

THE PURCHASING BEHAVIOR OF CHINESE STUDENTS FOR THAI TRADITIONAL MASSAGE

Tao Jiaqing*
Asst.Prof.Dr.Sayamol Nongbunnak**

ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to study the behavior of Chinese students who use massage services in Thailand, to study service marketing factors which affecting on Chinese student's decision to use massage service in Thailand and to use the results of research as guidelines for defining the service marketing mix plan and to develop massage business to have better images and to hit the best satisfaction from Chinese students.

Regarding suggestion to improve and develop massage business in Thailand include; should have a variety of chooses for consumers, should have more providing clear information about the massage. Should focus on value and creating value quality for the needs of students.

Finally, this study believes that massage service companies can take this study as a guide to develop effective service marketing mix strategy to meet the needs of students, and make recommendations for the business performance of massage business in Thailand. And will help the company to further effectively maintain competitiveness in the global market for the development of Thai massage services.

Keyword: Thai Traditional Massage, Purchasing Behavior, Massage Service

*A Student of MBA (International Program), College of Innovative Business & Accountancy, Dhurakij Pundit University, Bangkok, Thailand.

**A Research Supervisor

Introduction

Nowadays with the rapid development of China and the need of education, more and more students choose to study abroad to improve their ability. As one of Southeast Asian countries, Thailand attracts more and more Chinese students to study in Thailand because of its low cost of living and excellent educational environment. But as a foreign in Thai, there are many problems need to solve. Such as communication, diet, culture and so on. These problems will cause huge stress for students. There are many ways to solve it, such as running, listening music and Thai traditional massage.

Thai traditional massage is an important part of Thai culture, Thai massage originated in the west of ancient India, it has a long history about 4000 years and advanced massage theory. It uses fingers, arms, knees and legs to massage people acupuncture, and then presses and stretches on muscles and joints to restore balance of body, spirit, promote normal operation of blood circulation, respiratory system, nervous system and digestive system, and metabolism of body. Thai traditional massage is very popular in the world, almost every people will experience Thai traditional massage when they travel in the Thai.

So the researcher's aim is to find. "purchase behavior of Chinese student for Thai Traditional Massage in Thailand" through the investigation of the concept of service marketing, this paper studies the views of Chinese student on Thai Traditional Massage, analyzes the factors affecting Chinese students' use of Thai Traditional Massage in Thailand, aiming to This study aims to test whether there are relationship between demographic profile, service marketing mix 7P's to use Thai traditional massage. Therefore, this study proposed two hypotheses as follows:

H1: Demographic profile will have effect on purchasing behavior of Chinese student for Thai traditional Massage in Thailand

H2. Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) will have effect on purchasing behavior of Chinese student for Thai traditional Massage in Thailand

Investigating constructs

This study addresses the intention to purchase behavior of Thai traditional massage for Chinese students in Thailand. The proposed factors of demographic profile and service marketing mix 7P's were used to examine the relationship with purchase behavior of Thai traditional massage for Chinese students in Thailand. The definitions of key terms in this study are described as follows:

Demographic profile – Demographic segmentation is divide the market on variables

such as age, race, religion, gender, nationality, occupation, family size, family life

cycle, ethnicity, income, social class and education.

Service marketing mix 7P's – product, place, price, promotion, people, processes, physical evidence.

Demography is a science to study the quantitative characteristics and relationship of population phenomenon, the process and pattern of population reproduction and the trend of population development. It includes three aspects: static, dynamic and future population development trend to observe and study the quantitative characteristics and internal relations of population phenomenon. Under the condition of a certain period of time in a certain region, the quantitative characteristics of population phenomena, such as the total size of population, the gender structure of population, the age structure, the structure of industry and occupation, the cultural structure and the ethnic structure, are called static demographic characteristics. Demography is not only to describe the quantitative characteristics of these demographic phenomena in isolation, but also to further explore the internal relations of these demographic phenomena, so as to reveal the nature and characteristics of a population.

Kuntonbud (2009) Marketing mix is the elements of marketing activities called 4P's product, price, place and promotion that an organization use to the needs of target market for achieving marketing objectives and targets. Smorjai (2008) it is a tools or marketing factors that entrepreneurs and marketers to control the direction of the business. In order to meet demands of consumers and satisfaction to consumers. The goal is to encourage the demand of consumers to use the products. Business Services differs from consumer goods business because it has both tangible products and intangible products. Marketing strategies applied to business services necessary to provide a marketing mix which is different from the traditional formulation marketing (Gummesson, Gustavsson, & Edvardsson, 1991). Require the marketing mix 7 or 7P's of marketing strategy. Therefore, Service marketing mix strategy (7 P's of marketing) means creating an offering of marketing services that the entrepreneurs made to link the consumer, by considering to the demand of consumers, expectations of the service experience and satisfaction that more than expectations (Long, Ceng, & Jiang, 2009) .

Methodology

The research is a survey research design that uses questionnaire to collect data from respondents. The research adopted quota by using online questionnaire to collect data. The respondents are age between 20-55 years old and who stay in DPU Rangsit Assumption University. Convenience sampling was used for this study because the respondents are selected to be in the right place at the right time and least time consuming compared to other sampling techniques. The sample size is calculated based on 95% confidence level and 5% sampling error. However, this study collected data from 300 samples due to the limitation in terms of only 4 months study period for the independent study course, the researcher was allowed to collect 265 samples.

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistic to describe variables by mean, frequency standard deviation and percentage. Chi-Square was used to delimit the relationships between demographic profile and service marketing 7ps for purchasing behavior of Thai traditional massage for Chinese students.

Results and Discussion

This study collected data from Chinese students age between 20- 50years old who study in DPU University Assumption University (ABAC), and Rangsit University. Questionnaires were distributed to 300 respondents through online channel and 263 acts were received and all were used in data analysis, resulting the response rate of 87.66% were achieved.

In summary, the respondents of this study are Chinese students which is aged between 20-50 years old, and study in DPU university Assumption University (ABAC) Rangsit University, The majority of the respondents were female (64.3%), followed by male (35.7%), mostly aged 21-30 (59.3%), 31-40 (27.8%), 41-50 (7.2%), over 50 (4.2%), high school (3%), bachelor degree (70.3%), master degree (19%), doctor degree (7.7%). Marital status: most of them are Single (67.68%), followed by Married (27.65%), 4.67% for Divorced. Monthly income: most of them are 3001-5000 RMB (64.8%), followed by 5001-7000 RMB (19.3%), 14.9% for more than 7000 RMB.

Most respondents agreed that service marketing mix strategy such as product, place, people, process price promotion and physical evidence have an impact on purchasing behavior of Chinese students for Thai traditional massage.

The majority of respondent's show : Male tended to purchase Thai traditional massage after work (14.86%), weekend (48.93%), special day (2.12%), travel (34.04%). Female tended to purchase Thai traditional massage after work (18.93%), weekend (59.76%), special day (2.59%), travel (18.34%).

The majority of respondents show : Male tended to purchase Thai traditional massage for healthy (36.17%), relaxation (52.12%), skin (11.7%). Female tended to purchase Thai traditional massage for healthy (39.05%), relaxation (57.94%), skin (5.32%).

The majority of respondents show the results of Chinese students' agreement on items related to the Service Marketing Mix (7P's): It was found that the majority of the respondents did not seem to consider the product when purchase Thai traditional massage.

The majority of respondents showed that the majority of the respondents strongly agree that they have considered the price when purchasing Thai traditional massage (mean = 4.28): Chinese students strongly agree that reasonable price when compared with their service (mean = 4.23). Chinese students agree that Thai traditional massage shop has many price levels according to customer requirements (mean = 4.46).

The majority of respondents showed that the majority of the respondents agree that they have considered the place when purchasing Thai traditional massage (mean = 4.10): Chinese students strongly agree that the massage location is convenient to reach (mean = 4.32). Chinese students agree that they often choose the massage shop that has a good layout (mean = 4.46). Chinese students strongly agree that they often choose the massage shop that has a good shopping atmosphere (mean = 4.48).

The majority of respondents showed that the majority of the respondents agree that they have considered the promotion when purchasing Thai traditional

massage (mean = 4.04): Chinese students strongly agree that they tend to choose shop that offer “discount promotion” (mean = 4.41). Chinese feel neutral that they often choose the massage shop that has Promotion campaign is attractive (mean = 3.21). Chinese students strongly agree that they often choose the massage services included in the package tour already (mean = 4.45). Chinese students agree that they often choose massage shop with gifts (mean = 4.10).

The majority of respondents showed that the majority of the respondents agree that they have considered the people when purchasing Thai traditional massage (mean = 3.668): Chinese students strongly agree that Staff who are knowledgeable in service influence my decision to select massage shop (mean = 4.480). Chinese students feel neutral that they tend to use the service because of the attentions that staffs give to my group (mean = 3.24). Chinese students feel neutral that they tend to use the service because of politeness of staff (mean = 3.18). Chinese students agree that promotion action to solve problems of staff influence my decision to select massage shop (mean = 4.20). Chinese students feel neutral that they tend to use massage shop that staffs are energetic (mean = 3.24).

The majority of respondents showed that the majority of the respondents agree that they have considered the process when purchasing Thai traditional massage (mean = 4.37): Chinese students strongly agree that they tend to use the massage shop that has quick booking process (mean = 4.480). Chinese students strongly agree that they tend to use the massage shop that offer online booking (mean = 4.25). Chinese students strongly agree that Quick payment process influence my decision making to select massage shop (mean = 4.38).

The majority of respondents showed that the majority of the respondents agree that they have considered the physical evidence when purchasing Thai traditional massage (mean = 4.446): Chinese students strongly agree that Temperature in massage room is suitable (mean = 4.480). Chinese students strongly agree that Open a music that makes you feel relaxed (mean = 4.41). Chinese students strongly agree that the cleanliness of the place (mean = 4.45).

Table 1 Result of Hypothesis 1: Relationship between Demographic Profile and purchasing behavior

Demographic Profile	purchasing behavior			
	Time of purchasing	Purpose of purchasing	Who influence you purchase	Kind of massage
Gender	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Age	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Education	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Monthly income	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
Marital Status	-	-	-	-

The table 1 showed that the demographic found having significant relationship with purchasing behavior of Chinese customers towards the cosmetic stores in Beijing ($P < 0.05$)

Table 2 Result of Hypothesis 1: Relationship between Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) and purchasing behavior

Service Marketing Mix (7Ps)	Time of purchasing	Purpose of purchasing	Who influence you purchase	Kind of massage
Product	-	-	-	-
Price	-	-	-	-
Place	-	-	-	-
Promotion	-	-	-	-
People	-	-	-	-
Process	-	-	-	-
physical evidence	-	-	-	-

The table 2 showed that the Price, promotion, process and physical evidence found having significant relationship with purchasing behavior, and product, place and people found having no significant relationship with purchasing behavior. ($P < 0.05$)

This leads to development of conceptual framework of the study and the following hypothesis:

H1: There is an effect of demographic profiles on Chinese student choosing Thai traditional massage in Thailand.

H2: There is an effect of service marketing (7ps) on Chinese student choosing Thai traditional massage in Thailand.

Implication of the study

(1) According to the survey results, the massage service chosen by the majority of respondents is flexible in the booking process, and the physical evidence environment and facilities as well as the staff acknowledge in the service. These standards help the massage shop, especially a new massage shop. Although they are small, they can gain a competitive advantage in the market.

(2) Users consider the importance of location. In terms of decision-making, customers always feel convenient when they choose massage; there is sufficient parking space, close to the house and located in the community center.

(3) Compared with other promotional tools, public relations such as magazine articles and news have the least impact on customers' purchase behavior. The results show that customers do not seem to think that public relations is an important factor in

choosing massage shops. Therefore, the service of massage shop should not focus on free media, such as articles and news in magazines, but should consider the tools of marketing communication activities

Limitation of the study

First, the population should be increased in future research. This figure does not represent the entire population. Future research can expand the sample range and investigate more evidence to find the closest possible reality.

Secondly, in the future research, more in-depth investigation should be carried out to understand the needs of consumers or even more

Third, in this study, I only did research in Bangkok. Therefore, suggestions for further research should be carried out in provinces with more Chinese students. In order to accept the findings and results more widely.

Finally, we should study emerging markets such as the Middle East, India and Russia to expand markets. Because now, the number of Middle East students, Laos students and Korea students who visit Thailand every year is increasing. These target groups are interested in the future massage Market.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akhter, S. H. (2003). Digital divide and purchase intention: Why demographic psychology matters. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 24(3), 321-327.
- Barhey, S. (2012). The spa business marketing mix as customer requirement. Phuket Rajabhat University, Phuket.
- Boone, E., L. (1992). *Contemporary marketing*. New York, NY: The Dryden Press.
- Boone, K. (2006). *Principles of marketing*. London: Thomson Higher Education.
- Boonyarit, R., & Phetvaroon, K. (2004). Spa service quality: The case of the Andaman tourism cluster (Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi), Thailand. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 3(2), 69-79.
- Chan, T. S. (1996). Concerns for environmental issues and consumer purchase preferences: A two-country study. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 9(1), 43-55.
- Department of tourism Ministry of Tourism and Sports. (2013). The number of Chinese tourists to stay in Bangkok 2010-2013. Retrieved from https://www.mots.go.th/mots_en/Index.php
- Ernst, E. (2003). The safety of massage therapy. *Rheumatology*, 42(9), 1101-1106.
- Feng, L. H. (2012). *Consumer behavior analysis*. Beijing: People's Posts and Telecommunications Press.
- Gummesson, E., Gustavsson, B., & Edvardsson, B. (1991). *Service quality: Multidisciplinary and multinational perspectives*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Hantula, D. A., & Wells, V. K. (Eds.). (2014). *Consumer behavior analysis : (a) rational approach to consumer choice*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hawkins, D. I., & Mothers Baugh, D. L. (2011). *Consumer behavior*. Beijing: Beijing China Machine Press.
- Henderson, J. C., & Nutt, P. C. (1980). The influence of decision style on decision making behavior. *Management Science*, 26(4), 371-386.
- Kittiworapat, S. (1996). *A study of turbo and physics* (Master's thesis). Bangkok Thammasat University, Bangkok.
- Kuester, S. (2012). MKT 301: Strategic marketing & marketing in specific industry contexts. *University of Mannheim*, 110, 393-404.
- Kuntonbud, S. (2009). Principles of modern marketing. Bangkok Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.
- Long, Y. Q., Ceng, F. H., & Jiang, C. F. (2009). *Service marketing*. Beijing: Science Press.
- Paul, J., & Rana, J. (2012). Consumer behavior and purchase intention for organic food. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 29(6), 412-422.
- Payungsin, S. (2010). Marketing strategies of Spa business in Thailand. Eastern Asia University, Pathum Thani.

- Poldongnok, P. (2009). Marketing mix factors affecting service usage behavior of major karaoke's customers in Bangkok metropolitan area (Master's thesis). Srinakharinwiroj University, Bangkok.
- Sirirat, S. (2005). *Marketing research standard version*. Bangkok: Thammasarn.
- Smorjai, C. (2008). *Thitinun varivnit. Principles of marketing*. Bangkok: Bangkok SE-ED book publishing.
- Spa Finder. (2011). Trends spa report, 2013. Retrieved from <https://qa.spafinder.com/blog/trends/2013-report/>
- Stenden Rangsit University & Thai Spa Association. (2013). Spa industry study 2013. Retrieved from <https://globalwellnesssummit.com/wp-content/uploads/Industry-Research/Asia-Pacific/2013-stenden-university-thailand-spa-industry.pdf>
- Sukkunphithak, S. (2007). *The spa business marketing mix as customer requirement and independent study report for the master of business administration in marketing* (Master's thesis). Khon Kaen University, Nai-Muang.
- Yang, L. (2014). *New tourism law*. Retrieved from xinhuane.com