

The influencing of service marketing mix: A case study of three star hotels in Thailand

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Keywords

Market Factors, Three Star Hotel, Service Quality

Abstract

The purposes of this research paper was to survey hotel customers' attitudes towards the service marketing, service behavior and perceived brand value. The scope and focus of the study was to the three star hotels. In other words, there are small hotels which aim to provide service to mainly regular middle income. A non-probability random sampling technique was conducted to obtain a sample group that included 400 hotel guests. A questionnaire was developed and the research question was aimed to survey their attitude, their behavior, and their experiences. The findings revealed the respondents' attitudes towards the service marketing mix indicated high level in the area of product, place or distribution channel, people, and physical evidence, whereas, the respondents' attitude towards the service marketing mix indicated medium level in the area of price, promotion, and process.

1. Introduction

The three star hotels are important to serve the majority of Thai middle class and backpacker international tourists. In fact, hotel is a service business that Thailand has outperformed many countries in ASEAN countries. Service provide by Thai employees are considered the best and highly satisfied by the majority of international tourists [1]. Hotel businesses throughout Thailand have been predominated by three and four star hotel. Most hotel businesses have been handed from generation to generation with high investment and changes, especially during the last two or three decades. Nowadays, hotel businesses are making a significant change by offering not only food and shelter but also spa, massage, beauty and wellness products, Also, the management pattern has changed to be more with Thai and foreign investors and expertise management teams being involved and partnered in investment and development. However, this research paper focuses on the investigation of three star hotels in Thailand.

2. Literature Review

Hotel business is the business that need to understand their customers in order to provide a service the maximize customers' satisfaction. The theory of behavior and perceived brand value from customers was based on the marketing management theory of Philip Kotler, the guru of marketing [2] [3]. The findings of this research will contribute to knowledge of what are strengths of small hotel's service elements and its perceived brand value among customers, which will be beneficial in service marketing mix development for remaining its fame and competitive advantage in the small hotel business.

Brand value is an important factor for both customers and marketing managers. It can be categorized into 4 groups: brand awareness; perceived value induced from perceived brand; relationship between brand and perceived value; and brand loyalty [4]. By incorporating the service marketing theory to conceptualize the research framework, service consumption behavior and the purchase need responsiveness and the service marketing mix were also integrated. The service marketing mix has been changed from the classic theory of 4Ps which are product, price, place, and promotion. The service marketing mix in this study covers the following 7 Ps: product; price; place or distribution channel; promotion; people; physical evidence; and process. For this research, we focus our study on 7Ps.

3. Methodology

This research was aimed to survey customers' attitudes towards the service marketing of three star hotel and its customers' purchasing and receiving service behavior and perceived brand value. The population of the study included all three star hotels' customers per year. The simple random sampling technique was performed to obtain a sample group that included 400 respondents by Taro Yamane calculation [5], with its reliability of 95%. However, since there was enough time and budget, only 400 respondents was chosen to study. The simple random sampling was conducted at three star hotels in Bangkok and its vicinity. The questionnaire was used as the main research tool to collect data. The target respondents were selected by utilizing quota sampling technique as well as convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire was tried out with 20 hotel customers to test for its validity and reliability. All items received high reliability more than 0.70 Cronbach Alpha. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient score for all items were displayed in Table I. In this paper, the research framework were established as follows on the basis of marketing theory: (1) customers' attitudes towards the service marketing mix affected their purchasing and receiving service behavior; and (2) customers' purchasing and receiving service behavior affected their perceived brand value of hotel.

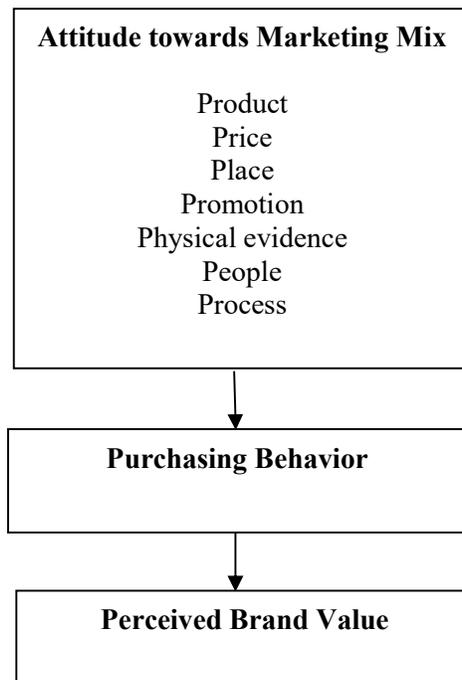


Fig. 1 Marketing Mix of 7Ps

The conceptual framework of this research study was showed in Fig. 1. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics was utilized by frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The Multiple Regression Analysis was employed for testing the research's hypothesis.

TABLE 1: CRONBACH ALPHA COEFFICIENT

<i>Items</i>	<i>Score</i>
1. Hotel Product	.8167
2. Price	.8516
3. Place or distribution channel	.8768
4. Promotion	.7364
5. People	.8590

6. Physical evidence	.9741
7. Process	.9054
8. Overall attitudes towards service marketing mix	.9852
9. Brand awareness	.8020
10. Perceived quality induced from perceived brand value	.8806
11. Relationship between brand and perceived value	.8932
12. Brand loyalty	.9744
13. Overall perceived brand value	.9540

4. Findings

From the finding the demographic finding of this research reported male respondents as the majority, between 20 - 40 years of age, between 40- 50 years of age and above 50 years of age, respectively. Most of them were married, single, widowed, divorced, or separated. The majority earned undergraduate degree as the highest, followed by master degree. Most of them are middle class.

TABLE 2

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES
TOWARDS SERVICE MARKETING MIX

<i>Service Marketing Mix</i>	\bar{x}	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
1. Product	4.56	.528	High
2. Price	3.95	.657	Medium
3. Place or distribution channel	4.01	.761	High
4. Promotion	3.96	.598	Medium
5. People	4.12	.574	High
6. Physical evidence	4.01	.585	High
7. Process	3.96	.670	Medium

The income per month was between 20,001- 30,000 Baht, followed by the amount equaled or below 50,000 Baht and above 50,001 Baht. The respondents' attitudes towards the service marketing mix indicated high level in the area of product, place or distribution channel, people, and physical evidence. Whereas the respondents' attitude towards the service marketing mix indicated medium level in the area of price, promotion, and process.

5. Future Studies

Future research should adopt an in- depth interviews to get both qualitative and quantitative information from hotel guests. The questions should be asked to find how and why the attitude occurred and also other technique should be used in order to find reasons behind the respondents' opinions.

6. Acknowledgment

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