

FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER REPURCHASE DECISION: A CASE STUDY OF SUKI TEE NOI

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research were to find how personal factors, brand equity, and service marketing mix factors influence consumer decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi. The sample consisted of 400 consumers who experienced dining-in at Suki Tea Noi in Pathum Thani. Questionnaires were used to collect data. The obtained data were analyzed by using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. T-test, One-Way ANOVA, and multiple linear regression analysis (MRA) were used to test the hypotheses.

The study shows that 1) personal factors: age, occupation, and average monthly income differently affected consumer decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi products in Pathum Thani, 2) Brand equity factors: brand loyalty and brand awareness influenced consumers' decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani, and 3) Service-marketing mix factors: service process, price, and marketing promotion influenced consumers' decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani at a statistically significant level of .05. The brand equity and service-marketing mix factors together explained 65 percent of the variance in the repurchase decision.

Keywords: Brand Equity, Service Marketing Mix Factors, Repurchase Decision, Suki Tee Noi

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Introduction

Nowadays, Thai people's lifestyle, especially in big cities with large populations, has been rapidly changing. People's hectic lifestyle caused by their commute and work with high competition leads to changes in society, livelihoods, consumption, culture, and values among people living in the city and suburban. Such lifestyle also affects their food consumption behavior. Due to the fact that cooking requires time and place, people tend to dine out which is more convenient while they can experience new atmosphere to relieve stress and spend time with their family and friends. Despite slow economic growth, Thai people still prefer dining out several times a month (Positioning, 2017).

Japanese-style restaurants that provide suki-shabu buffets are available in large numbers corporate and family business. Obviously, the growth is among Asian restaurants. Suki and shabu restaurants have increased equally by 15 percent. At present, the shabu market has completely entered the Red Ocean. Even though this market has high business opportunities, high competition among entrepreneurs becomes more intense (Klomdang & Suthisanont, 2019). Thus, entrepreneurs have to develop their products and services while presenting positive brand image to impress consumers and meet the ever-growing and changing needs of customers. A restaurant named 'Suki Tee Noi' with 41 branches throughout Bangkok and its vicinities serving 30,000-40,000 customers per day has been popular among consumers. Its popularity has generated over 3,000 million baht as the income of this business. Besides the food itself that meets the taste of customers, technology is also used for booking, queuing, serving, and payment processes. Suki Tee Noi plans to enter the stock exchange within 2022-2024. Thus, it has been speeding up the expansion of branches to 60 (The Standard, 2022). Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Suki Tee Noi was able to adjust the strategy for survival by offering a la carte sukiyaki and delivery in various areas by food trucks (Brand Buffet, 2021).

In addition to the intense competition in the suki business, also compete to present marketing promotion strategies also compete to gain market share. Therefore, various suki businesses try to find approaches and strategies to win the hearts of customers and make them use the service again as often as possible. So that the company can earn continuous profits and be able to forecast sales and commodities effectively. Several studies have shown that repeat purchase decisions are caused by various factors, including individual differences (Tusakunee & Inkaew, 2016), service marketing mix (Namsaeng et al., 2020), brand equity (Thiengmak, Jinpha, Inkum, & Chienwattanasook, 2022). Brand equity and marketing mix factors are therefore important variables for the study of consumer repurchases.

According to the fact as mentioned, it is essential to examine the factors affecting consumer repurchase decision by using Suki Tee Noi as a case study and a guideline to enhance the efficiency of the service to meet the needs of consumers.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the personal factors of consumers that affect the decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani,
2. To examine the brand equity that affects the decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani
3. To examine the factors of service marketing mix that affect the decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani.

Hypothesis

1. Different personal factors influence consumers' decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani Province,
2. The brand equity factors have a positive influence on consumers' decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani province
3. The service marketing mix factors have a positive influence on consumers' decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani province.

Literature Review

Concepts and theories related to brand equity

Brand equity refers to the value of a brand with a unique reputation accepted by consumers, including the assets and liabilities of the company (Aaker, 1991; Schiffman, Kanuk & Wisenblit, 2010). Brand value is divided into five aspects: 1) brand awareness, which means that customers can remember the name of the company's brand or service, 2) brand association, which means outstanding characteristics, features, or benefits of the brand, 3) perceived quality, which means that consumers are aware of the quality of goods and services, 4) brand loyalty, which means customer's love and faith in the brand, and 5) other proprietary brand assets, which means the assets of the brand such as patents, trademarks, or distribution channel relationships.

Concepts and theories related to service marketing mix factors

Marketing mix factors are used to motivate consumers to purchase products and services of the company to achieve organizational objectives. They are recognized as important marketing variables that should be applied to meet the needs of customers. Originally, marketing mix factors consisted of product, price, place, and promotion (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). However, process, people, and physical evidence were also added as the key factors (Kar, 2016).

Concepts and theories related to repurchase decisions

Repurchase refers to the intention to purchase goods or services from the same brand due to the satisfying result of the previous experience. Repurchase can also lead to word of mouth among close family members, colleagues, and others (Karjaluoto, Munnukka & Tikkanen, 2014). In fact, repurchase decisions are driven by internal and external impulses, which can be categorized into three types: habitual decision making, limited decision making, and extended decision making (Song, 2016).

Brand equity and service marketing influencing repurchase decisions

Previous studies have highlighted the relationship between brand equity and marketing mix factors that influence repeat purchase decisions in the context of food-related businesses:

Nangam and Phothongsaengaro (2019) examined the influence of causal factors on repurchase intention of clean food products. Perceived quality of products and services, customer expectation, and perceived value of products and services indirectly influence repurchase intention of clean food. through intermediary variables such as satisfaction in addition, social factors influence customer expectation and repurchase intention statistically significantly. Thiengmak et al. (2022) investigated the influence of brand equity and marketing mix on the decision of cooked-to-order restaurant operators to repurchase Thai chili paste. The research found that brand equity has a positive influence on the decision to repurchase Thai chili paste. Porndechdecha and Booranavitayaporn (2022) investigated the marketing mix factors influencing repeat purchases of Japanese Izakaya restaurants in Bangkok. Marketing mix service, process, customer value perceived by customers, cost, convenience, staff support, and success in responding to demand, this influences the intention to make repeat use of service at Japanese izakaya restaurants in Bangkok.

Conceptual Framework

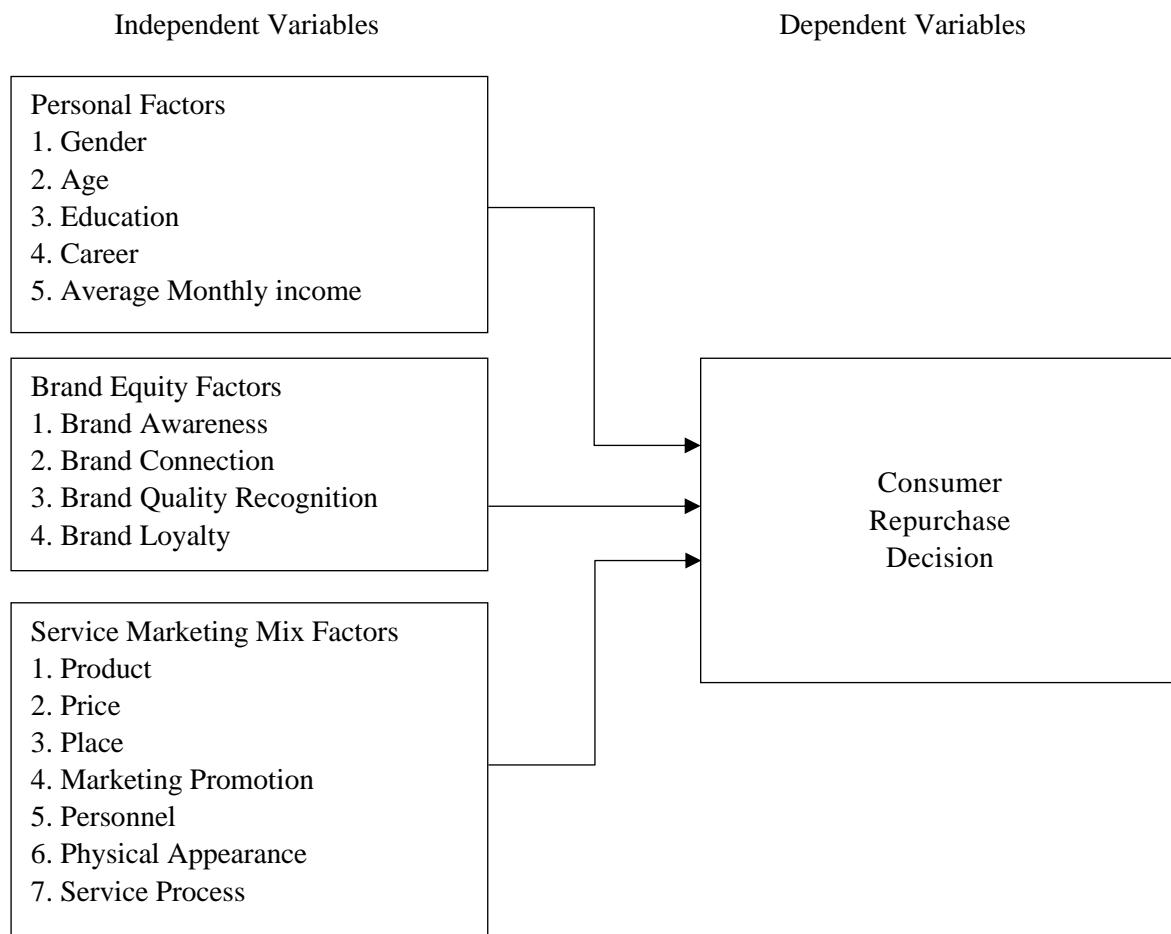


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Method

1. The population and sample group used in the study were consumers who had visited Suki Tee Noi branches in Pathum Thani: Lam Luk Ka Khlong 2 branch and Thanyaburi Klong 4 branch. Only two branches of Suki Tee Noi are open in Pathum Thani province. Since the exact population was not known, the formula of Cochran (1977) was used to calculate the sample size. Thus, 384 samples and 16 additional samples, for a total of 400 samples, were collected. Based on purposive sampling, the data were collected from consumers who were being served at Suki Tee Noi restaurants in Pathum Thani.

2. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire developed based on relevant concepts and theories. The study consisted of four parts: 1) general information about respondents, 2) brand equity factors, 3) service marketing mix factors, and 4) repurchase decisions. A five-point rating scale was used. Scores were interpreted on an interval scale. The item-objective congruence (IOC) index was greater than .6. For the Cronbach's coefficient alpha, the sample size for the pre-tests of the questionnaire was 30 people with similar characteristics of the sample group. The reliability value was .80 in all aspects. The results of the reliability tests for each aspect were as follows: (1) Brand Awareness ($\alpha = .763$), (2) Brand Connection ($\alpha = .815$), (3) Brand Quality Recognition ($\alpha = .849$), (4) Brand Loyalty ($\alpha = .838$), (5) Products/Services ($\alpha = .843$), (6) Price ($\alpha = .877$), (7) Place ($\alpha = .870$), (8) Promotion ($\alpha = .878$), (9) Personnel ($\alpha = .900$), (10) Physical Appearance ($\alpha = .913$), (11) Service process ($\alpha = .913$), and (12) Repurchase decision ($\alpha = .891$) (Vanichbuncha & Vanichbuncha, 2015).

3. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyze general characteristics of the samples. To test the hypothesis, inferential statistic, such as t-test, One-Way ANOVA, and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis (MRA) were used.

Results

1. The results show that most of the consumers were male (53.5%), aged between 26 to 30 years (36.8%), holding an undergraduate degree (71.3%), employees of private companies (39.5%), and had 15,001 – 20,000 baht as average monthly income (39.2%).

2. In terms of Suki Tee Noi consumer's behavior, most of the consumers went to the restaurant with their families (34%). The frequency of their visits was once a month (37.5%). Most of the consumers found the price reasonable (60.8%). They preferred to visit on weekdays (46.5%), between 16:00 and 18:00 (26.5%). Most of them came to Suki Tee Noi to dine in (94.3%), and were influenced by their family members to visit the restaurant (32%).

3. Hypothesis Test Results

Table 1 Results of hypothesis test on personal factors affecting repurchase decisions

Personal Factors	Statistics	Values	Sig.
Gender	t-test	-1.168	.243
Age	F-test	2.299	.034*
Education	F-test	0.643	.526
Occupation	F-test	3.141	.005*
Average Monthly Income	F-test	2.868	.015*

*Statistically significant at .05

Table 1 presents that age, occupation, and average monthly income had an influence on consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani with statistical significance at the .05.

Table 2 Results of hypothesis test on brand equity and 7Ps affecting repurchase decision

Repurchase Decision	b	t	Sig.
Constants	-0.463	-2.605	.010*
Brand equity			
Brand Awareness	0.152	2.792	.006*
Brand Connection	0.012	0.219	.827
Brand Quality Recognition	0.018	0.294	.769
Brand Loyalty	0.167	2.738	.006*
Service marketing mix (7Ps)			
Products/Services	0.039	0.614	.540
Price	0.180	2.351	.019*
Place	-0.009	-0.118	.906
Promotion	0.123	1.967	.050*
Personnel	0.085	1.321	.187
Physical Appearance	0.063	0.936	.350
Service Process	0.240	3.475	.001*

$R^2 = 0.650$, $F = 63.453$, $p = .000^*$

*Statistically significant at .05

Table 2 shows the results of the hypothesis test, which revealed that brand equity in the form of brand loyalty ($b = 0.167$, $t = 2.792$, $Sig. = .006$) and brand awareness ($b = 0.152$, $t = 2.792$, $Sig. = .006$)/ and Service marketing mix factors in term of service process ($b = 0.240$, $t = 3.475$, $Sig. = .001$), price ($b = 0.180$, $t = 2.351$, $Sig. = .019$), and marketing promotion ($b = 0.123$, $t = 1.967$, $Sig. = 0.050$) influencing consumers' decision to make a repeat purchase at Suki Tee Noi restaurant in Pathum Thani

province. All 5 variables were able to explain 65% of the variance in the decision to repurchase ($R^2 = 0.650$), with statistical significance at the .05 level.

Discussion

1. In the aspect of personal factors, the results show that ages, occupations, and average monthly incomes affected consumers' decision to repurchase products and services of Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani at a statistically significant level, which supports the hypothesis. This is due to the fact that most consumers were still in the working age and fond of the taste of food. They preferred gathering up in a restaurant. Moreover, consumers with different occupations had different concepts, attitudes, and values in choosing a restaurant service. Interestingly, dining out was found to be a normal behavior of certain occupations. In addition, the average monthly income was also another factor that differentiates the decision. In other words, those with higher incomes tend to pay for more expensive food. This is consistent with the research by Weerayuthbancha and Dharma (2013), who studied factors affecting the repurchasing of Starbucks coffee's client: case study of the client in Bangkok. Their results also show that ages, occupations, incomes, educations, and marital status affected repurchase behavior of Starbucks' consumers in Bangkok. In addition, Khumhome, Juntarukka, and Zheng (2021), who conducted a study on Customers' Buying Behavior of Safe Food in Ubon Ratchathani Province, found that genders, ages, and occupations affected their buying decisions differently.

2. In the aspect of brand equity factors, brand loyalty, and brand awareness respectively affected the decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani. Thus, the hypothesis was supported. The results are discussed as follows:

2.1 Brand loyalty affected consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani the most, which supported the hypothesis. The consumers were likely to visit Suki Tee Noi in the future, and also recommend this restaurant to others. Despite the increase in price due to the economic situation, Suki Tee Noi has still been recognized by consumers. One of the reasons is that there are several branches located in various places near the community, which is convenient for consumers to visit. Moreover, the food and the management system are satisfying. Similarly, Sangsuphan and Chienwattanasook (2020), who studied brand equity and service marketing mix factors affecting repurchase decision-making of Café Amazon coffee consumers at department store in Pathum Thani Province, found that brand loyalty significantly affected repurchase decision of Café Amazon coffee consumers at department stores in Pathum Thani Province. This is also consistent with Siriwongnam and Rammanust (2019), who conducted a study on organizational factors and brand value as factors linking integrated marketing communications that affect frozen food purchasing decisions of consumers in Bang Khae, Bangkok. They found that brand equity factor significantly affected consumers' decision to purchase frozen food in Bang Khae, Bangkok.

2.2 Brand awareness affected consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi restaurant in Pathum Thani Province, which supported the hypothesis. Since Suki Tee

Noi is well-known and its logo is well-recognized, most consumers are more familiar with this brand than others. People tend to think of Suki Tee Noi first when they think about Suki and Shabu restaurant. This is in line with Sangsuphan and Chienwattanasook (2020), who studied brand equity and service marketing mix factors affecting repurchase decision-making of Café Amazon coffee consumers at department store in Pathum Thani Province, found that brand awareness significantly affected repurchase decision of Cafe Amazon coffee consumers at department stores in Pathum Thani Province. In addition, Thiangmak et al. (2022) also found that brand awareness significantly affected the decision to repurchase Thai chili paste products of a la carte restaurant operators in Mueang District and Khlong Luang District, Pathum Thani Province.

In addition, the researcher would like to further discuss the reasons for the variable of brand loyalty and brand awareness, which does not affect repeat purchase decisions because Tee Noi Suki has the potential to create brand awareness and also create loyalty towards the product as well. However, in the buffet business, packaging is not used to connect the brand. Moreover, most of the activities that take place only in the stores. In addition, consumers do not rate the quality level of the brand as high as that of the market leaders in the industry. Therefore, these two variables do not influence the repeat purchase decision.

3. In the aspect of service marketing mix factors, service process, price, and promotion were found to affect consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani respectively. Thus, the hypothesis was supported. The results are discussed as follows:

3.1 Service process was found affected consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani the most. The consumers were satisfied by the efficient booking process, store management system, food ordering process, serving process, and a variety of payment systems and decided to repurchase the products and services at the restaurant. Likewise, Prapasongsit, Bilmanoch, and Saenjit (2022) found that process affected consumers' decision to visit Sweet Shine Coffee, a slow bar coffee shop with Moka Pot brewing method the most.

3.2 Price the affect consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani in the second place. The price of the Suki Tee Noi product is clearly stated and reasonable for their product quality. This is in line with Mangalasut (2013), who found that price significantly affected consumer satisfaction. Similarly, Yuwannasri and Chienwatthanasook (2017) found that price was the factor that highly affected customer loyalty to purchase coffee at Doi Chang and Starbucks in Bangkok. Furthermore, Weerayuthbancha and Dharma (2013) also revealed that price was corelated with consumers' behavior to repurchase coffee at Starbucks in Bangkok.

3.3 Marketing promotion was found the affect consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi in Pathum Thani in the last place. Suki Tee Noi is advertised through various channels, provides promotions with business partners in various channels, and offers seasonal discounts. Suki Tee Noi also provided fun activities on its social media channel. Its advertisements and communication on a regular basis affected consumers' decision to repurchase products and services at

Suki Tee Noi. This is in line with Weerayuthbancha and Dhama (2013), who found that marketing promotion was correlated with consumers' behavior to repurchase Starbucks Coffee in Bangkok. Additionally, Sangsuphan and Chienwattanasook (2020) also revealed that marketing promotion significantly affected consumers' decision to repurchase Cafe Amazon coffee at the department stores in Pathum Thani.

In addition, the researcher would like to further discuss the reasons for the product/service variables, location, employees, and physical characteristics. This does not affect the repurchase decision, although it is not according to the concept and theory. But empirical evidence shows consumer desire for a more diverse menu. Moreover, the current branches in Pathum Thani are still few. In addition, the employees and physical characteristics of the Tee Noi store are generally similar to those of Suki restaurants and do not differ from consumer sentiments, so this does not affect repurchase decisions.

Suggestions

1. According to the results that different in ages, occupations, and average monthly income affected consumers' decision repurchase products and services at Suki Tee Noi branches in Pathum Thani, entrepreneurs or those involved in marketing should concentrate on behaviors of consumers in different ages, and occupation that prefer consuming sukiyaki at the restaurant by collecting various numerical data in order to formulate a marketing strategy that corresponds to these differences.

2. According to the results of the study of brand equity factors affecting consumers' decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi branches in Pathum Thani Province, there are suggestions as follows:

2.1 Brand loyalty affected consumers' decision to repurchase and consume products at Suki Tee Noi the most. Even though the price rose due to the economic situation, the consumers tend to visit and dine in the restaurant continuously. Thus, entrepreneurs should take the advantages of brand loyalty to create satisfaction and build confidence among customers to positively increase the brand image.

2.2 Brand awareness affected consumers' decision to revisit buffet restaurants that provide tastier food with higher quality than others. Suki Tee Noi product quality is worth the price paid. Thus, entrepreneurs should develop the quality of products and services, the marketing media plan, advertisement, and public relations through online media. This plays a very important role to attract consumers and stimulate more demand.

3. According to the results of the study of service marketing mix factors affecting consumers' decision to repurchase Suki Tee Noi branches in Pathum Thani Province, there are suggestions as follows:

3.1 Service process was found to affect consumers' repurchase decision since the customers were satisfied with the service of Suki Tee Noi restaurant. Thus, entrepreneurs or those involved in marketing should be continually advertised and publicized, as well as marketing activities

through various media to convey messages and connect with consumers. In addition, a membership system is also recommended since it provides consumers who regularly visit to receive benefits, such as discounts or rewards, etc. Furthermore, there should be seasonal promotional activities on a regular basis to provide a choice for consumers.

3.2 Price was obviously found to affect consumers' repurchase decision. The price was reasonable for the quality and the variety of the food, as well as the atmosphere in the shop. Thus, Entrepreneurs should focus on the value of their products and set the price to suit the quality and quantity since consumers always compare the value of the product with the price prior to making a purchase decision.

3.3 Marketing promotion in the forms of membership or activities to receive special privileges was found to affect consumers' repurchase decision. Marketing promotion is an important factor that motivates and drives the target group to choose the service. Moreover, entrepreneurs should focus on advertising and public relations through various online media to boost sales. Offering gifts and special privileges to members can also create long-term relationship between the brand and consumers as well.

Suggestions for Future research

1. It is necessary to conduct a comparative study on economic factors and values influencing consumer's decision to purchase Suki Tee Noi and other type of shabu restaurants in order to analyze the advantages and disadvantages for developing a guideline for shabu business.

2. The behavior and demand for Suki Tee Noi and other shabu restaurants in Pathum Thani should be comparatively studied. The results can be used to improve and develop strategies in accordance with the market share of each business and to satisfy consumers, which lead to an increase in market share.

3. A qualitative study, especially in-depth interviews on the types of services that consumers prefer, should also be conducted to get clearer and useful insights in developing a service model to meet the needs of customers. The problems or limitations in using the service at Suki Tee Noi should also be considered in order to obtain comprehensive information for planning a business strategy to achieve the goals.

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