

A Study on Consumer-Based Marketing Management: Interesting Research on Marketing Mix Strategies in Thai Businesses

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ABSTRACT:*Business management has evolved over time, and nowadays it is found that businesses are subjected to many pressures, including global politics and economy, wars, changing human generations, and growing technology. In order to survive this crisis or disruptive change, it is essential for management to have appropriate strategies that are in line with the surrounding situation. Marketing management needs to adapt the right strategy to the current situation. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying this concept through the analysis of academic articles and research articles related to the concept of marketing mix in Thailand. The interesting research shows that the marketing mix factors that businesses use are highly valued and satisfied by consumers. In addition, the research also found that marketing mix factors influence the purchasing decisions of Thai consumers. However, marketers need to study the results thoroughly to determine which aspects of the marketing mix are the most important factors in consumer decision-making. The researcher expects that the lessons learned from the analysis of this academic article will benefit both businesses that will apply the results of the study for practical purposes and the academic community as well.*

KEY WORD: *Consumer Behavior, Marketing Mix, Purchase Decision, Service Marketing, Online Marketing*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Business management has evolved all the time since before the COVID-19 era until it came into operation during the COVID-19 crisis that created a lot of changes to businesses. In addition, business operations are also subject to many pressures such as global politics and economy, wars occurring, human generation changes, and technology that grows at an exponential rate. In order to survive in this crisis or disruptive change, it is essential for management to have appropriate strategies that are in line with the circumstances around

them. The same strategy that used to work will no longer work because every factor has changed and is different from the past. This includes marketing management that needs to adapt and create strategies that are right for the current situation. Marketers will need to do more market research in order to clearly understand the needs and expectations of consumers and to use it in formulating the marketing strategy of the organization. One marketing concept that has been studied and used extensively in marketing management is the marketing mix concept. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying this concept through the analysis of academic articles and research articles related to the concept of marketing mix. The area of interest to study is Thailand where the researcher found that there is a great deal of research on marketing mix concepts in every business. The researcher expects that the lessons learned from the analysis of such academic papers will benefit both businesses that will apply the results of the study for practical use and benefit the academic community as well.

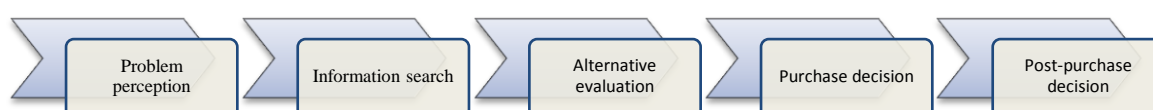
II. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Much research on consumer behavior is being done around the world, including in Thailand. Due to business operations, it is necessary to understand the needs and expectations of consumers. Businesses need to understand the behavior of their target consumers in order to create marketing strategies that are suitable for that target.

2.1 Consumer behavior concepts

Consumer behavior is behavior expressed by consumers in the manner of searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and discarding products, services, ideas, or experiences that consumers expect to meet their needs (Chomraka, Yeamkong, Jindatawin, & Jirawongsatian, 2022; Padermatthakij, 2016). Marketers must pay attention to and study external stimuli in order to generate consumer demand for the product. Stimuli are considered motives to purchase, which can provide rational and psychological motives (Padermatthakij, 2016). Consumer Behavior Analysis is the process of finding out the buying behavior of consumers in order to understand the characteristics of consumers' needs by asking and answering questions that can help marketers formulate marketing strategies that can meet their needs. The 6Ws and 1Hs of behavioral questionnaires that marketers should use include Who (who is in their target market), What (what the consumer buys), When (when the consumer buys), Where (where the consumer buys), Whom (who participates in the purchase decision), Why (why the consumer buys), and How (how consumers buy) (Chotikul, Kraisanti, Pantarak, & Riyapun, 2022; Santikul & Taweasuk, 2019). After that, marketers need to understand the number of steps in the consumer decision-making process and how important each step is to make the designed marketing strategy more effective. Consumer decision process generally consists of five steps including problem perception, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation (Chomraka, Yeamkong, Jindatawin, & Jirawongsatian, 2022), as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Consumer decision process



2.2 Purchase decision

The consumer's decision-making process refers to the process of purchasing two or more options for a product. Consumer behavior considers the decision-making process in terms of mental, cognitive, and physical behavior (Padermatthakij, 2016; Hongyont, 2019). The consumer purchase decision process generally consists of five steps: problem perception, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation (Chomraka, Yeamkong, Jindatawin, & Jirawongsatian, 2022). To drive consumer decision-making, marketers must use various marketing strategies that align with consumer needs. There are many marketing strategies to choose from, depending on how much the marketer understands the marketing process and the marketing environment. An example of a marketing strategy that has been chosen to generate consumer decision-making in Thailand is the marketing mix strategy (Akkapin, et al., 2021; Chomraka, Yeamkong, Jindatawin, & Jirawongsatian, 2022; Detthamrong, et al., 2019; Hongyont, 2019; Menil, Somjai, & Boonpadung, 2021).

2.3 Consumer satisfaction

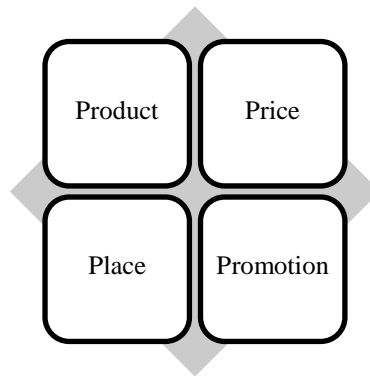
Consumer satisfaction variables are often one of the important variables that research in Thailand uses to measure consumer behavior in Thailand because satisfaction variables directly affect consumer purchasing decisions and also include repeat purchases or consumer loyalty as well (Nirot & Booranavitayaporn, 2022).

There are many factors that influence consumer satisfaction such as perceived value from products or services purchased, social interaction, consumer experience, etc. Consumer satisfaction is something that marketers need to know in order to use the results of the study to adjust the process of creating products that better satisfy consumers (Chewwasung, 2022).

III. CONSUMER RESEARCH WITH MARKETING MIX CONCEPT

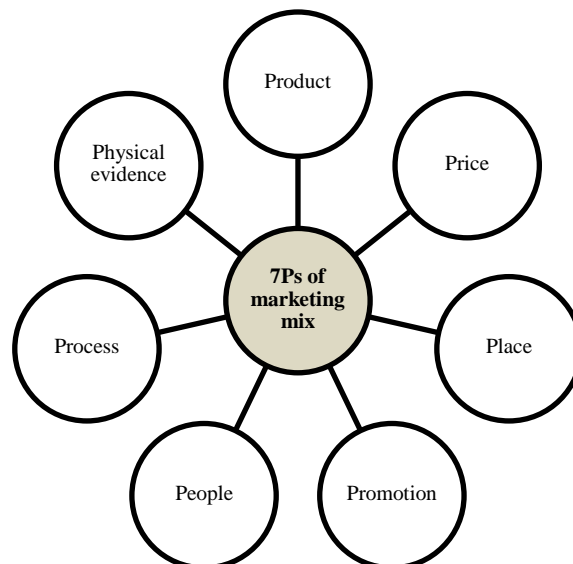
Global consumer behavior research focuses on the study of marketing strategies based on the concept of the marketing mix. Because the strategy is clear and can be easily executed in the context of today's marketing work. In Thailand, the concept of marketing mix is used in marketing research every year and applies to many industries. In general, the product marketing mix concept consists of four components including product, price, place, and promotion (Cheisang&Jarutaweepholnukul, 2021; Chomraka, Yeamkong, Jindatawin, &Jirawongsatian, 2022; Detthamrong, et al., 2019; Hongyont, 2019), as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Aspects of 4Ps marketing mix concept



In service business research, most researchers use the 7P marketing mix concept, which consists of seven components of the study, namely product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence (Akkapin, et al., 2021; Porndechdacha&Booranavitayaporn, 2022; Saniprachakorn&Punpanich, 2019; Sriplang, Petmee, & Chayomchai, 2021) as shown in Figure 3.

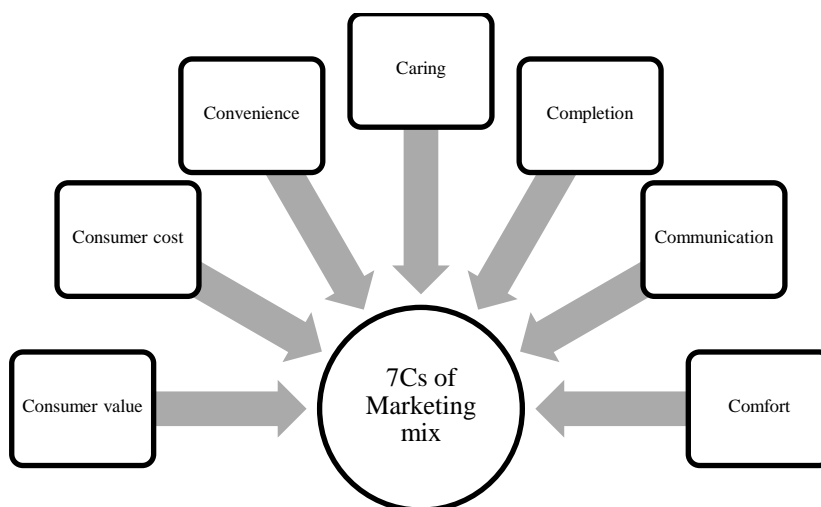
Figure 3: Aspects of 7Ps marketing mix concept



The study of Sriplang, Petmee, and Chayomchai (2021) in the tourism industry found that the seven components of the service marketing mix were interrelated. The results of this research indicate that marketers need to create strategies that use all seven factors simultaneously to influence modern consumer behavior. While modern studies have found that researchers have opted for consumer studies using the 7Cs marketing mix concept. Porndechdacha and Booranavitayaporn (2022) have researched consumer behavior in the restaurant

business using the concept of the Seven C's marketing mix, which consists of seven factors: customer values, caring, cost to customer, convenience, communication, comfort, and completion.

Figure 4: Aspects of 7Cs marketing mix concept



IV. MARKETING MIX STRATEGIES IN PRODUCT PURCHASING

Businesses that sell products or tangible goods must produce products that meet the needs of consumers in the most relevant way. This affects many aspects of consumer behavior such as satisfaction, perceived value, purchase decisions, and repeat purchases or loyalty to a particular product. Marketers must create marketing strategies to attract and meet consumer needs and expectations. The marketing mix strategy is one of the most important strategies for consumer behavior. The study of Chomraka, Yeamkong, Jindatawin, and Jirawongsatian (2022) was conducted in the Thai fruit business using the concept of marketing mix. It was found that the opinions of Thai consumers gave importance to four factors of the marketing mix at a high level. The results of this study concluded that the four factors of the marketing mix including product, price, place, and promotion, significantly influenced the purchasing decisions of Thai consumers. The study of Padermatthakij (2016) was conducted in Thailand's bottled water business using the concept of marketing mix. The results show that the opinions of drinking water consumers in Thailand place great importance on the marketing mix that affects purchasing decisions at a high level. However, the study by Detthamrong, et al. (2019) about purchasing decisions in traditional Thai retail stores mainly focused on the study of the marketing mix. The research found that consumers do not like to shop at such stores for reasons of old stock, expensive prices, and too little selection. In addition, it was found that consumers' perceptions of the four marketing mix factors were moderate. While the study of Menil, Somjai, and Boonpadung (2021) studying the marketing mix in the cosmetic business in Thailand found that the marketing mix does not directly affect consumer behavior, but indirectly affects the intermediaries, namely attitudes and perceived values of consumers. A study of Cheisang and Jarutaweepholnukul (2021) in the cosmetic product purchase decision of consumers in Thailand using the 4P marketing mix study as the main concept. The study found that three factors of the marketing mix, namely product, price, and marketing promotion, had a significant influence on the purchase decision of such cosmetics.

V. MARKETING MIX STRATEGIES IN SERVICE BUSINESSES

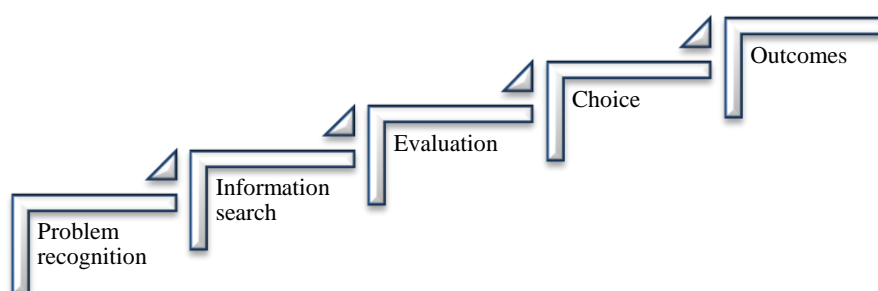
Service business is important to every country, especially those that have suitable areas for tourism. Because the tourism industry is connected with many other industries such as transportation industry, hotel industry, medical industry, conference industry, etc. Thailand is considered a country that earns a lot of income from industry and service businesses every year (Sriplang, Petmee, & Chayomchai, 2021). Therefore, entrepreneurs need to use marketing management to generate income from buying services for both domestic and foreign consumers. The development of new forms of tourism is therefore necessary for the tourism business in each country, for example, in Thailand, creative tourism forms have been developed to take advantage of the country's geography (Wongmanee & Wongsaroj, 2021). Porndechdacha and Booranavitayaporn's (2022) research has studied consumer behavior in the restaurant business using the concepts of the 7Cs and 7Ps marketing mix. The study found that the marketing mix factors including process, customer values, caring, cost to customer, convenience, and completion significantly affected the repurchase intention of the consumers. The study of Akkapin, et al. (2021) on consumer opinions in the service marketing mix or 7Ps of the aviation business found that consumers expressed their opinions or satisfaction on all aspects of the

marketing mix at a relatively high level. Also, the study of Silanoi and Sutthirak (2015) using the 7P marketing mix concept in research with Thai tourists found that the opinions on the actions in all seven factors of the marketing mix were mostly at high levels. In addition, the study of Mongkolvanich, Chatiwong, and Chandaeng (2013) using the 7P marketing mix concept in researching Thai tourists in their youth found that their opinions on management in all seven factors of the marketing mix were at a high level and still it was found that such tourists paid the most attention to marketing promotion. While the study of Ambavamata and Warapishet (2011) who studied the decision to use services from electrician service providers in Thailand found that the most important marketing mix factor was the physical aspect. The research found that the things consumers value most are accuracy and modernity. The study of Thongtae and Koocharoensit (2020) studying the decision to buy a house from a real estate developer in Thailand using the 7P marketing mix study. The study found interesting details in all aspects of the marketing mix, such as the process must be fast and convenient, the price must be worth the quality, the personnel must be attentive and take good care of customers, the product must have variety.

VI. MARKETING MIX STRATEGIES IN ONLINE PURCHASING

Technology plays a perfect role in today's human life. Especially the new generation born with digital technology will be ready to use such technology in their daily lives at all times. Today's businesses have to adapt to electronic commerce in order to better meet the needs of modern consumers (Pasim & Rattanapienthamma, 2018; Saniprachakorn & Punpanich, 2019). If the business does not adapt in this way, it risks losing its competitiveness. Therefore, businesses need to consider creating a marketing strategy that relates to modern consumers' online purchasing decisions (Hongyont, 2019). For the online purchase decision process, it was found that it consists of five important steps (Nguyen, Leeuw, & Dullaert, 2018) including problem recognition, information search, evaluation, choice, and outcomes, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Decision-making process of Online consumer behavior



Marketing strategies related to the online purchasing decisions of modern consumers need to start with identifying what the target's consumption problems are and end with satisfying them (Nguyen, Leeuw, & Dullaert, 2018). The study of Hongyont (2019) studying online shopping decisions found that only two aspects of the marketing mix, product and promotion, had a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Thai consumers. The study of Kongrachata (2019) studying online shopping decisions in Nonthaburi Province found that three marketing mix factors, namely product, price and place, had a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of such consumers. An interesting result is that the promotional marketing mix has no or very little influence on online purchasing decisions. Therefore, it is necessary to further study why such images occur. Also, the study of Pasim and Rattanapienthamma (2018) found that the opinions of Thai consumers in online purchasing decisions about all aspects of the 7P marketing mix were at highest level. The study of Saniprachakorn and Punpanich (2019) studying fresh food purchasing decisions through online channels of Thai consumers using 7P marketing mix studies. The study found that consumers have a high level of opinions on the marketing mix of online fresh food products and also found that physical evidence is the most important factor. This is consistent with the study by Chotikul, Kraisaniti, Pantarak, and Riyapun (2022) examined the online food purchase decisions of consumers in Thailand using the study of marketing mix as the main concept. The results of the study confirmed that marketing mix factors had a significant influence on the decision to order food through such online channels.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the results of the study, understanding consumer behavior is essential for developing a suitable business marketing strategy. By setting goals for strategies that meet the needs and expectations of consumers, leading to purchasing decisions and ultimately creating satisfaction in consumers. Achieving

consumer satisfaction will have a positive effect on business performance and competitiveness. The ability to compete is very important nowadays that businesses are in the midst of changes and crises at certain times. Marketing research studies in Thailand apply the concept of marketing mix in many ways, including the 4Ps for product manufacturing, the 7Ps for service businesses, and the 7Cs for modern studies. Including the study of marketing mix factors in online business, which is a modern way of doing business in line with the current digital technology development. According to interesting research findings, it is found that the marketing mix used by businesses is of high importance and satisfaction to consumers in most cases. In addition, most studies have found that marketing mix factors influence the purchasing decisions of Thai consumers. As for which aspect of the marketing mix is the most important factor in consumer decision-making, it is necessary to look at the results of each case in detail. Because each business is different and the target consumer group of the business may also differ. Therefore, a detailed study of the findings is necessary for marketers to create the best marketing strategies for their business goals.

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