

Service Marketing Factor Affecting Decision Making in Using Fitness Centers of Working-Age Consumers

Siriporn Pomjaturas, Sittichai Thammasane

*Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, 1-U-Thong Nok, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand, E-Mail:
Siriporn.pom@ssru.ac.th, Sittichai.th@ssru.ac.th*

ABSTRACT

Abstract—The objectives of this research were to study the attitude of service marketing mix that affected decision making behaviors in using fitness service in case of working consumers in Bangkok, Thailand. This study employed by survey research and questionnaire was used to collect the data from 385 of working-age consumers who have used the service and interested in using the service in the future. The descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze data. The results revealed that the attitude toward overall service marketing mix was at moderate level. For particulars, attitude toward product and service aspects were at good level, however, attitude toward price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence and service quality aspects were at moderate level. The hypothesis testing results showed that attitude toward each aspect affected word of mouth, however, attitude toward product and service, place, promotion, people and physical evidence affected tendency to use fitness service at .05 statistically significant level.

Keywords—Decision Making, Fitness Centers, Service Marketing, Working-Age

INTRODUCTION

Economic and social conditions today make people rush against the time and compete with peers in working hard to earn money for themselves and their families regardless of the physical and mental health. Living in these situations every day will affect stress and unhealthy body. If people are forced to work too much, they will get physical illness and mental health illness as well (Ministry of Public Health, 2020). To promote a healthy body free from disease and have longevity, eating a healthy diet, avoiding risky activities, well resting and having physical check up on a regular basis are the ways to maintain physical and mental health.

Today, Thai people begin to realize more health and it leads to the growing trend of health care and strong public priority to maintain health. Modern society has also been widely recognized trend in health care, not only limited to older people or working people but also extended to the new generation Y (Gen Y) and generation Z (Gen Z) which are still young and have no health problems. It may be because older generation or their parents show the awareness of health care seriously. Fitness gym business growth is highest with industry value over 3500 million baht and will grow by another 1,000 million baht in 2020. Fitness First ranked number one for market share by the year 2015, with growing revenue in 2014 compared to revenue of the year 2019 was 11. % (data through October), and the year 2015 is expected to have a growth rate of over 20% (Kasikornthai Research Center,2020).

The health-loving trend is a trend that occurs all over the world, including Thailand. As a result, the interest in exercising and playing sports tends to increase. If considering only the part of Thailand, it was found that There are many people who are interested in participating in running competitions. While the fitness business, which originally had a lot of interest in using the service, was not very high. Currently, the number of people using each service is increasing. When considering the number of Thai people exercising or playing sports, there were about 12.9 million compared to 12.7 million in the previous survey. It is interested in exercising or playing sports in both the group of school age, working age and elderly. However, it found that between the ages of 25-44 years will have the largest proportion of up to 5.4 million people, which is a group of working-age people who have relatively purchasing power. (Kasikornthai Research Center,2020).

Whether the value of exercise, exercise behavior, trend of using gym service, the overall problems situation of fitness gym are the key factors in driving sport business rapidly growing. "Fitness business" is a new trend that is gaining popularity among the young generations working in the office which are interested in health care and be high end market. Fitness gyms are located in business center zone or downtown area since Bangkok people lack of space to do

the exercise. Fitness business competed severely for the good location in communities with high purchasing power as office buildings, condominiums and luxurious apartments. Their strategies are innovation of fitness equipment and effective workout programs. Currently, some fitness business offers the services at niche market for specific target groups such as "Fitness for Kids" which is different from a typical gym. The objective is to provide self-development program for children on thinking and healthy body. There are "BABY GYM" for the baby aged 6-12 months and "TOT GYM" for the kids aged 1-2 years and fitness program for children up to age 12 years. For children program, a child's guardian must attend the class together. Presently, this business gain popularity among city youth because there is less chance to play or exercise than children in rural areas [3].

Then, the researchers aware that this business is likely to grow according to the health trend and supportive factors on less areas for sport playing and exercise and the continually popular trend of exercise. It is interesting to study this research title "The attitude on the service marketing mix affecting the trend of making decision behavior in using the service of fitness gym". The data from this research can be utilized in determining strategy, marketing plan in business operations for entrepreneurs in the fitness industry and those who are interested in this type of business.

The purposes of this research paper were to study the influence of the attitude on service marketing mix affecting the trend of decisions making behavior in using service of the fitness gym. The research hypothesis was that the attitude on service marketing mix affects the trend of decisions making behavior in using service of the fitness gym. The results of this research will be useful information for the entrepreneurs in the fitness business to conduct the marketing plan and develop marketing strategies to meet the needs of consumers as the guidelines to develop better services over the rivals. Results of the research will also be the guidelines for related research and to benefit for those are interested in doing gym business.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Concepts and theories about service marketing mix (7P's)

Market positioning is to set the position of the products to create perception in the minds of consumers of Fitness first gym in Bangkok compared to competitors to make a difference of the product and brand and used to determine marketing mix strategy. Kotler & Armstrong (2017) have discussed the use of important marketing tools or strategic marketing mix 7P's of service business which includes.

Product. Considering service product includes the scope of service, quality of service, class or level of service, brand of service, lines of service, warranty and after-sales services. In case of fitness business, quality of the exercise equipment, features of the exercise equipment, modern the exercise equipment, standardized the exercise equipment, etc. should be considered

Price. Considering the price includes price level due to price involves in making a difference for different services and affects consumer perception of the value received from the services by comparing the price and quality of services such as the price of the exercise program, pay of trainer, special fitness activities, etc.

Place. Distribution of the service provider and the difficulty of access are other important factors. Difficulty or ease of service to access is not only focus only physical evidence but also including communication. Then the type of distribution channel and coverage are essential for accessing to services, such as the ease of traveling to the location of fitness gym, etc.

Promotion. Marketing promotion is to gather a wide range of communication techniques to the markets whether through advertising, personal selling, sale promotion and other forms either directly to the public and indirectly through the media, as the thoroughness of the public relations about the various programs of fitness gym, etc.

People. People refer to the role of the personnel of service businesses. They have to provider service and also sell service concurrently with building customer relationship Building customer relationship is essential such as providing services to customer of gym business accurately and timely right to the needs of clients and so on.

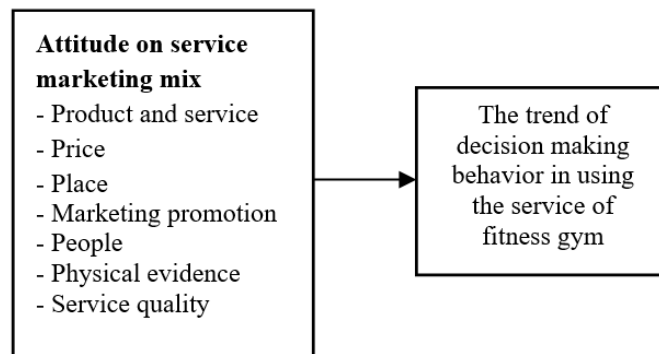
Physical evidence. Physical evidence is the physical characteristics to be used in the formulation of marketing strategy. The physical components will affect the decisions of customers such as equipment to facilitate the service of the gym, decoration of the place, cleanliness, color and convenience.

Process. Process of service delivery is as important as human resources. Although the staffs take care of customer well sometime they could not solve the problem that the customers has to wait in line to play exercise

equipment. The service business should choose difference systems of delivering services in the exercise to support the fitness business and get loyalty of the clients.

The researcher employed the concept and theory of the service marketing mix of Lovelock and Wright (2002) consists of product, price, distribution channel, marketing promotion, people or staff, physical evidence and service quality. Also, the concept and theory about decision making behavior is using the service of Kotler & Armstrong (2017). The researcher used theories and related researches to define the conceptual framework and create questionnaire in this study. The conceptual framework of this study was exhibited in Figure 1.

Figure 1
The conceptual framework of the study



METHODS

The population used in this research was the working-age consumers in Bangkok who have used the service and interested in using the service in the future, which the researcher does not know the exact population. Therefore, the researcher assigns the sample according to the case where the exact population is unknown using Cochran's formula, at a 95% confidence level, the allowable error of 5% and the proportion of trait of interest in the population was 0.5. The required sample size was 385 individuals and the sample number were increased to 400 to get more accurate information. The statistics used to analyze data were descriptive statistics to describe the profile of the sample. The inferential statistic used in the hypothesis testing that the attitude of the service marketing mix affects the trend of decisions making behavior in using service of fitness gym is multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS

The study found that most of the respondents were male, aged 30-40 years old, single, with a bachelor degree, the average income per month was 30,000-50,000 baht and no underlying disease. The attitude on service marketing mix which was product and service, price, place, promotion, personnel, physical evidence and service quality was at a good level. The motive for the purchase decision on social need, respectful demand, and the need for success in life were at a high level while the trend of decisions making behavior in using service of fitness gym, the recommendation or telling others to use the service and the tendency to use the service in the future were at service usage level.

The results of the test showed that the attitude on price, place, marketing promotion, people, physical evidence and service quality affected the trend of decisions making behavior in using service on the aspect of recommendation or telling others to use the service by using Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis at the .05 level of statistically significant as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
The Analysis Results of The Trend of The Decisions Making Behavior in Using Fitness Service Center

Variables	B	SE	t	Sig.
Constant	.712	2.094	1.294	.196
Price	.559	.658	4.645*	.000
Place	.369	.536	4.042*	.000
Marketing promotion	.256	.564	3.994*	.000
People	.674	.506	3.305*	.001
Physical evidence	.691	.137	5.036*	.000
Service quality	.343	.128	2.680*	.008

R = .344 Adjusted R² = .114, R² = .118, SE = 1.447

* Statistical significant at .05 level, ** Statistical significant at .01 level

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Conclusion and discussion

The result revealed that attitude of the service marketing mix affects the trend of decisions making behavior in using service on the aspects of recommendation or telling others to use the service and the potential to use the service again in the future. This is consistent with the research of Ruangkol (2015) which stated that the attitude of the marketing mix takes place inside the products and services, price, place of service, marketing promotion, people, physical evidence, and services quality which is the organization of the any concept. This organization will take place after assessing the trend of consumer behavior in decision making on using fitness gym service that is also consistent with the research work of Wongsawas (2011) which stated that the expectations of the target personnel for using fitness gym service on the aspect of the marketing mix had high correlation with the trend of decision making on using the service of fitness gym located in IFCT Tower building, New Petchburi Rd. This research was found that the personnel of private agencies in Bangkok needed the exercise with good service from both places and personnel and also had difficulty of time and commutation and also was in accordance with the research of Techaratanaset (2015) study about the attitude towards service marketing mix service and the intention of foreign visitors to use the service again for the boutique hotels in Bangkok. It was found that the attitudes towards products/services and other marketing mix on employees, physical appearance, service process and distribution channels affect the intention to use the service again on the tendency to come back for the statistically significant at the 0.05 level. The attitude towards the product / service and the other marketing mix on employees, the physical appearances, price, marketing promotion and distribution channels affect the intention to use the service again on the tendency to recommend known people to use the services statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The results can be concluded that the service of fitness business is not only getting member subscription and then the customer will come again to use the service. At present, there are various options available to customers and competitors' products and services are not much different. The main factor of the service to make customers satisfied and come back for more is service quality and variety of exercise equipment, which require adequate standard of cleanliness and safety to meet the needs of service users. It also includes the services of a staff, trainers, timing, atmosphere and not too crowded space to provide customers with privacy. Also, there must be warning sign of safe conduct clearly to prevent harm and the explicit prohibition order not to violate the rights of others to use the service. The facilities arranged for customers to use after finishing the exercise with security and privacy such as swimming pools, hot and cold shower, ice room, steam room for rehabilitation after sport playing and lockers for customers to keep their belonging. Other important factors are the convenient location to visit and parking space. The fitness gym must provide the convenience for customers to use the service. In the case of promotions to attract old customers to come back to use the service while make it more inducement to new prospects, the businesses need to study the need of the customers in order to offer more than customer needs. The fitness gym should study the time the customer may choose to use the service and also to look at the trends in fitness to fit the need of specific group of customers. For the internal management, the gym must repair and maintain the equipment regularly to be ready to serve the customers at

any time. In case the equipment is broken, there must be back up plan and the devices available to replace the broken one as it may affect the queue to use an exercise machine for more waiting time. Also look for new equipment or new options as an alternative to customers and make them impress and satisfy with that fitness gym without changing their mind to use the competitor's service

Recommendations and future work

Regarding the results of this study, the implication of this research suggested future practicality as follows.

1. Use the data of the target users to conduct making promotion or member privilege programs. So the entrepreneur or marketer should increase marketing campaigns targeted at the male in order to increase the loyalty of service resulting in using the service again. For the targeted female, the entrepreneur or marketer should provide superb service to enhance customer satisfaction, resulting in customer loyalty to the service and further use of the service.

2. For the attitude on the marketing mix, entrepreneurs should focus on the differences in the characteristics of the product and service with other fitness gyms such as dance exercise, exercise equipment, the decoration of the places, using services of renowned artists to create the motivation of consumer to make easier decision and also stimulate its members to feel proud to be a member.

3. Should study the pattern of fitness gym presentation on price and service image to improve and develop marketing strategies and provide users with the most satisfaction.

4. Should study the reasons for member subscribing, recommendation/word-of-mouth, and the trend of service in offering helpful guidelines for those who are interested in doing gym business in the future.

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