

Customers' Perception Towards the Service Marketing Mix and Repurchase of Thai Dessert

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ABSTRACT

Abstract—This research aimed to study the relationship between attitudes toward marketing mix and customers repurchase intention of Thai dessert. This study employed by survey and quantitative research and the questionnaire was used to collect the data from 385 sampled of customers who visited at Thai desert shop in Bangkok, Thailand. The descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis was used to analyze data. The research found that the customers' perception on the overall and individual aspects of attitudes toward marketing mix include products, prices, promotions, and physical characteristics were at very good level, but distribution channels, staffs, and management process were at good level. Furthermore, the hypothesis tests found that attitudes toward overall marketing mix had relationship with individual aspects of intention that were the repurchase intention, willingness to recommend others to repurchase, and possibility to repurchase with statistical significance level of 0.01.

Keywords—Repurchase, Service marketing mix, Thai dessert

INTRODUCTION

In Thai society from the past to the present, Thai people tend to consume snacks in addition to savory food. In addition, Thai desserts are also made during important merit-making festivals where villagers work together to make Thai desserts as a tradition. In addition to Thai desserts that are used for daily consumption Thai desserts are also used in various ceremonies such as weddings, ordination, housewarming, etc. At present, Thai desserts are still a medium for various events such as New Year's Day to welcome visitors or as a souvenir came back from different places over the years until now. Several kinds of them were mentioned in valuable works of Thai literature. They are well known for their taste sensations which are as impressive as their appearance. Their appealing looks reflect the nature of the Thais who are neat and meticulous. Most Thai desserts are a sweet and sometimes filling snack opposed to a light and airy Western style dessert. Most Thai sweets are made from five simple ingredients coconut cream, coconut flesh, rice flour, palm sugar and eggs.

The Thai dessert market has grown every year and is in demand from both domestic and international markets. Thai desserts exported to foreign countries are of 2 types, namely frozen desserts such as Khao Tom Mud, Kanom Sod, etc., it must be heated in a microwave oven before eating. Another type of food is retort pouch when eating, bring it to a boil in boiling water for the whole envelope or heat it in a microwave oven. The major markets for Thai desserts are Japan and the United States. It is expected that the demand for Thai desserts in the market will increase in terms of variety of Thai desserts. As for the Thai market, demand is in the form of consumption, for traditions, and purchases as souvenirs (Thai Business, 2020).

To study factors related to the intention of consumers to Thai dessert, the researcher reviews opinion and feelings of customers on Thai dessert, the largest gift shop in the province. However, there are also other popular Thai dessert shop requires planning and strategy adaptation to compete with its rivals and to make the existing customers users repurchase the products. Additionally, to measure the attitudes of services marketing mix as a guide to improve the operations and direction of the business to meet the needs of consumers and to increase sales and expansion of organization (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Khunrattanaporn, 2017) in case of Thai dessert shop.

The purposes of this research paper were to study the relationship between customer attitude towards marketing mix of services include product, price, distribution channel, marketing promotion, service staff, physical characteristics and process management (Kotler, 2016) with the intention to repurchase of customers at Thai dessert shop. The expected benefits for this study were getting the basic information that is useful for

companies to use to improve the service, product planning and marketing strategy of Thai dessert shop to meet the needs of consumers and the present competitive situation. As well, the shop will get the basic information that is useful for the company to use in branding and creating the consumer's loyalty towards products (Aaker, 1996).

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Service Marketing Mix Factors

Marketing Mix (Kotler & Keller, 2016) refers to the key elements in marketing operations that are factors that the company can control. It is necessary to have an appropriate marketing mix for use in marketing strategy, consisting of 7 factors, namely Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence, which are known as 7Ps.

Product means something that the company offers to sell to cause interest by consumption or use of the service which can make customers satisfied. The customer will receive the utility and the value of the product. The product may be something that is tangible called goods or things that are intangible called services. Formulating product strategies need relevant factors such as product differentiation mean products or services that are different from other service providers in the market in order to create outstanding competitiveness. Including the product component or the properties of the product refers to product features, efficiency and benefits.

Price refers to the value of a product, service or fee for receiving a service, which the consumer is willing to exchange for that service. Consumers tend to consider the price they pay along with the value they receive. If the value is higher than the price, the consumer will decide to purchase. Therefore, pricing must be including cost of services, value perceived by users, and pricing to be competitive and superior to competitors.

Place means distribution channel where service providers deliver goods or services to consumers both directly and indirectly. Whether the distributor will be effective or not must be reflected through the convenience and satisfaction that consumers receive. Therefore, service providers must take the determination of distribution channels which can be comfortable and suitable for the lifestyle of the target group.

Promotion means marketing communication tool between seller and buyer. Its purpose is to inform and induce attitudes, needs and attract behaviors in using that service. Communication mix consists of communication by using personal selling and communication without a non-personal selling, which requires the principle of Integrated Marketing Communication.

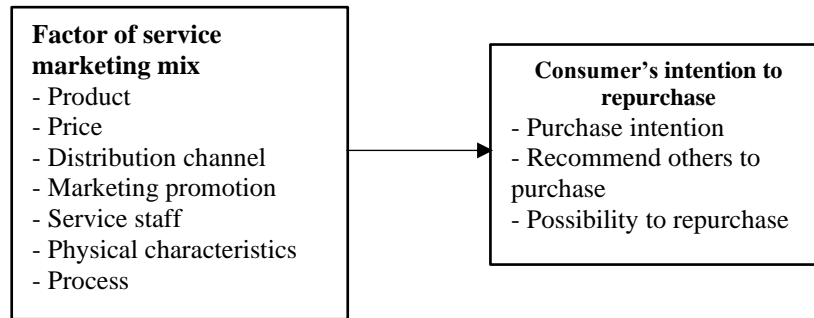
People means people who participate in the process of providing services, including employees of the Company. customers who come to use the service and other customers who come to use the service as well. People are an important element in both service production and service delivery. Therefore, the acquisition of quality personnel requires a process of selection, training, development of employees to have knowledge, skills, and willingness to serve to create satisfaction for users effectively.

Process refers to the process to deliver quality services to consumers with speed, accuracy and impress customers. A process involves a system or method, machine or tool, and a person. If a business can manage both systems, tools and people effectively, it will be able to create satisfaction for customers.

Physical Evidence refers to what the customer can be touched by choosing goods and services. It creates a difference and quality such as clean, tidy, gentle negotiations and prompt service which is necessary in service. It may also refer to a symbol that customers understand the meaning of receiving information from marketing communications to the public.

The researcher used related theory and research works to determine the conceptual framework and to do the questionnaire design. The researcher employed the concept on attitude of controllable marketing services mix which companies must use to satisfy the needs of the target customers including product, price, distribution channels, marketing promotion, service staff, physical characteristics and process (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Kotler, 2003). For the concept of intention to repurchase, the first decision to purchase and repurchase behaviors which are divided into the consumer intention to repurchase, recommendation or telling people to repurchase and the possibility to repurchase. The conceptual framework of this study was exhibited in Figure 1.

Figure 1
The conceptual framework of the study



According to the conceptual framework of research, the hypothesis was customer attitude towards marketing mix of services including product, price, distribution channels, marketing promotion, service staff, physical characteristics and process had a relationship with the intention to repurchase of customers on the aspect of the consumer intention to repurchase, recommendation or telling people to repurchase and the possibility to repurchase.

METHODS

Population used in this research is the consumer who buy products in Thai desert shops located in Bangkok, Thailand. The researchers used the method for determining the sample size from unknown number of populations who use the service. The sample size was determined by using the formula for 385 samples and 15 reserved samples. Multi-stage sampling was used to selected sample from desert shops located in Bangkok, Thailand. Reliability values of each variables are between .725-.859 and the reliability of the total questions about the intention to repurchase is .824. The statistics used for data analysis were descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to test the hypothesis of this study which were factors of marketing mix 7 P's with the intention to repurchase Thai desert shops, by using simple correlation of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

RESULTS

Descriptive results

The demographic finding of this research reported that most consumers were female, their age 30 years or lower and holding a bachelor's degree. Their career was the private company employees with the average income ranged from 10,001 - 15,000 baht and most of them were single.

The respondents' attitudes towards the marketing mix service in repurchase at Thai desert shop were at a very good level including product, price, promotion and the physical characteristics while the attitudes were at good level including distribution channels, service staff and process. The results showed that the consumers are willing to repurchase the products at Thai desert shop at an intention level. On recommendation or telling a person known to come back to buy at Thai desert shop was at the recommendation level. In addition, Table VI shows the maximum, minimum, mean value, and standard deviation of consumer's intention to repurchase at Thai desert shop. The possibility of coming back to buy Thai desert shop, the highest rate was at 100% while the lowest rate was at 85%.

Hypothesis testing results

The hypothesis testing found that the attitude of the service marketing mix correlated with consumer's intention to repurchase the products at Thai desert shop in Bangkok in each dimension including willingness to come back to buy Thai desert shop, recommendation or telling people to come back to buy Thai desert, and the possibility to come back to repurchase had statistically significance at the 0.01 level, which was based on the set hypothesis as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1
Hypothesis Testing Results for Customers' Perception towards the Service Marketing Mix and Repurchase of Thai Dessert

Service marketing mix	Intention to repurchase		
	r	Sig.	level of relations
Products	.254**	.000	Low at the same direction.
Price	.495**	.000	moderate at the same direction
Distribution channels	.351**	.000	moderate at the same direction
Marketing promotion	.427**	.000	moderate at the same direction
Service staff	.512**	.000	moderate at the same direction
Physical evidences	.446**	.000	moderate at the same direction
Process	.200**	.000	low at the same direction

** significance at the .01, * significance at the .05

The hypothesis testing results revealed that the factors of service marketing mix at Thai desert shop in the aspect of the intention to repurchase had moderated correlation at the same direction with price, distribution channel, marketing promotion, service staff and physical evidences, while products and process had low correlation at the same direction. As well, in the aspect of the recommendation or telling people to repurchase, the results founded that overall factors of service marketing mix had moderated correlation at the same direction with recommendation or telling people to repurchase at Thai desert shop. In addition, the overall factors of marketing mix had low correlation with the possibility to repurchase at Thai desert shop.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Conclusion and discussion

From the analysis of the relationship between attitudes on service marketing mix and the consumer's intention to repurchase on the aspect of the consumer intention to repurchase, recommendation or telling people to repurchase and the possibility to repurchase found that the attitude of the seven marketing mix: product, price, distribution channels, marketing promotion, service staff, physical evidences, and process management have correlated with intention to repurchase of the consumer, recommendation or word of mouth to repurchase and the possibility to repurchase. Principally, marketing mix has four aspects: product, price, distribution channels, and marketing promotion (Engel, 1995). For service business, marketing mix is different from the marketing mix of products because there are three more factors include the service staff, service process management, and physical evidence, which is a mix of the three main factors in service delivery (Engel, 1995). So, the marketing mix of service business is comprised of 7P's include products and services, price, place or distribution channel, promotion, people or service staff, process management and the physical evidence.

The results revealed that the factors of service marketing mix at Thai desert shop in the aspect of the intention to repurchase had moderated correlation at the same direction with price, distribution channel, marketing promotion, service staff and physical evidences, while products and process had low correlation at the same direction. It can be explained that it probably due to the products of Thai desert shop is not different because the almost the desserts are made of the same ingredients and the same production process which make the products are not variety. As well, the process of service in the shop is the old styles shop which the products are shown on the shelves and customers can choose the preferred dessert and then go to the pay at the counter. To improve the service marketing mix for Thai's desserts, the product should motivate customers in such guarantee the quality of products, delicious and freshness of products. To improve the service process, the process should impress the consumers because customers want good service and also innovative processes that can satisfy the needs of the customer, provide customers with convenience and benefit from access to the service in the shop.

For the intention to repurchase at Thai desert shop, the results can be explained that if the consumer's attitude toward service marketing mix is positive, consumer's intention to repurchase, recommendation or telling people to repurchase and the possibility to repurchase will increase which is consistent with the concept of Skinner (Skinner, 1981). This theory of conditions learning noted learning relationship between operant and consequence that the results from past actions will determine the tendency to act or cease to act in the future. This can explain

the first impression of consumers toward the service then they come back for the next time because of service satisfaction. Then, the information is so vital in planning the operational policy in adjusting the services marketing mix strategy to maintain the quality of Thai desert shop to satisfy the consumers' needs.

Recommendations and future work

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

Thai dessert shop should focus on public relations to consumers who use the service on the product quality of freshness and cleanliness at the same standard of service in Bangkok. The research results showed that the attitude on services marketing mix on products perceived that products in Thai desert souvenir shop are clean and fresh. For the distribution channel, the communication to Thai desert shop is convenient but no relationship with the consumer intention to repurchase. In order to strengthen the attitude of service marketing mix on products that the souvenirs from Thai desert shop are clean and fresh and convenient distribution channel. Thai desert should open new branches in various provinces to provide more convenience to the consumer and make more consumer intention to repurchase.

Moreover, Thai dessert shop should have a strategy focus on all service marketing mix to encourage consumers on the aspect of intention to repurchase, recommendation or word of mouth to other person to repurchase and increase the possibility of the consumer to repurchase. The results of the research showed that the attitude on service marketing mix; products, pricing, distribution channels, marketing promotion, the service staff, physical evidences and process management correlated with consumer intention to repurchase on the aspect of the intention to repurchase, recommendation or word of mouth with a person known to come back to buy again and the possibility to repurchase that will satisfy the needs of the consumers. Moreover, Thai desert shop should boost sales by creating a brand identity for products by organizing special events, providing gift sets of variety of products at the different prices for the holiday seasons and the festivals to meet the needs of the different target groups.

In further study, a comparison between the gift shops of the same type can be done by exploring consumers' behavior and their preferences toward many brands, the differences of consumer attitudes towards the marketing mix, and the trend of consumer's intention to repurchase in order to be the guidelines in setting marketing strategy in the competition. Including there should study other factors beyond the variables studied in this research such as brand loyalty or consumer personalities.

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