Influencing Factors on Consumer's Perception: On-site to On-lineDuring Covid-19 Pandemic in Thailand

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Abstract

The midst of Covid-19, Thailand has been hit with lock down on the department stores. The government announce lockdown along with the uncertain situations of the Covid-19 pandemic have caused both business and consumer change their shopping behavior. This situation has been affecting the urban lifestyle among consumers who enjoys going to department store. The objective of this study is to investigate the influencing factors that affect the consumer's perception on visiting the department store. The statistical analysis on factor analysis was conducted with 400 questionnaires. The questionnaires focus on the decision on the decision of the consumer's consumption during Covid-19. This study aims to investigate 4 factors which are services of the mall, consumers' satisfactions, Modernization of the shopping malls, and public relations of the shopping mall. The results finding suggest that social media online has significant influent factor to the consumer's perception on their decision of department store services.This research can assist business in adapting to the new uncertainty situation of pandemic.

Keywords: Perception, Online, Social Media, Services, Marketing Mix, Shopping Mall

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the society has become increasingly complex today especially in the aspect of people. People tend to live hastily and the outdated form of communication can no longer serve the needs of communication of human being anymore. Social media is one of the most technology-driven ways of communicating with various forms of communication. It is suitable for people in today's world and the future. In ancient times, humans communicated information in less sophisticated ways such as word by word communication, using horse or pigeon to deliver the message. Later, information communication changed to mail, telegraph, telephone, and radio. When entering an era where computer networks and the Internet are involved, human data communication has been increasingly transformed into electronic media such as IRC (Internet Relay Chat) services, chat programs, electronic mail (e-mail), and web boards. Human beings began communicating everyday information with one another through the use of social media (Vijitboonyarak, 2018).

Due to the amid changes of environmental factors because of the expansion of the economy social structure together with the well-being of the population, increasing population, needs to consume products with great variety, convenience of shopping and advancement of modern technology, the retail business in Thailand has grown into a modern

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Department store is a form of retail service which is considered to be very relevant to the life of the consumers. As people's lifestyles change rapidly, consumers want more convenience than objects. For this reason, department store has be changed from originally a place to buy goods and services. It becomes a place where people can enjoy lifestyles and relax because it offers a full range of services and meet the needs of people covering all aspects. In the current market conditions, due to the rapidly expanding and increasing number of shopping malls, shopping center operators faced with the challenges of changing consumer shopping habits emphasizing convenience. and challenges from the growth of the online product and food delivery service, the frequency of visiting shopping centers tends to decrease. These factors are the challenges of shopping center entrepreneurs. They must find strategies for attracting customers to use the service and create a competitive advantage.

The expansion of shopping centers or department stores today triggers more intense competition. Therefore, the administrators of each shopping center try to find a solution and draw many different strategies used in the administration and management of both marketing management along with other planning aspects to achieve the most efficiency and effectiveness. Marketing management is the process of planning and managing the distribution of products and services as well as the creation of ideas in products and services in order to create an exchange by achieving the objectives of the organization or business and to meet the needs of consumers with the most diverse characteristics (Suksamai, 2017).

According to the above information, it is interesting to study the social media awareness factors that affect students' access to shopping malls. The information will be useful for those interested because the results of the study allow them to realize the needs in order to be a guideline for development and improvement in business performance and meet the needs of consumers and can respond to the needs of consumers appropriately.

Objective

1) To study social media awareness factors affecting the use of department stores in the coronavirus disease situation (COVID-19).

2) To study the relationship between social media awareness factors and shopping mall service traffic in the coronavirus disease situation (COVID-19).

3) To compare the influence of department store marketing mix factors of department store traffic in the coronavirus disease situation (COVID-19).

Research Methodology

This research aimed to study social media awareness factors affecting department store access in the coronavirus situation 2019 (COVID-19). It was   quantitative research used survey search. Questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data. The data were collected with the targeted population who visited a department store during the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) situation. After that, the data were analyzed by statistical method with SPSS program.

Population and Sample Group

The population and sample used in the study were 400 people who visited the department store during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation. The size of the sample group was determined by using Cochran 1977 (Vanichbancha, 2017).

Research Instrument

Questionnaire was created to study the social media awareness factors affecting the use of department stores in the COVID-19 situation in accordance with the guidelines of the objectives and conceptual framework of the research. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections. The details are as follows:

Section 1 The questionnaire was about the demographic factors of the respondents which consisted of gender, age, education, occupation, average monthly income. They were closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was a checklist with 5 items.

Section 2 The questionnaire was related to social media awareness factors. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions indicating the level of opinions. The questionnaire was in accordance with the Likert scale (Noll. 1989, referred to in Vanichbancha, 2017). Each question can be answered by using 5 rating scale.

Section 3 The questionnaire was related to use of department store service. The study covered a wide range of areas with closed-ended questions. Type of questionnaire was a checklist questionnaire showing the level of opinions that were in accordance with the Likert scale (Noll. 1989, citied in Vanichbancha, 2017). There were 21 questions. Each question can be answered by a 5 rating scale.

Section 4 Open ended questions was included in the questionnaire for useful feedback.

Data Collection

The sample group on a study of patterns in making a decision on purchasing food for consumption consisted of 400 people who were randomly selected. Google form was for data collection because it is the easiest channel for the sample to access the questionnaires. The researcher distributed the questionnaire via social networks including Line, Facebook, Messenger and E-mail.

Data analysis and statistics

After the data were collected, it was checked for accuracy. The data were graded and coded for analysis and statistical processing by using a software package for analyzing statistical data. The details are as follows:

1. Descriptive statistics

1.1) Descriptive statisticswas applied to analyze the demographic factors of the respondents consisting of gender, age, education, occupation, average monthly income. The data were analyzed in frequency and percentage.

1.2) Descriptive statistics was applied to analyze social media awareness factors, including Blogging, Twitter and Microblogging, Social Networking, and Media Sharing. The data were analyzed in arithmetic mean and atandard deviation.

1.3) Descriptive statistics was applied toanalyze the access to the department store services. The study covered various areas, including Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process and Physical Environment. The data were analyzed in arithmetic mean and atandard deviation.

2. Inferential statistics

2.1) Hypothesis testing for correlation between social media awareness factors with access to a department store service was conducted by the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to determine the statistical significance level of .05.

3. Factor Analysis

The factors of the 7p's marketing mix were used to find the weight and compose the main elements and sub-elements by using the following method

3.1)KMO and Bartlett's test to determine the consistency of the data.

Results

1. The result analysis on personal information of the sample group who visited department stores during the situation of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The majority of the respondents were 322 females accounted for 80.50 percent and 78 males accounted for 19.50. 310 of the respondents were aged lower or as equal as 25 years old accounted for 77.50 percent. Subordinately, 50 of the respondent were aged between 26 – 30 years old accounted for 12.50 percent. Next, 22 respondents or 5.50 percent were aged between 31-25 years old. There were 10 respondents or 2.50 percent aged between 36-40 years old.Moreover, 4 respondents or 1 percent were aged between 41 – 45 years old. The least groups of the respondents were aged between 46-50 years and more than 51 years old. Both groups consisted of 2 respondents account for 0.50 percent. In terms of education, it was found that 330 respondents or 82.50 percent had a bachelor's degree. 56 respondents or 14 percent had lower than bachelor's degree. 14 people or 3.50 percent had postgraduate level of education. In terms of occupation, 261 respondents or 65.25 percent were students. 95 respondents or 65.25 percent worked for a private company or state enterprise. 27 respondents or 6.75 percent had their own business. 6 respondents or 1.50 percent worked as a contractor or had other occupations. The last group of 5 respondents or 1.25 percent worked as government officers. 268 respondents or 67.00 percent earned 15,000 – 20,000 baht. Next, 48 respondents or 12 percent earned around 20,001 - 25,000 baht. In addition to this, 43

respondents or 10.75 percent earned 25,001 - 30,000 baht. 18 respondents or 4.50 percent earned more than 40,000 baht. 14 respondents or 3.50 percent earned 30,001 - 35,000 baht. The least group of 9 respondents or 2.25 percent earned 35,001 – 40,000 baht.

2. The result analysis of the significance level of the elements affecting the perceived factor of social media.

In terms of blog, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was accessing information about the department store from the personal comments of the bloggers which was in high level of opinion. The next one was finding information from the blog first to decide to use the service which was high level of opinion. The least one was making a decision to use a department store service based on blogger data sharing which was in high level respectively.

In terms of Twitter and microblogs, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was to stay tuned for more news from this Twitter post which was in high level of opinion. The next one was to stay informed about the department stores from Twitter and microblogs which was also in high level. The least one was to desire to use department store service after retweeting other Twitter users which was respectively in high level.

In terms of social networks, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was to be aware of advertisement, recommended products and modernization of the department stores from social media networks which was in high level. The next one was to see the video introducing the department stores by advertising through social media networks which was in high level. The least one was to find details about the department store services from the social media networks which was respectively in high level.

In terms of online media sharing, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was to decide to use the department store service by sharing information of friends or acquaintances on social media which was in high level. The next one was to decide to use the department store service from marketing communications through online media. The least one was to recognize the department store services by online media shared by family member which was high level of opinion.

Overall, it was in high level. The respondents placed an the highest priority on online social networks. The next priority was placed on sharing via online media which was in high level. The latter one would be in blog which on in high level. The least priority was placed on Twitter and microblog which was respectively in high level.

3. The result analysis of significance level on elements affecting the use of the department store service in the coronavirus disease situation 2019 (COVID-19)

It was found that in terms of product, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was the quality of service to customers who use the service which was in the highest level. The next one was the reputation and image of the department stores which was in high level. The least one was It is modern, luxurious and classy image of the department store which was in high level respectively.

In terms of price, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was the variety of price range serving the needs of the customers. It was in high level. The next one was reasonable price exchanging with the satisfaction customers received. It was also in high level. The least one was the reasonable product prices when compared to the quality and service of the department store. It was respectively in high level.

In terms of place, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was the wide space of the department store location which was in high level. The next one was the suitable decoration of the department store to serve the customers. It was also in high level. The least one was convenient entrance and exit. It was respectively in high level.

In terms of promotion, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was to access to information and news related to the department stores and its services. It was in the high level of opinion. The next one was public relations through various advertising media allows customers to receive information and news that meets their needs. It was in high level of opinion. The least one was reliable monthly sales promotion discounts, swaps, and giveaways. It was respectively in high level.

In terms of people, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was that the staff are polite, humble, and good human relations. It was in high level of opinion. The next one was that the staff are attentive to details and help customers who face difficulties. The least one was providing services and performing work by knowledgeable and skilled staff. It was respectively in high level.

In terms of process, it was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was the fast service. It was in high level of opinion. The next one was the international standard. It was in high level. The least one was the systematic process of the service. It was respectively in high level.

In terms of physical environment. It was in high level. When each item was considered, it was found that the most influential one was the availability of facilities to serve customers. It was in high level. The next one was interesting display of the products. It was in high level. The least one was modern technology used in the service. It was respectively in high level.

Overall, it was in high level. The respondents placed the highest priority on process of the service. It was in high level of opinion. The next one was people. It was in high level. The latter one was in price which was in high level of opinion. Physical environment was with high level of opinion. Promotion was with high level of opinion. Place was in high level of opinion. The least priority was product with high level of opinion.

4.The results of the relationship analysis of social media awareness factors affecting traffic department store services in the situation of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

It was found that from the hypothesis on social media awareness factors influencing department store traffic in the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) situation. The following hypothesis testing results are as follows.

Social media awareness factors correlated the use of department store in the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) situation with the following hypothesis testing results.

The hypothesis was accepted as blog, twitter and microblog, online social networks and online media sharing were related to the use of department store service.

Table 1.1 The summary of hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Hypothesis test
Factors influencing the consumer's perception of online media to use Department store in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic	
Blog	Hypothesis accepted
Twitter and Microblog	Hypothesis accepted
Online Social Networks	Hypothesis accepted
Online Media Sharing	Hypothesis accepted

5.The results of the sub-element analysis affecting the use of the services of the department store in Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) situation in the marketing mix Element 1

Table 1.2 Sub-elements and element weight values based on the elements of the marketing mix 7P's of the main element 1.

No.	Sub-Elements	Details of the Sub-elements	Element Weight Values
1	Process6.1	There is a systematic service process.	0.762
2	People 5.1	Providing services and performing work by knowledgeable and skilled employees.	0.761
3	People 5.2	Employees are polite, humble, and with good human relations.	0.729
4	Process6.3	The service is fast.	0.723
5	Physical7.1	Modernization in bringing technology to help in the service.	0.704
6	Process6.2	There is international standards.	0.700

| 7 | People5.3 | Employees are attentive to details and help customers who use the service when there is an incident. | 0.671 |

According to Table 1.2, the main element 1 has a total of 7 sub-elements with the highest weight of the first 3 elements which are 1. systematic service process. 2. providing services and performing work by knowledgeable and skilled staff 3. fast service.

Element 2

Table 1.3 Sub-elements and element weight values based on the elements of the marketing mix 7P's of the main element 2.

No.	Sub-Elements	Details of the Sub-elements	Element Weight Values
1	Product 1.3	Quality of the service	0.74
2	Price 2.1	The product prices are reasonable when compared to the quality and service of the department store.	0.68
3	Price 2.3	There are a variety of price range serving customer needs.	0.61
4	Price 2.2	The prices are reasonable in exchange for customer satisfaction.	0.57

According to Table 1.3, the main element 2 has 4 sub-elements with the highest weight of the three elements which were 1. Reputation and image of a department store. 2. The product prices are reasonable when compared to the quality and service of the department store. 3. There are various price range to choose from according to customer needs.

Element 3

Table 1.4 Sub-elements and element weight values based on the elements of the marketing mix 7P's of the main element 3.

No.	Sub-Elements	Details of the Sub-elements	Element Weight Values
1	Product 1.2	It is modern, luxurious and classy.	0.70
2	Product 1.1	Reputation and image of the department store.	0.69
3	Place 3.3	There is a convenient for the entrance and exit.	0.62
4	Place 3.2	The department store location is	0.57

		spacious.	

According to Table 1.4, the main element 3 has 4 sub-elements with the highest weight of the first 3 elements which were 1. Modern, luxurious and classy department store 2. The reputation and image of a department store. 3. There is a convenient entrance and exit.

Element 4

Table1.5 Sub-elements and element weight values based on the elements of the marketing mix 7P's of the main element 4.

No.	Sub-Elements	Details of the Sub-elements	Element Weight Values
1	Promotion 4.2	Public relations through various advertising media allows customers to receive information and news that meets their needs.	0.73
2	Promotion 4.3	Obtaining correct, clear and easy to understand information about department store and services	0.69
3	Promotion 4.1	There is a reliable monthly promotion program with discounts and giveaways.	0.50

According to Table 1.5, the main element 4 has a total of 3 sub-elements with the highest value of the top 3 sub-elements as follows: 1. Public relations through various advertising media allowing customers to receive information that meets their needs. 2. obtaining correct, clear and easy to understand information about the department store and its services 3. There is a reliable monthly promotion program with discounts and giveaways.

Discussion

The study on social media awareness factors affecting the use of department store in the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) situation can answer the research objectives and can be used to discuss as follows:

1. To study social media awareness factors affecting the use of department store in the situation of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

The results of the study showed that the majority of the respondents were female aged under or equivalent 25 years. They had a bachelor's degree. Most of them were students with monthly income of 15,000 - 20,000 baht. Online social networks were placed as the most important social media awareness factor with high level of opinion. The subordinate one was online media sharing with high level of opinion. The next one was blog with high level of opinion. The least one was twitter and microblog with high level of opinion. For the use of department stores, the respondents placed the highest importance on the process of services with high level of opinion. The latter one was the employees with high level of opinion. The

next one was price with high level of opinion. The following factors were listed respectively as physical environment, marketing promotion, and place with the high level of opinion. The least one was product with high level of opinion. This is in line with Sairojphan (2015) who conducted a research study on factors affecting consumers' decision to use supermarket services in Bangkok. The study demonstrated that the respondents placed an importance on every aspect. Moreover, it was found that the attitude of the consumers were in high level on marketing mixed factors. Overall, the importance was placed highly on the quality of service.

2. To correlate factors of social media awareness and the use of department store services in the coronavirus disease situation (COVID-19).

The results of the study showed that social media awareness factors correlated to the use of department stores in the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) situation consisted of blog, Twitter and microblog, social networking and online media sharing. The relationships were shown in every aspect of the use of the department stores. This is in line with Suksamai (2017) who studied factors affecting the decision to use shopping center services and marketing mix factors affecting the decision to use shopping center services. The results showed positive effect because consumers' decision to use shopping centers was taken into account as the shopping center was famous. There should be a variety of shops. These stores must have trendy and modern products for the customers to choose.

3.To compare the influence of factors of marketing mix of the use of department store in the coronavirus disease situation (COVID-19).

It was found that the sub-elements of the 7P'S Marketing Mix variable group are as follows:

Element 1 consisted of 7 sub-elements. The first three sub-elements with the highest weight value were 1) systematic process 2) employees provide services and perform work by knowledgeable and skilled employees. 3) employees are polite, humble, and good relations. This is in line with Thongnoppakhun (2014) who found that the shop where the seller has good manners, personality, and clean dress, can give advice on products, provide fast service, and can calculate the price of the product correctly attracts consumers to purchase easily. This is because they feel comfortable and they are willing to pay especially for service businesses that need to focus on the interaction between sellers and customers.

Element 2 consisted of 4 sub-elements. The first three sub-elements with the highest weight value were 1) Quality of service provided to customers 2) The product prices are reasonable when compared to the quality and service of the department store. 3) There are various price range to serve the needs of the customers. This is in line with Sangsawat (2015) who studied the factors of confidence in service quality and loyalty influencing decision to use service in department stores: a case study of leading department stores in Bangkok. The results of the study showed that the confidence factor in service quality influenced the decision to use the service in a department store.

Element 3 consisted of 4 sub-elements. The first three sub-elements with the highest weight value were 1) a modern, luxurious and classy image of the department store 2) Reputation and image of the department store 3) convenient entrance and exit. This is line with study on factors that related to consumer behavior in using the service in Central Plaza

Shopping Center conducted by Sangphet&Ritkaew (2559) who mentioned that the shopping mall were chosen by the customers because of its the most diverse and modern products and services.

Element 4 consisted of 3 sub-elements. The first three sub-elements with the highest weight value were 1)Public relations through various advertising media allowing customers to receive information and news that meets their needs 2) Receiving correct, clear and easy to understand information about the department store and its services. 3) There is a reliable monthly promotion program with discounts and giveaways. This is in line with Phuriphakdee(2011) who studied about combining the physical characteristics of the store perfectly to create the image of the store. Its physical features included architecture, structure, layout plan, signage, lighting, sound and temperature of the store, store design and product placement. The interior of the shop created an interesting atmosphere inside the store and enticed customers who wanted to walk into the store.

Suggestion

According to the study of social media awareness factors affecting the use of department store in the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) situation, it can be suggested as follows:

1. Suggestions for research result application

1.1 In this study, the sample area or specific department stores were not identified and did not specify. Thus, there were many factors that did not affect the decision. Therefore, those who are interested in studying this subject should be more specific in detail to make the results more effective.

2. Suggestions for further study in the future

2.1 There should be a study to find additional factors affecting the use of other department stores such as integrative factors and mixed marketing factors including the decision to visit the department stores.

2.2 A comparative study of the factors affecting the use of the department stores in order to differentiate affecting factors more clearly.

2.3 In-depth study focusing on specific issues regarding the use of the department store's services can be conducted in order to obtain a guideline for further comprehensive analysis.

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