

# Behaviors and Factors Affecting the Selection of Spa Services among Consumers in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram, Thailand

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**Abstract**—This research aims to study the factors that influence the decision to choose the spa service of consumers in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram, Thailand. The research method will use quantitative research; data were collected by questionnaires distributed to spa consumers, both female and male, aged between 20 years and 70 years in the Amphawa, Samut Songkhram area for 400 samples by convenience sampling method. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including percentage, mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation for hypothesis testing. The results showed that the demographic variables including age, education, occupation, income and frequency of access to service spa were related to the decision to choose the spa service of consumers in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram. In addition, the researchers found the marketing mixed factors such as products, prices, places, promotion, personnel selling, physical evidence and processes were associated with the decision to choose the spa service of consumers in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram, Thailand.

**Keywords**—Consumers in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram, Thailand, decision to choose a spa service, marketing mixed factor, spa service.

## I. INTRODUCTION

CURRENT spas of Thailand have developed a highly innovative and progressive forms of standards of service quality. The spa is beautifully decorated including the use of modern equipment. In addition, many operators have also developed products and equipment sold under its own, as well as techniques for holistic health care treatments with natural elements of water treatment in conjunction with medical therapy and other alternatives to the customer. This study focuses on using the five senses of taste, smell, sound and touch as the factors that create a balance between the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional factors of the spa and a mixture of science and art of healing that incorporates the principles of the five senses together, like a hot water system will help blood circulation in the body, the cold water refreshes the body, the mineral water is good for the skin, while floating in water relaxes and heat sauna dries the skin and encourages the secretion of sweat [1], and the wet steam moisturizes the skin and helps in breathing. Massage has been shown to relax muscles and increase circulation, while regular exercise has a powerful effect, and can stimulate the body feel

refreshed and invigorated. In addition, yoga and pool exercising are also popular today.

The spa market in Thailand has a great deal of potential for growth; however, the sector urgently needs to develop personnel and service standards. Especially in the field of spa services on a number of different sources, in order to meet the national development strategy plan of the 11<sup>th</sup> National Economic and Social Development plan in four strategic areas, restructuring the economy for sustainable growth and quality, as well as restructuring economic development, and quality and sustainability through strengthening entrepreneurs. With regard to the restructuring of services, it can add value to the service sector potential, and considering national policy and strategy research to build capacity and capability for economic development associated with the government roadmap. A review of research on the development and strengthening of small and medium-sized enterprises shows the trend of the dramatic growth of the spa business. Individuals who have studied only to a basic level can operate a spa that can generate revenue and enhance and also reduce unemployment and help eradicate poverty, benefitting the entire country [2]. From these reasons, this research was undertaken to study the behavioral factors that influence the selection of spa services in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram. The research hopes to provide insight for the development and strengthening of small businesses, which can affect the economy at a macro level. This research project will help to get information about the behavior patterns and factors affecting the choice of a local service spa. The results will be used to improve service standards to create an image in the expression of the readiness and ability to provide services of a spa. This is part of the process of developing quality and sustainable services for small businesses [3].

Located in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram, the service area of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Samut Songkhram campus, offers a number spa services to staff and students, and is particularly popular among the expatriate community. Each store varies in terms of store location, store layout, staff expertise and service prices that differentiate the store offering to customers. Employees often have high specific customer groups which are working people and older housewives. These are the factors which may influence the decision to use the services among consumers. This will benefit the development of service revenues, as well as sure a professional and sustainable business in the future. Researchers see the need for

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a study on the behavior factors that influence the selection of spa services in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram [4].

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Marketing Mix for Services

As a result of four distinctive characteristics of service, service marketer have found that the traditional four P's of marketing are inadequate to achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty. Thus, Philip Kotler proposed an expanded marketing mix for services consisting of the four traditional elements - product, price, place, and promotion and three additional elements - physical evidence, people, and process. Each element of the services marketing mix has an effect on the customer's perception of and experience with the service. These experiences and perceptions have a pervasive influence on their satisfaction and loyalty [6].

#### 1. Product/Service

This refers to the basic service or good, including packaging and performance characteristics. The product offer in respect of services can be more usefully analyzed in terms of two components: (1) The core service which represents the core benefit and (2) The secondary services, which represents both the tangible and augmented product levels. The secondary services can be best understood in terms of the manner in which a service is delivered.

#### 2. Price

Due to the intangible nature of the services, price becomes a pivotal quality indicator in situations where other information is not available. It is essential, therefore that the services firm engages in competitive pricing. Thus, the current study focuses on value pricing or perceived value. Zeithaml has defined it as 'the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given'. In other words, perceived value is the benefits customers receive in relation to total costs, which include the price paid plus other costs associated with the purchase [1].

The construct of perceived value has been identified as one of the most important measures for gaining competitive edge and a significant indicator of repurchase intentions. Research has suggested that perceived value may be a better predictor of repurchase intentions, than either satisfaction or quality. Bolton and Drew have shown that future intentions are determined in part by perceived value. In making the decision to return to the service provider, customers are likely to consider whether or not they received value for money [2].

#### 3. Place or Location

The place or location is where the service is made available to consumer. Place decisions refer to ease of access which potential customer to a service such as location (distance to services sites) and distribution. Place decisions can involve physical location decisions (as in deciding where to place a hotel), decisions about which intermediaries to use in making a service accessible (e.g. whether a tour operator uses travel agents or sells its holidays direct to the customer).

#### 4. Promotion

It is a decision of how best to communicate the product to the target audience, and how to persuade them to buy it. No marketing program can succeed without an effective communication program. This component plays three vital roles: providing necessary information and advice, persuading target customers of the merits of a specific product, and encouraging them to take action at specific times. The intangible nature of the service offer often results in consumers perceiving a high level of risk in the buying process, which promotion must seek to overcome. A number of methods are commonly used to remedy this, including the development of strong brands; encouragement of word-of-mouth recommendation; promotion of trial usage of a service; and the use of credible message sources in promotion (especially through public relations activity). The service marketer should constantly stimulate word-of-mouth communications apart from using regular advertising. Communication includes informing the customer in a language they can understand [6].

#### 5. People

The people refer to service employee who produce and deliver the service. They act as the "fifth P" of the marketing mix. Many services require personal interactions between customers and the firm's employees, and these interactions strongly influence the customer's perception of service quality. Personnel are key to the creation of the service and its delivery to the consumer. Customers identify and associate the traits of service personnel with the firms they work for. They are a key element of a customer-centered organization and source of differentiation variables together with product, services, channel, and image similarly, they are important asset of an organization. Achievement of a customer-orientation is impossible if the employees of an organization do not see themselves as being there to serve the customers [6].

#### 6. Physical Evidence

The physical evidence refers to the surroundings in which the services production is housed (Mittal and Baker, 1998). The intangible nature of a service means that customers are unable to judge a service before it is consumed, increasing the riskiness inherent in a purchase. Effective marketing planning therefore reduces this level of risk by offering tangible evidence of the promised service delivery. These physical assets are important in facilitating the enhanced marketing and delivery of services. A consumer must experience a service. This experience is greatly affected by both the setting that is visible to customers and the physical assets hidden from view. Physical surroundings and other visible cues can have an effect on the impressions customers form about the quality of the service they receive. These "tangible components of the service experience are called the "servicescape" - that is, the ambience, the background music, the comfort of the seating, and the physical layout of the service facility, the appearance

of the staff - can greatly affect a customer's satisfaction with a service experience [6].

#### 7. Process of the Service Production

Because customers are often involved in the production of service, the flow and progress of the production process is more important for services than it is for goods. A customer who buys a television set is not particularly concerned about the manufacturing process that made it, while the customer at a fine restaurant is not interested merely in the end result - the cessation of hunger. The entire experience of arriving at the restaurant, of being seated, enjoying the ambiance, ordering, receiving, and eating the meal, is important. The pace of the process and the skill of the providers are both apparent to the customer and fundamental to his or her satisfaction with the purchase. Process management assures service availability and consistent quality, in the face of simultaneous consumption, production of the process management, balancing services demand with service supply is extremely difficult creating, and delivering product elements to customer requires the design and implementation of effective processes. A process describes the method and sequence in which service operating systems work. Badly designed processes are likely to annoy customers because of slow, bureaucratic, and ineffective service delivery. Similarly, poor processes make it difficult for front-line staff to do their jobs well, result in low productivity, and increase the likelihood of service failure [5].

#### B. Consumer Decision-Making

For each purchase, regardless of consumer age, a purchase decision is made and a variety of associated behaviors can occur. These certain types of behaviors evidence varying degrees of dependency on outside sources of influence, and the consumer decisions can be categorized by the level of this dependency. They demonstrated that consumers may make decisions autonomously, while hybrid and subcontracted decisions are, respectively, decision styles (or types) in which consumers partially or totally give up control over the decision by soliciting help (e.g., from a salesperson, friend, relative, or the published report of a product testing agency). A subcontracted decision, for example, might be one in which the consumer allows a salesperson to make his/her purchase choice. In hybrid decision making, a consumer might confine his or her information search and purchase choice to only those brands recommended by one or more referrers. Though Olshavsky and his colleagues identified a variety of circumstances under which hybrid and subcontracted decision behaviors might be observed, this research represents the first attempt to develop a theoretical explanation for the occurrence of dependency-related decision-making styles [4].

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Methodology

This research aims to study and analyze the behavior and the factors that influence the decision to choose the spa and satisfaction to the spa of consumers in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram.

The sample used in this research is that consumers in the spa, both female and male, aged between 20 years to 70 years. The formula used to calculate the sample size is the size of the sample did not know the exact number of the population by 95% confidence that the error does not exceed 5%.

$$n = \frac{Z^2}{4e^2}$$

where, n = The sample size, Z = confidence level set at 95%, e = Error value established by determining the 5%. Substitute out as:

$$n = \frac{1.96^2}{4(0.05)^2} = 385$$

The sample size was calculated to be 385, but for a proper research will add about 4% to prevent a crash. Therefore, in this study, the researchers used a sample of 400 people. The sample was selected using convenience sampling method which is not based on probability sampling. A questionnaire was used in data collection.

#### B. Data Collection

The study was conducted through the distribution of questionnaire used to gather data about the community as a tourist destination to spa and the community as a whole. To provide access to a wide range of samples, the data collected on a sample of research with queries will be conducted during the months of February and March 2016.

#### C. The Process of Building a Research Tool

The tools used in research. Follow these steps:

1. Secondary (Secondary Data) study from research article principles and related research to define the scope of research and research tools and cover the purpose of the research.
2. Primary (Primary Data) learn how to create a query from the document to define the scope and content of the test.
3. The data obtained from a questionnaire.
4. Remove the draft questionnaire and test content and ask for guidance in resolving and proofread to make it understand simple and clear.
5. Remove the query editor, and then follow the instructions to carry out tests on the target audience (Pretest) 30.
6. Remove questionnaires collected the confidence test (Reliability).
7. Improve the query again, then offer a qualified original series. Have to improve engine efficiency.
8. To complete a questionnaire to ask for a sample.

#### D. The Statistics Used in Research

Analyses of the data from the data collection were conducted using SPSS, which has achieved a sequential analysis as follows:

- 1- To test the confidence of a query using alpha coefficient formula. (Coefficient) of Akron, BAC (Cronbach's).

$$a = (k/(k-1)) * [1 - \frac{S^2_L}{S^2_{sum}}]$$

where  $\alpha$  = The reliability of the questionnaire,  $K$  = the number of queries,  $s_i^2$  = the sum of the variance of the individual items,  $s_{\text{sum}}^2$  = variance of scores of the questionnaire.

2- Analysis of demographic characteristics including age, marital status, education, occupation and income, the average monthly sample, and the distribution in terms of frequency, as well as basic statistics such as the percentage and standard deviation [5].

a) Percentage:

$$P = \frac{f \cdot 100}{n}$$

where,  $P$  = the percentage,  $f$  = frequency change as a percentage,  $n$  = number of spectrum.

b) Arithmetic Mean [2]

$$X = \frac{\sum X_i}{n}$$

where;  $X$  = Average,  $X_i$  = the sum of all scores,  $n$  = the sample size.

c) Standard Deviation [2]

$$S = \sqrt{\frac{n \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2}{n(n-1)}}$$

where;  $S$  = standard deviation of the sample  $(\sum X)^2$  = the sum of all the squares,  $\sum X^2$  = the sum of the squares of each sample,  $n$  = Members of the group.

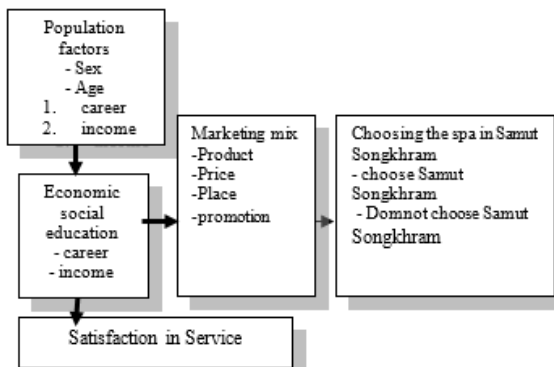


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

3- Correlation analysis Pearson (Pearson correlation coefficient) to determine the relationship between two variables or between two data sets, which both set in Section interval. Ratio or Section or dummy data [5].

$$r = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[(N \sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2][(N \sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

where,  $R$  = coefficient of need,  $Z$  = rating standards, and  $N$  = number of samples. Our variable data series is set to have two sets of  $x$  and  $y$ .

#### IV. FINDINGS

The findings show that average spa user was aged 31 years to 40 years, single, professional and educated with at least a degree, a monthly income is estimated at 5,001-10,000 baht, and is a resident of Samut Songkhram.

TABLE I  
DEMOGRAPHIC OF THE RESPONDENT

Characteristics of Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Males	67	20.7
Females	258	79.3
Age		
below 30 years	16	4.9
31 - 40 years	190	58.5
41 - 50 years	80	24.6
Over 51 years	39	12.0
Status		
Single	186	57.2
Married	139	42.8
Income		
Below 50,000	12	3.7
50,001 - 100,000	237	72.9
100,001 - 150,000	54	16.6
150,000 Up	22	6.8
Total	325	100.0

Consumers focus on factors that influence the choice of the service spa including staff, courteous service, price, close to other shops, no traffic issues, convenient location / parking, satisfying and affordable spa services, and customer care, including polite service and understanding customer needs, as well the property is clean and service is provided in a timely fashion. Consumers are satisfied with the factors that influence the choice of the service, spa staff provides advice on services that fit the needs of the clients. Costs are less than other stores. No traffic jam/location convenient parking. Recommendation from an acquaintance that the spa is affordable. Being able to explain the details of the service provided.

Consumer behavior when using the services of a massage spa is influenced by their expectations of a massage from skillful employees; they visit on average once a month for a period of 30 minutes to 1 hour at a cost of 101 baht to 300 baht. The hypothesis testing found that the variables are age, education, occupation, as well as income and number service spa. In addition, the researchers found a relationship among the products/services, price, places, and promotion or marketing of personnel, the physical processes, and the satisfaction of the guest.

TABLE II  
THE INTERPRETATION OF SERVICE MARKETING STRATEGIES

Service Marketing strategies	Mean	Interpretation
1.1 Product & Service	3.64	Effective
1.2 Price	3.65	Effective
1.3 Place	3.61	Effective
1.4 Promotion	3.65	Effective
1.5 People	3.53	Effective
1.6 Physical Evidence	3.65	Effective
1.7 Process	3.70	Effective
Overall Mean	3.63	Effective

## V. CONCLUSION

This research focuses on the behavior and factors that influence the selection of spa services in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram.

The study and analysis of the relationship between various factors and study the options, spa consumer in Amphawa, Samut Songkhram. Spa consumers were aged 31 years to 40 years, single, with a bachelor's degree, with a monthly income of approximately 5,001-10,000 baht, and a resident of Amphawa, Samut Songkhram. This is consistent with findings for the characteristics of consumer demand for wireless services in Chiang Mai Municipality [3].

Consumers pay more attention to factors that influence the choice of spa including spa services provided by friendly, courteous staff, priced comparable to other spa services, no traffic jam and convenient parking at location, as well as positive reference from acquaintances that the spa services are good and affordable, and that the property is clean, and well-ventilated. This corresponds with [2] that satisfaction refers to the product's ability to satisfy its customers. The satisfaction that occurs after the purchase of goods or services is based on the perception of the performance of the product or service.

The findings of Jaidee [3] were consistent with the hypothesis between the variables age, education, occupation, income and spa service are interrelated [3].

The findings hypothesis confirmed that the factors of products, pricing, distribution channels, promotion, marketing personnel, and the physical process, is associated with a level of importance and the satisfaction level of guests of spa services. Consistent with the concept of the marketing mix for services of Philip Kotler, a business that serves a mix of marketing or the 7Ps, are important in determining marketing strategies and effective focus on the consumer; the product should meet the needs and demands of customers. The seller must deliver to customers, and customers will receive the benefits and value of that product in general. Products are divided into two types of tangible and intangible, while the price represents the monetary value of the products. Customers will compare the value of the price of the services, and if the value is higher than the price, a customer will buy. Therefore, the pricing of services should be appropriate to the level of service. The distribution channel activities related to atmospheric environmental service offerings to customers affects the perception of the value and benefits of the services offered, which must be considered in terms of its location and channel offerings. Marketing promotion is one of the most important. The purpose is to inform or influence the attitudes and behavior of the service and is a key market relationship. Staff must have the capability and attitude that can respond to the needs of the users of the services on offer [6]. The initiative have the ability to solve problems can create value for the organization. The creation and presentation of physical creates and presents physical characteristics to its customers and to the overall building quality of the thread physical models and services to create value for customers, The negotiations must be courteous, offer quick service or other benefits that customers should receive. The process is an

activity in terms of providing fast and meticulous service to leave service users with a lasting positive impression [3].

## V. RECOMMENDATION AND FUTURE STUDIES

The future study should focus on more areas in Samut Songkhram. Next, spa operators should have a clear communication to customers in order to impress the customers and they will return to use our spa services.

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