized by stepwise bass motion (ascending or descending root movement) in conjunction with sustained common tones in the uppermost voice across harmonic changes. This compositional technique generates an atmospheric quality conducive to relaxation, establishing a sense of meditative stillness while enabling the musical narrative to guide listeners through the sonic environment without necessitating active participation. Representative examples include:

The progression from G to G/F♯, wherein the bass voice descends stepwise (G⟶F♯) while the soprano voice retains B as a common tone across both harmonies.

The progression from F6/9 to Cadd9, wherein the bass voice ascends (F⟶C) while the soprano voice retains D as a common tone linking both chords.

Finally, the development of music relaxation activities focused on song composition and instrument creation as **song composition** "*Retreat*" included acoustic guitars, piano, voice, double bass, and a four–pitched percussion instrument, with technical specifications summarized below:

Table 3 Song Composition

Feature	Description
Musical Form	ABA' (A: bars 1–16; B: 17–24; A': 25–43)
Tempo	76 BPM (Andante)
Meter	4/4 (common time)
Key	G Major
Duration	~2.30 minutes
Melodic/Harmonic Principles	Consonant intervals (M6, P8, m3, m6), simple rhythmic patterns, slow harmonic shifts

1.2 The development of musical instruments

The development of the "Four-Pitched Percussion" instrument was inspired by the ranad thum lek—a traditional Thai metallophone—and adapted into a newly designed instrument for use in relaxation-focused music activities. The instrument comprises three main components: 1) Mallets: The mallet handles are made of bamboo, chosen for its natural flexibility and comfortable grip, allowing for ease of performance. The mallet heads are covered with soft fabric to produce a gentle and soothing tone. 2) Wooden Resonant Frame: Constructed from teak (Tectona grandis) or Pterocarpus macrocarpus (Burmese rosewood), selected for their durability, structural integrity, and local availability in Thailand. These materials provide stability and natural resonance that enhance the instrument's acoustic quality. 3) Four Metal Bars: Fabricated from brass alloy through a casting process utilizing the following compositional ratio: 69% copper, 29% zinc, and 2% tin. Following casting, the bars undergo precision turning to achieve Western musical pitch standards. This material selection was informed by the acoustic properties of traditional brass bells and kangsadan (Thai temple bells), whose resonant tones evoke calmness and tranquility in listeners—sounds characteristic of temples and cultural sites. This conceptual framework guided the development of four brass bars producing distinct pitches for the 4 Pitched Percussion instrument.

Building on this concept, four brass bars were developed to produce four distinct pitch levels, forming the Four-Pitched Percussion instrument. The bars correspond to the following notes: Bar 1: G, Bar 2: D, Bar 3: G (one octave higher than the first G), Bar 4: D (one octave higher than the first D) (as illustrated in Figure 3).

The selection of only two pitch classes—G and D—was intentional. These two tones serve as common harmonic tones that blend naturally with all chords throughout the composition without producing dissonance. In the key of G major, the note G functions as the tonic, representing the tonal center and most stable sound, while D serves as the dominant, the second most important tone in the scale. Together, they form a balanced harmonic framework suitable for meditative and relaxation-oriented music.

This design thus ensures that the Four-Pitched Percussion can be played harmoniously across all sections of the composition, reinforcing both the tonal unity and the therapeutic ambiance of the "Retreat" music activity.

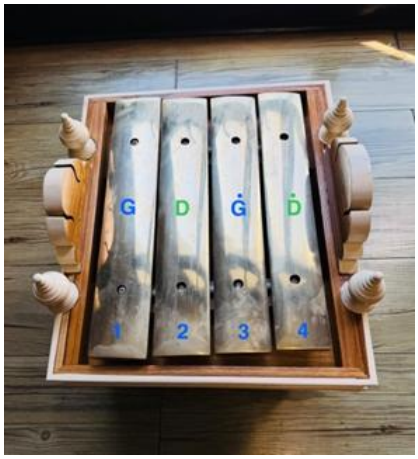

Figure 3 4 The sequence of metal bars and note order of the 4 pitched percussion instruments

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that a new four–pitched percussion instrument was designed to complement the composition. Its characteristics are summarized in Table 4

Table 4 the pitch levels of the metal bars

Bar	Note	Characteristics
1	G	Tonic of the main key
2	D	Dominant
3	G	One octave higher than the first G note (from Bar 1)
4	D	One octave higher than the first D note (from Bar 2)

Moreover, Musical Theory Principles Only G and D notes were used to harmonize with all chords, prevent dissonance, and emphasize the tonic and dominant notes of G Major, ensuring consonance throughout the composition.

1.3 Conducting music relaxation activities consistก of the following steps:

1. playing duration

1) The instrument can be played or performed along with the composition from beginning to end for a total duration of 2.30 minutes, as the musical composition is 2.30 minutes in length.

2) Playing may involve pause or stop to listen to song during the performance at the discretion of players. For instance, when the participants are interested in a song, they do not have to start playing with an instrument at the beginning of that song and could follow it first and embark on the music performance when comfortable or could pause any time in between to hear out for the balance part of the song.

2. Performance Guidelines for Note Selection and Rhythmic Execution

Prior to performing with the Four-Pitched Percussion instrument, participants are first required to identify the downbeat of the composition. This process involves listening attentively to the music and counting the beats in a steady sequence—"one, two, three, four"—or alternatively, clapping along in synchrony with the rhythmic pulse. Establishing a clear sense of the downbeat ensures rhythmic cohesion between the participants' performance and the musical structure.

Once the downbeat has been recognized, participants may proceed to create their own rhythmic patterns to accompany the composition. These self-generated rhythmic patterns should correspond to the tempo of the musical piece. Participants are encouraged to modify, simplify, or elaborate their rhythmic expressions according to their individual preferences, comfort levels, and the overall suitability to the musical context.

In terms of note selection, participants are not required to adhere to any fixed sequence or to be concerned about tonal compatibility, as the metal bars of the Four-Pitched Percussion instrument have been pre-tuned to produce harmonically consonant pitches throughout the entire composition. Participants may therefore strike the bars sequentially or in any alternating order without creating dissonance.

For participants who may prefer guided rhythmic structures, the composer recommends two foundational rhythmic patterns: 1) Sequential striking pattern: Strike the metal bars consecutively from Bar 1 to Bar 4, and repeat the sequence continuously. Each strike should correspond with the downbeat counts of "one, two, three, and four." 2) Selective striking pattern: Follow the same sequential order (Bars 1–4) and maintain the same beat count; however, strikes are to be performed only on beats one and three, while omitting beats two and four.

These rhythmic frameworks provide participants with a structured yet flexible approach to performing with the Four-Pitched Percussion instrument. The activity fosters rhythmic awareness, concentration, and relaxation, allowing participants to engage actively with the music while maintaining a meditative and calming experience consistent with the therapeutic objectives of the "Retreat" composition.

Objective 2 . Results of Experience and Well-being Assessment of Elderly Tourists from Testing Music Relaxation Activities in Communities of Nakhon Pathom Province.

The demographic analysis classified respondents by gender, age, marital status, education, income, and travel pattern. Most participants were female (78.5%) and aged between 67 and 70

years (50.2%). Nearly half were single (47.3%), and the majority held a bachelor's degree (65.8%). Over two-thirds reported a monthly income of 15,000–30,000 baht (65.5%). Travel patterns were evenly distributed among family (31.5%), group (34.0%), and individual or couple travel (34.5%), indicating a balanced representation across participation types.

2.1 Tourist experience following wellness tourism activity testing with music for relaxation

Based on the tourist experience evaluation results, participants demonstrated consistently high satisfaction levels across all four dimensions of wellness tourism activities as follow;

Table 5 Satisfaction results from tourist experience following wellness tourism testing with music for relaxation

Tourist Experience	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Physical Dimension			
1. Physical experience (sight, taste, smell, sound, or touch) for health from participating in activities as a tourist	4.03	0.64	High
2. Health services from activities	4.09	0.58	High
3. Receiving detoxification or ability to remove harmful substances from the body through activities	4.03	0.68	High
4. Activity facilities and health products positively affect health	4.09	0.58	High
5. Activity characteristics affect health care experience	4.27	0.62	High
6. Cleanliness and safety of tourism activities positively affect health	4.12	0.54	High
Subtotal	**4.11**	**0.44**	High
Mental Dimension			
1. Positive health-related changes	4.04	0.69	High
2. Receiving new experiences that promote feelings of liberation, restoration, and refreshment	4.28	0.51	High
3. Sense of community belonging from activity participation	4.31	0.58	High
4. Learning new aspects of health care through activities	4.22	0.54	High
Subtotal	**4.21**	**0.43**	High
Spiritual Dimension			
1. Inner fulfillment or spiritual elevation	4.13	0.60	High
2. Sharing positive experiences from activities with others	4.02	0.86	High
3. High level of interest in completed activities	4.03	0.59	High
4. Acquiring knowledge, memories, awareness, emotions, and identity (mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom)	4.22	0.54	High
5. Receiving repeated positive health experiences when recalling wellness tourism activities	3.99	0.44	High
Subtotal	**4.08**	**0.44**	High

Tourist Experience	$\overline{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Environmental Dimension			
1. Community members or staff possess relevant knowledge about wellness tourism activities	4.25	0.61	High
2. Activity environment maintains appropriate atmosphere beneficial to health	4.25	0.61	High
3. Number of tourists and activity-related personnel is not excessively dense	4.03	0.73	High
4. Tourism activities provide authentic health experiences	4.12	0.60	High
Subtotal	**4.17**	**0.55**	High
Total	**4.14**	**0.36**	High

The analysis revealed that the overall tourist experience derived from wellness tourism activities was high ($\overline{x}$ = 4.14) across all four dimensions. The mental dimension scored highest, followed by environmental, physical, and spiritual dimensions.

These findings indicate that the music-based wellness activities provided meaningful engagement that stimulated both mind and body. High ratings in the mental dimension reflected psychological renewal, emotional restoration, and a sense of belonging within the wellness setting. The physical dimension demonstrated satisfaction with bodily relaxation and perceived health improvement through sensory participation, while the environmental dimension underscored the importance of well-managed spaces, appropriate atmospheres, and knowledgeable facilitators. Likewise, high spiritual scores suggested enhanced mindfulness, emotional awareness, and inner calm. Collectively, these results confirm that wellness tourism offers an integrated experiential framework that harmonizes sensory, emotional, environmental, and spiritual well-being.

2.2 Tourist Well-being following wellness tourism activity testing

Following the assessment of tourism experiences, the output evaluated the impact of music relaxation activities on tourist well-being across five fundamental dimensions as follow:

Table 6 Results of tourist well–being following music relaxation activities for community – based wellness tourism

Tourist Well–being	$\overline{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Financial Well–being			
1. Having financial liquidity and sufficient funds for necessary expenses	3.81	0.77	High
2. Having adequate money and willingness to pay for enjoyable health activities	3.68	0.81	High
3. Satisfaction with living conditions after spending money on health activities	3.94	0.75	High
4. Ability to control spending	3.78	0.74	High
Subtotal	3.81	0.66	High
Physical Well–being			
1. Improved physical health after activity participation	3.97	0.68	High
2. Ability to control physical health after activity participation	4.03	0.59	High
3. Weight satisfaction after activity participation	3.99	0.66	High
4. Increased energy or strength for necessary tasks after activity participation	4.10	0.63	High
5. Enhanced ability to maintain physical health after activity participation	4.15	0.67	High
6. Satisfaction with external appearance after activity participation	4.13	0.66	High
Subtotal	**4.07**	**0.54**	**High**
Social Well–being			
1. Openness and ability to communicate with others when encountering problems after activity participation	3.96	0.77	High
2. Having friends and trusted individuals during crises after activity participation	4.00	0.61	High
3. Ability to spend time with friends, relatives, or acquaintances in activities	4.15	0.57	High
Subtotal	4.02	0.62	High
Eudaimonic Well–being			
1. Having continuous health care goals after activity participation	4.05	0.75	High
2. Having thoughts about changing lifestyle for better health after activity participation	4.12	0.75	High
3. Ability to live meaningfully after activity participation	4.12	0.65	High
4. Spiritual satisfaction after activity participation	4.13	0.60	High
5. Self–confidence after activity participation	4.21	0.60	High
6. Creative thinking in health care after activity participation	4.15	0.62	High
7. Happiness in discussing and exchanging health care experiences after activity participation	4.15	0.57	High
Subtotal	4.14	0.53	High

Tourist Well-being	$\overline{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Hedonic Well-being			
1. Activity participation brings happiness	4.34	0.65	High
2. Activity participation increases frequency of happiness feelings	4.34	0.65	High
3. Activity participation brings life happiness	4.31	0.64	High
Subtotal	4.34	0.60	High
Total	4.07	0.50	High

The overall level of tourist well-being after participating in wellness tourism activities was high ($\overline{x}$ = 4.07) confirming their positive contribution to holistic health. Among the five dimensions, hedonic well-being achieved the highest score, reflecting increased happiness, pleasure, and life satisfaction. Eudaimonic and physical well-being also scored highly, indicating strengthened purpose, creativity, self-confidence, and improved health outcomes.

Conversely, financial well-being received the lowest mean score, though it remained within the high range. This suggests that while tourists were generally satisfied with financial management and willingness to invest in health-related activities, monetary aspects were less affected than emotional or physical benefits.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that wellness tourism effectively enhances both hedonic (pleasure-oriented) and eudaimonic (meaning-oriented) well-being, fostering immediate enjoyment and long-term personal growth. Music relaxation activities—incorporating therapeutic compositions, acoustic instruments, and participatory rhythmic engagement—proved particularly effective in promoting emotional restoration, physical vitality, social connection, and mindfulness. These results validate music-based relaxation as a practical, evidence-based intervention for enhancing elderly tourists' holistic well-being within community wellness tourism contexts.

Discussions

The development of music relaxation activities in this study was guided by compositional principles specifically adapted to the context of wellness tourism. The composition Retreat was conceptualized around the therapeutic notion of a retreat—an inner journey toward tranquility and renewal. Its ABA′ ternary form represents three psychological stages of this process. Section A (Measures 1–16): Arrival and Grounding symbolizes release from daily stress through calming melodies and consonant harmonies that facilitate relaxation and emotional balance (Syarifani, 2024). Section B (Measures 17–24): Inner Exploration promotes introspection and emotional resilience, highlighting music's transformative capacity for mental clarity and self-reflection

(Shweta, 2025). Section A′ (Measures 25–43): Integration and Return conveys renewal and spiritual uplift, integrating earlier motifs to reinforce closure and serenity (Ohls, 2024). Throughout the composition, consonant intervals, simple rhythmic patterns, and gradual harmonic transitions create an atmosphere conducive to mindfulness, emotional regulation, and stress reduction (Hanser, 2019; Djohan et al., 2022).

Participants engaged with *Retreat* in two complementary modes. Individual listening encouraged self–reflection, emotional restoration, and inner calm consistent with eudaimonic well–being (Dingle et al., 2021; Rebecchini, 2021). Group participation involved playing a four–pitched percussion instrument inspired by the traditional *ranad thum lek*, designed for harmonization with the composition. This participatory structure fostered cooperation, empathy, and shared enjoyment—key contributors to social well–being among elderly tourists (Daykin et al., 2018; Kwan & Clift, 2018). Flexible activity design allowed participants to alternate between guided rhythm and creative improvisation (Bugos, 2019; Maclean et al., 2014), supporting relaxation, mindfulness, and social engagement.

Evaluation of tourist experiences revealed consistently high satisfaction across all four dimensions—physical, mental, spiritual, and environmental. The mental dimension received the highest score, indicating psychological rejuvenation and emotional connectedness fostered by the music activities. Positive outcomes in the environmental, physical, and spiritual dimensions highlighted the significance of supportive surroundings, competent facilitators, and multisensory engagement in sustaining holistic experiences (Ortiz et al., 2024; Kongtaveesawas et al., 2022). These findings correspond with prior research emphasizing music therapy's benefits for emotional regulation, social bonding, and relaxation (Boonrod, 2020). Notably, the participatory design—beyond passive listening—enhanced both personal growth and community interaction, extending existing evidence on the psychosocial impacts of music–based relaxation (Dingle et al., 2021; Rebecchini, 2021).

Tourist well–being outcomes were similarly high, affirming the effectiveness of music relaxation activities in promoting holistic health. Hedonic well–being achieved the highest rating, reflecting heightened happiness, pleasure, and satisfaction (Haybron, 2016), while eudaimonic and physical well–being also scored strongly, suggesting improved confidence, creativity, and vitality. Financial well–being ranked lowest but remained high overall, indicating that monetary aspects were less directly influenced by participation.

The results reveal distinct yet complementary effects of the two activity types. Individual listening facilitated mindfulness and self–awareness, enhancing eudaimonic well–being, whereas group percussion promoted shared enjoyment and social connectedness, reinforcing hedonic and social well–being (Viola et al., 2023). These outcomes align with prior studies confirming music therapy's efficacy in reducing stress, enhancing emotional stability, and promoting social inclusion among older adults (Daykin et al., 2018; Kwan & Clift, 2018).

Overall, this study advances understanding of how structured, participatory music interventions within wellness tourism contexts can simultaneously strengthen hedonic (pleasure–oriented) and eudaimonic (meaning–oriented) well–being. By combining individual reflection with communal participation, music–based relaxation fosters short–term enjoyment, long–term personal growth, and collective cohesion, underscoring its value as an evidence–based model for community wellness tourism (Yu et al., 2018).

New Knowledge from Research

This research introduces the CALMS model and the innovative four–pitched percussion instrument as key contributions to community–based wellness tourism. The CALMS model provides a new framework combining music therapy and community tourism, guiding the design of relaxation–oriented musical activities that enhance holistic well–being (Conrad et al., 2023; Li et al., 2024). The four–pitched percussion instrument offers a participatory tool for group engagement, fostering creativity and harmonizing naturally with relaxation–focused compositions. Each component is detailed as follows:

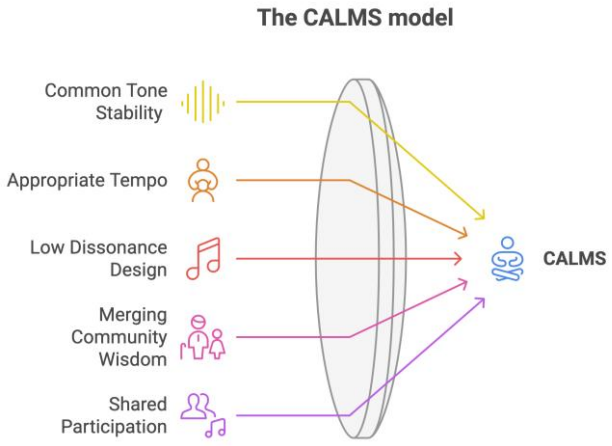

Figure 4 CALMS Model

The CALMS model consists of five components:

1. C–Common Tone Stability: Continuity of notes and chords for smooth, calming harmonies.

2. A–Appropriate Tempo: Rhythms aligned with natural heart rate and walking pace (~76 BPM) to induce relaxation.

3. L–Low Dissonance Design: Minimizing dissonance using tonic and dominant notes (G and D) to ensure harmonious sounds.

4. M–Merging Community Wisdom: Integrating local knowledge, traditional instruments, and cultural familiarity with music therapy principles.

5. S–Shared Participation: Encouraging tourist engagement through listening or simple rhythmic performance to enhance social and personal well–being.

By combining music therapy principles with cultural and participatory elements, the CALMS model offers a replicable framework for future wellness tourism programs, guiding the development of musical activities that foster emotional, social, and personal growth in diverse community contexts.

Conclusion

This study developed and evaluated music relaxation activities for community–based wellness tourism in Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand. The research produced two main outcomes: the composition “Retreat” and the Four–Pitched Percussion instrument.

The composition “ Retreat” was designed using therapeutic principles including natural acoustic instrumentation, consonant intervals, and Andante tempo (76 BPM) aligned with resting heart rate. Its ABA’ structure musically represents three retreat stages: arrival and grounding (Section A), inner exploration (Section B), and integration and return (Section A’). The Four–Pitched Percussion instrument, adapted from traditional Thai Ranat Thum Lek, enables non–musicians to participate harmoniously using only G and D notes (tonic and dominant in G major).

Evaluation with 400 elderly tourists demonstrated high effectiveness across all measured dimensions. Tourist experience satisfaction averaged 4.14 with the mental dimension scoring highest, indicating strong psychological restoration and community belonging. Tourist well–being averaged 4.07 with hedonic well–being (happiness and pleasure) receiving the highest scores followed by eudaimonic well–being (purpose and self–confidence) and physical well–being. These

results confirm that music relaxation activities effectively enhance both immediate pleasure and sustained personal growth among elderly tourists.

This research introduces the CALMS model (Common tone stability, Appropriate tempo, Low dissonance design, Merging community wisdom, Shared participation) as a replicable framework for developing music-based wellness tourism activities. The model combines evidence-based music therapy principles with cultural adaptation and participatory design, addressing wellness tourism's previous emphasis on physical treatments over holistic psychological approaches.

Suggestions

The CALMS model introduces an integrative theoretical framework that bridges music therapy principles with wellness tourism development, addressing the existing gap in holistic psychological approaches within this field. It establishes a foundation for future studies exploring music-based interventions in tourism contexts.

Practically, the findings suggest that: (1) local communities can adopt music relaxation activities as unique wellness tourism products; (2) such activities offer accessible methods for stress relief and social connection; (3) facilitators should receive training in music psychology and group dynamics; and (4) the model's adaptable principles allow for cross-cultural implementation.

Future research is encouraged to investigate the long-term impacts, cultural adaptability, and effectiveness across different age groups compared to other wellness modalities. Further exploration of optimal session length, frequency, and participant group size would also refine practical application guidelines.

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