SERVICE MARKETING MIX AND SERVICE QUALITY INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION IN USING 7-ELEVEN CONVENIENT STORES IN BANGKOK AND METROPOLITAN AREA

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Abstract

The research aimed to study (1) effect of service marketing mix strategies (7Ps) on customer's satisfaction and (2) effect of service quality on customer's satisfaction of 7-Eleven Convenience Stores in Bangkok and Metropolitan area. A survey questionnaire was a tool for data collection. 400 samplings were collected from the customers using 7-Eleven Convenience Stores in Bangkok and Metropolitan area. Data analysis was based on descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation; and inferential statistics including stepwise multiple linear regression. The results indicated that service marketing mix strategies including product, price, place, promotion, personnel, physical and process had an effect on customer's satisfaction. Lastly, the service quality including tangibles, responsiveness and assurance had an effect on customer's satisfaction at the significance level of .05. The study proves that marketing mix strategies and service quality are the keys to drive 7-Eleven Convenience Stores successful. The implications related to this study results is recommended for similar retail businesses.

Keywords: Service Marketing Mix, Service Quality, Customer's Satisfaction, Convenience Stores

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Introduction

Recently, all people are demanding and like to spend their lives with comfortability, especially, buying household things, foods, and beverages. Therefore, the concepts of using the services from various types of convenient stores happened and expanded into different areas with the purposes to cover all people's wants (Hood, Clarke, & Clarke, 2016). One of several convenient stores in Thailand includes 7-Eleven convenient stores. It is an international chain of convenience stores, headquartered in Dallas, Texas and was founded in 1927. However, in 1991, it was reorganized as a wholly owned subsidiary of Seven-Eleven Japan Co., Ltd in 2005, and is now held by Chiyoda, Tokyo-based Seven & I Holdings Co., Ltd. For Thailand, 7-Eleven convenient stores was launched by CP All Public Co.Ltd. the 7-Eleven in Thailand is a one-stop convenient store that offers fresh and a wide variety of products, ready-to-eat meals, and beverages. There were 10,268 branches broken down into 4,556 franchises in Bangkok Metropolitan Region, which is accounted for 44% and 5,712 franchises in provincial areas of Thailand, which is accounted for 56%. Stores are clustered into 3 types: Company Stores (44%), Store Business Partner (49%), and Sub-Area License Stores (7%). There is currently an average of 11.8 million customers entering 7-Eleven stores daily.

After 7-Eleven was bloomed in Thailand, the other Thai traditional retailers were very much suffering. The competition among the modern trade retailers like 7-Eleven and Thai traditional retailers was so tuff. This is due to lack of proper management of service marketing mix dealing with the process how the products and services are able to deliver to proper customers with the right time, place, price, and process. For service marketing strategy (7Ps), it is a sub field of marketing, which can be split into the two main areas of goods marketing and services marketing. In addition, some Thai traditional retailers lack the knowledge to provide the service quality to serve properly customers (Feeny, Vongpatanasin, & Soonsatham, 1996; Schipmann, & Qaim, 2011; Gen, 2013). These two areas are important for service businesses (Gianie Abdu, 2013).

Though 7-Eleven is successful in doing business in Thailand and completes the need of Thai people, therefore, there is significance to study about the how it run the business as well as what the factors are driving their success. This study aimed to focus on proving the service marketing mix and service quality can be applied to create customers' satisfaction and customers loyalty which can keep customers to visit and revisit to buy the products and services. The study gained from this can prove the study and see the guidance on how the 7-Eleven stores run their business, which can be applied to Thai traditional retail shops.
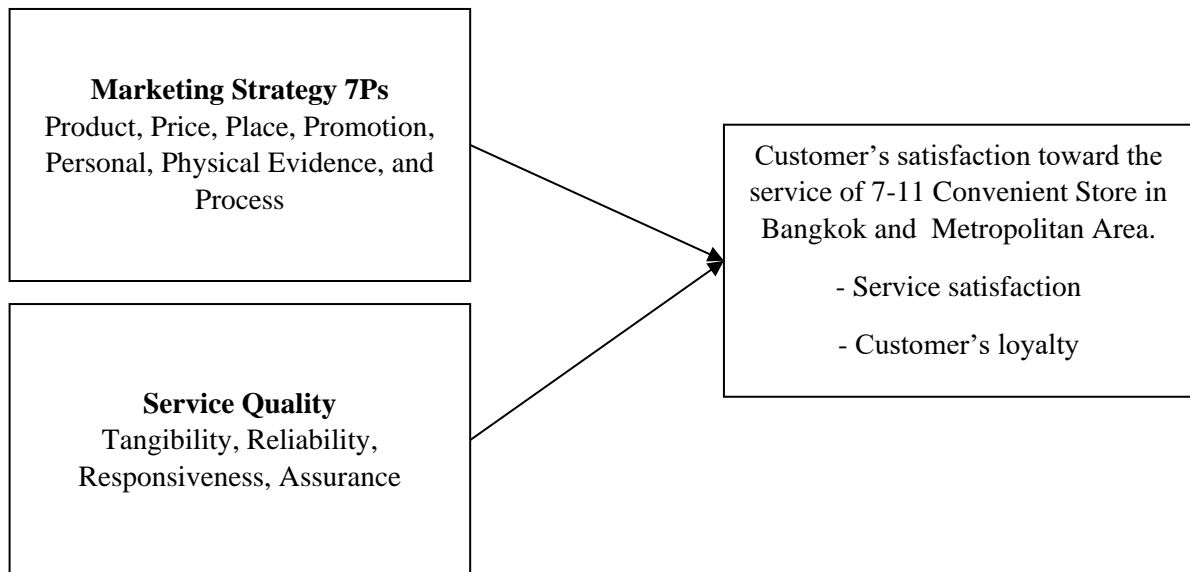
Objectives

1. To study effect of service marketing mix strategies (7Ps) including product, price, place, promotion, personal, physical and process evidence on customer's satisfaction.

2. To study effect of service quality including tangibility, reliable, responsiveness, and assurance on customer's satisfaction.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Service marketing mix strategy (product, price, place, promotion, personal, physical, process) affected customer's satisfaction toward service of "7-11" convenience stores.

Hypothesis 2: Service quality (tangibility, reliable, responsiveness, and assurance) affected customer's satisfaction toward service of "7-11" convenience stores.

Conceptual framework

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│   Marketing Strategy 7Ps    │
│ Product, Price, Place,      │        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│ Promotion, Personal,        │        │ Customer's satisfaction      │
│ Physical Evidence, and      │───┐    │ toward the service of 7-11   │
│ Process                     │   │    │ Convenient Store in Bangkok  │
└─────────────────────────────┘   └───▶│ and  Metropolitan Area.      │
                                  ┌────▶│                              │
┌─────────────────────────────┐   │    │ - Service satisfaction       │
│     Service Quality         │   │    │ - Customer's loyalty         │
│ Tangibility, Reliability,   │───┘    └──────────────────────────────┘
│ Responsiveness, Assurance   │
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Theories, concepts and related researches

Service marketing strategy (7Ps)

Service marketing strategy (7Ps) is a sub field of marketing, which can be split into the two main areas of goods marketing and services marketing. Service marketing includes telecommunications services, financial services, all types of hospitality services. The range of approaches and expressions of a marketing idea developed with the hope that it could be effective in conveying the ideas to the diverse segments of people who receive it (Abdulnabi, Hameed Al-Debi;Ashraf Mustafa, 2014). The service marketing strategy (7Ps) can include 7 sub-dimensions including as follows. The first is the product, which is defined as the extent to which the organization develops a comprehensive service offer to satisfy the guests and customers' needs and requirement in highly competitive industry or market. The second is the price, which is defined as the extent to which the organization practices pricing policies and activities in setting a products or services prices. The third is the place, which is defined as the extent to which the organization uses distribution strategies, channels and activities in setting products and services distribution strategies. The fourth is the promotion, which is defined as the extent to which the organization uses the components of promotion activities and elements in formulating products and services promotions strategies. The fifth is the personnel, which is defined as the extent to which the organization is customer oriented in practicing its business, putting the guests

and customers at the heart of activities. The sixth is the physical evidence, which is defined as the extent to which the organization is interested in creating a guest and customer friendly, safety, secure and green atmosphere in their environment. The last one is the process, which is defined as the extent to which the organization servicing customers who come to receive the services. Regrading this, there were many researches applying the service marketing strategy to prove its significant (Jain, 2013; Yoon, 2010; Amofah, Gyamfi, & Tutu 2016; Chienwattanasook, & Onputtha, 2018). For example, Andreti et l. (2013) studied about the analysis of product, price, place, promotion and service quality on customers' buying decision of convenience store: A survey of young adult in Bekasi, West Java, Indonesia by using 300 questionnaires to collect data from customers buying the products and services from the convenience store in Bekasi. The data were analyzed with SPPS statistics including frequency, descriptive statistics, validity and reliability test, multi regression analysis, correlation analysis, F- Test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), generating the result that the most of customers comes to convenience store because of the price offered, kind of promotion, and also service quality provided. In addition, Khatab, Esmaeel, & Othman (2019) studied about the dimensions of service marketing mix and its effects on customer satisfaction: a case study of international Kurdistan Bankin Erbil City-Iraq with the objectives to investigate the relationship between the service marketing mix of banking services and customer satisfaction from International Kurdistan Bank. The data were collected by using questionnaires from 131 customers who used the services from international Kurdistan Bankin Erbil City-Iraq and were analyzed by covariance structures (structural equation modeling) confirmatory factor analysis and process analysis. The result indicated that there is a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction by all the dimensions of service marketing mix and advises that more focus should be on physical evidence and process, in their service delivery in order for International Kurdistan Bank to be able to satisfy its customers.

Service Quality

Service quality also found that customer satisfaction strongly mediated the effect of service quality on behavioral intentions (Dabholkar, Shepherd, & Thorpe, 2010). It can consist of 4 dimensions. The first is tangibles, which is distinct and separate from other research data and intellectual property such as patentable or copyrightable works, and trademarks. Intellectual property that develops from research activities and/or data is subject to a separate policy. The second is reliability, which is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. The third is responsiveness, which it, in the context of a system, can be defined as the outcome that can be achieved when institutions and institutional relationships are designed in such a way that they are cognizant and respond appropriately to the universally legitimate expectations of individuals. The last one is assurance, which is all the planned and systematic actions implemented within the quality system, and demonstrated as needed, to provide adequate confidence that an entity will fulfil requirements for quality. The service quality has its importance in service business. Andreti et al. (2013) mentioned that most of customers

comes to convenience store because of the price offered, kind of promotion, and also service quality provided. In addition, Solimun and Fernandes (2018) studied about the mediation effect of customer satisfaction in the relationship between service quality and the result found that the service quality provided by the organization is very much important for making customer feel satisfied and loyalty.

Customer's satisfaction

Service satisfaction is at the core of human experience reflecting the interests of the business activities of our company's high level of customer satisfaction with a pleasurable experience as predictors of strong customer retention, customer loyalty, and repurchase the product (Abdulnabi, Hameed Al-Debi;Ashraf Mustafa, 2014). When satisfaction happens to the customers, it can also link to create customer loyalty, it resulted from a consumer committed to the store through an explicit and extensive decision-making process. Customer loyalty is frequently operated as a conscious evaluation of the price/quality ratio or the willingness to pay a premium price, or alternatively price indifference (Anderson, Fornell, & Rust, 1997). Solimun, & Fernandes (2018) mentioned that customer satisfaction can be defined as pleasure perceived by customers when evaluating a particular product or service which they have used.

Research methodology

Population in this study are customers visiting and buying the products in 7-Eleven convenience stores in Bangkok and Metropolitan area. With sampling computation employing unknown population (Silpcharu, 2005) at the confident level as of 95%, therefore, the samples were of 400 customers. The random sampling method hired convenience sampling to collect the data.

In terms of research tool, the researcher used close–ended questionnaires divided into 4 parts. The first part consisted of check-list questions asking about the personal factors including gender, age, marital status, occupation, income, and education level. The second, third, and fourth part consisted of rating scale questions (1-5 Likert's scale) asking about service marketing mix, service quality, and customer satisfaction.

For validity check, the researcher had experts in related fields inspect the accurate and consistency of contents and questions used in the questionnaires and recommend for improvement and edition. For reliability check, the finding discovered Cronbach's alpha coefficient as of 0.913 for service marketing mix, 0.931 for service quality, and 0.880 for customer satisfaction. This meant that the data derived from this survey questionnaire can be proceeded to have further study.

Researchers analyzed the data derived from samples by using descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics consisting of stepwise multiple regression model analysis to oversee the effect of independent variables on dependence variables.

Results

Personal characteristics

In terms of general characteristics, the results indicated that most of were female (227 persons or 56.8%), aged between 21-30 years old (242 persons or 60.5%), were single (349 persons or 87.3%), graduated in bachelor's degree (298 persons or 74.5%), were students (311 persons or 77.8%) and has income less than 10,000 baht (264 persons or 66.0%).

Service marketing mix factors, service quality and customer satisfaction

Table 1 Mean, Std. Deviation and Interpretation of service marketing mix factors, service quality and customer satisfaction

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Service Marketing Mix			
Product	4.22	0.46	Highest Level
Price	4.02	0.54	High Level
Place	4.31	0.58	Highest Level
Promotion	4.15	0.53	High Level
Personnel	3.96	0.61	High Level
Physical Evidence	4.04	0.52	High Level
Process	4.02	0.61	High Level
Overall of Service Marketing	4.10	0.41	High Level
Service Quality			
Tangibility	4.03	0.53	High Level
Reliability	4.01	0.56	High Level
Responsiveness	3.98	0.58	High Level
Assurance	4.02	0.56	High Level
Overall of Service Quality	4.01	0.50	High Level
Customer Satisfaction			
Service Satisfaction	4.06	0.53	High Level
Service Loyalty	4.16	0.55	High Level
Overall of Customer Satisfaction	4.11	0.50	High Level

According to the Table 1, the study of service marketing mix factors indicated that product and place were rated in the highest level, which mean scores were of 4.22 and 4.31, respectively. This reflected that the customers highly agree on various kinds and brands of products as well as easy-to-access location. In the meantime, price, promotion, personnel, physical evidence, and process were rated in the high level, which mean scores were of 4.02, 4.15, 3.96, 4.04, and 4.02, respectively. This

reflected that the customers highly agreed on clearly price information, advertisement on social media and discount, professional and well-groomed staffs, and good interior decoration. In the meantime, the study of service quality indicated that all dimensions of service quality including tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance were rated in high level, which mean scores were of 4.03, 4.01, 3.98 and 4.02. This implied that the customers highly agreed on good location, high quality of products and services, problem solution and care, as well as service assurance. Lastly, in terms of customer satisfaction, the study also revealed that service satisfaction and service loyalty were also rated in high level, referring that the customers were satisfied with services provided from the 7-11 and intended to revisit the store.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1: Service marketing mix strategy (product, price, place, promotion, personal, physical, process) affected customer's satisfaction toward service of "7-11" convenience stores.

Table 2 The result of stepwise multiple regression model analysis of service marketing mix on customer satisfaction

Service Marketing Mix	Customer Satisfaction				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.81	0.18		4.47	0.00
Process	0.19	0.04	0.23	4.66	0.00
Promotion	0.17	0.05	0.19	3.92	0.00
Physical evidence	0.16	0.05	0.17	3.20	0.00
Product	0.19	0.05	0.18	3.63	0.00
Personnel	0.10	0.04	0.12	2.53	0.01
Place	-0.10	0.04	-0.11	-2.54	0.01
Price	0.10	0.04	0.10	2.17	0.03

R = 0.72; R Square = 0.52; Adjusted R Square= 0.51; S.E.E. = 0.35,

Durbin-Watson = 2.05, Tolerance = 0.43 - 0.64, VIF = 1.54-2.30

From the Table 2, the multiple regression model analysis was conducted to study the effect of the marketing strategy toward customer's satisfaction by stepwise method. The result indicated that 7 variables including process, promotion, physical, product, personal, place and price have appropriate tolerance, VIF and Durbin-Watson. As a result, it can be concluded that the 7 variables including Process, Promotion, Physical, Product, Personnel, Place and Price can be employed to predict the dependent variables. After using stepwise multiple regression models to explore the most appropriate values for model prediction, the result indicated that there were 7 variables including process,

promotion, physical, product, personnel, place, and price that have an effect on the customer's satisfaction at the significant level as of 0.05. Overall, the model has correlation coefficient (r) Process, Promotion, Physical, Product, Personal, Place and Price toward Customer's satisfaction as of 0.72 and R square as of 0.52 this means that the model of Process, Promotion, Physical, Product, Personal, Place and Price can accurately predict the Customer's satisfaction as of 52%. In addition, the model has the unstandardized coefficients (b) ranging from -0.10 to 0.19 and standardized coefficients (β) ranging from -0.11 to 0.18. Align with these values; the first is Process can most significantly affect the Customer's satisfaction with weight as of 0.23 or accounted for 23% Then, the second is Promotion with weight as of 0.19, or accounted for 19%. The third is Physical with weight as of 0.17, or accounted for 17%. The fourth is Product with weight as of 0.18, or accounted for 18%. The fifth is Personal with weight as of 0.12, or accounted for 12%. The sixth is Place with weight as of -0.11, or accounted for 11%. The last one is Price with weight as of 0.10, or accounted for 10%. Consequently, the model can generate the equation as of follow.

$$Y = 0.812 + 0.190(Process) + 0.178(Promotion) + 0.161 (Physical) + 0.193(Product)$$
$$+ 0.096(Personnel) + 0.09(Price)$$

Hypothesis 2: Service quality (Tangibles, Reliable, Responsiveness, and Assurance) affects customer's satisfaction toward service of "7-11" convenience stores.

Table 3 The result of stepwise multiple regression model analysis of service quality on customer satisfaction

Service Quality	Customer Satisfaction				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.84	0.14		6.07	0.00
Responsiveness	0.37	0.04	0.40	8.48	0.00
Assurance	0.26	0.05	0.27	5.05	0.00
Tangibility	0.18	0.05	0.18	3.66	0.00

R = 0.77; R Square = 0.60; Adjusted R Square= 0.59; S.E.E. = 0.34,

Durbin-Watson = 2.80, Tolerance = 0.35 - 0.45, VIF = 2.21-2.84

From the Table 3, the multiple regression model analysis was conducted to study the effect of the quality of service toward customer's satisfaction by stepwise method. The result indicated that 3 variables including Responsiveness, Assurance and Tangibility have appropriate tolerance, VIF, and Durbin-Watson. As a result, it can be concluded that the 3 variables including Responsiveness, Assurance and Tangibles can be employed to predict the dependent variables. After using stepwise multiple regression model to explore the most appropriate values for model prediction, the result

indicated that there were 3 variables including Responsiveness, Assurance and Tangibility that have an effect on the Customer's satisfaction at the significant level as of 0.05. Overall, the model has correlation coefficient (r) responsiveness, assurance, and tangibility toward Customer's satisfaction as 0.77 and R square as of 0.60. This means that the model of responsiveness, assurance and tangibility can accurately predict the Customer's satisfaction as of 60%. In addition, the model has the unstandardized coefficients (b) ranging from 0.18 to 0.37 and standardized coefficients (β) ranging from 0.18 to 0.37. Align with these values; the Responsiveness can most significantly affect the Customer's satisfaction with weight as of 0.37 or accounted for 37%. Then, it was followed by the Assurance with weight as of 0.26, or accounted for 26%. The last one is Tangibility with weight as of 0.18 or accounted for 18%. Consequently, the model can generate the equation as of follow.

$$Y = 0.836 + 0.37(Responsiveness) + 0.26(Assurance) + 0.18(Tangibility)$$

Discussion

For the study related to the effect of service marketing mix strategy on customers' satisfaction, the result indicated that all aspects of service marketing mix strategy including product, price, place, promotion, personnel, physical and process had an effect on customers' satisfaction. This is because the customers wanted to have good services as well as good physical evidences which they can be seen from all dimensions of service marketing mix strategy including product, price, place, promotion, personnel, physical and process. The service operators provided various kinds and brands of products as well as easy-to-access location. In addition, they provided good location, high quality of products and services, problem solution and care, as well as service assurance. As the result, the convenience store that applied service marketing can be successful in creating the satisfaction for the customers. This study had related to the study related to the analysis of product, price, place, promotion and service quality on customers' buying decision of convenience store: A survey of young adult in Bekasi, West Java, Indonesia, done by Andreti et al. (2013), and the result that the most of customers comes to convenience store because of the price offered, kind of promotion, and also service quality provided. Moreover, this study also matches with Abdulnabi, Hameed Al-Debi and Ashraf Mustafa (2014) find the significance of service marketing mix on customer satisfaction. Lastly, the study was matched with Khatab, Esmaeel and Othman (2019) studied about the dimensions of service marketing mix and its effects on customer satisfaction: a case study of international Kurdistan Bankin Erbil City-Iraq with the objectives to investigate the relationship between the service marketing mix of banking services and customer satisfaction from International Kurdistan Bank. The result indicated that there is a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction by all the dimensions of service marketing mix and advises that more focus should be on physical evidence and process, in their service delivery in order for International Kurdistan Bank to be able to satisfy its customers.

For the study related to the effect of service quality on customers' satisfaction, the result indicated that service quality in terms of responsiveness, tangibles and assurance had an effect on

customers' satisfaction. It is because 7-11 convenient store had the policy to service the customers with quick response and assure the quality of service. In addition, 7-11 convenient stores also provide the services in terms of both tangibles and services with it can be seen from the beautiful shop decoration. This reason matches with Innis and La Londe (1994) who mentioned that the customer service: the key to customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and market share. In the meantime, Kotler (2000) indicated that satisfaction can be created when the customers' need can be responded. Furthermore, this research result corresponded with the study by Andreti et al. (2013) mentioning that most of customers comes to convenience store because of the price offered, kind of promotion, and also service quality provided. Also, Solimun and Fernandes (2018) studied about the mediation effect of customer satisfaction in the relationship between service quality and the result found that the service quality provided by the organization is very much important for making customer feel satisfied and loyalty.

Recommendations from the study

After this study, the research result can be implemented by the related managers of 7-11 convenient store in order to set the service marketing mix strategies including product, price, place, promotion, personal, physical and process for the business in order to increase the satisfaction of customers who have used the services from them. Also, the managers and other business owners who have service business can use the result gain from this study to set their strategies related to result of service marketing mix strategies. In addition, the study result also shows the relationship of service quality toward the customer satisfaction. Therefore, the managers of 7-11 convenient store can implement the service quality including responsiveness, tangibles, and assurance in order to improve the customer's satisfaction.

Recommendation for the future research

Further studies should be done to extend the scope of the study. The first is that the research should find the appropriate sampling method in order to gain the appropriate study samples. With careful selection of the method, the research can then gain more reliable data. Secondly, the research should find and add more variables such as business strategies, internal and external business environment such as government policy, business economic, culture and recent technology in order to find out the factors that can also influence the customers' satisfaction. Thirdly, the future research should expand the study area further 7-11 convenient stores that are located near the schools or universities in order to set the strategies right to the group of people.

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