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MARKETING POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN TERMS OF NEEDS OF THAI HERBS IN SPA BUSINESS TO PROMOTE MEDICAL TOURISM

Praputhson Piakson, Chumpon Piakson and Sunantha Singhathawat

Faculty of Business Administration Bangkok Thonburi University, Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The study was mixed methods research which use survey and analysis of data from business entrepreneurs who have been operating for 5 years or more, 10 locations in Bangkok. The snowball sampling method was used and 400 tourists by followed Taro Yamane, questionnaires were purposive sampling that who have used the spa services. Then analysed by descriptive statistics, Average standard deviation. Most of tourist are female, ages 41-50 years, single, revenue more than 40,001 Bath, career: private employee. Tourist behaviours of using Thai massage services for relieve stress 1 time per month. Period of spend the service around 1-2 hours per time in Saturday-Sunday. The influence persons in the use of the service were themselves. The expense par time to use the was less than 1,000 Baht. Marketing Mix (7Ps) travellers focus on satisfaction in providing services of spa business in term of process, physical environment, marketing promotion, people, place, price and products as severally. Equivalent of women and men entrepreneurs in Day spa business. The investment were personal capital and a bank credit. There are 10 or more employees. Types of massage services were general spa which are various price, on location store. The marketing promotions were public relations, brochure, event. The staffs dress well as simple, elegant, good-looking, and clean. In terms of personnel employees who take an experience and able to communicate in foreign languages are selected. For service staffs have to professional license, good personality, and have a good relationship. Raw materials used in the spa business were purchase from ready-made raw materials. Problems and obstacles in the spa business are a lack of staff who have a knowledge or expertise in spa business management, high of staff turnover and a services skill of employees in providing services are rare. In marketing aspect were high competition, good locations were rare and high cost. Herbs which used in spa business were general such as turmeric, Phlai, compress massage oil, tamarind, Kaffir lime, balm, aroma oil and etc. Currently, there is no shortage of such herbs. and has sufficient quantity to meet demand.

KEYWORDS: Spa Business, Health Tourism, Marketing Mix (7Ps).



1. INTRODUCTION

Because of economic and social situation bring Thai people have more stress hence, they more focus on health care and beauty that lead to a rise demand of people in society particularly urban society. The target groups were working age, people who take care of their appearance, health, personality. Those have willingness to high expense for spa services.

Thailand's health and beauty business marketing in 2017 have value 136,5000 million Bath which are medical part 102,926 million Bath, spa and Thai massage 33,574 million Bath. Thai spa business growth to 8% higher than global market value growth rate that have the average expansion trend is approximately 5% per year, lead to Thai spa business ranked 16th in the world and became 5th of Asia value as 3.5 billion Bath (BLT Bangkok, 2018). Ranking of service use in the spa market in Asia were China, Japan, South Korea, India and Thailand Department of Commercial Registration Ministry of Commerce, 2018.

The government policy have supported Thailand national major plan in 2017-2026 state that the government have to promote Thailand to be international Medical Hub resulting in the investment of spa business in 2023 were interesting along domestic and international. Medical Hub policy consist of develop health service quality of people including tend to be international health hub conduct by Department of Health Service Support and prepared as a national major plan to serve as a guideline for working together with relevant agencies in the public sector which were.

- 1.) The major plan as to be International Medical Hub for Thailand (Country Strategy, 2014-2018)
- 2.) The major plan as to develop Thailand to become International Medical Hub in 10 years (2016-2025).

Furthermore, there is also spending on alternative medicine services to promote health such as Thai Massage, herb spa, ancient treatment in term of natural therapy of any service center where provide those of services for forefinger tourists (Kasikorn Research Center, Tourism Authority of Thailand, AEC Journal).

Health tourism is a travel or leisure activity combined with care traveler's health. Health tourism can be divided according to the health characteristics of tourism into 3 levels as followed.

- 1.) Travel to maintain and support the health of tourists who are already good.
- 2.) Tourism to retreat the health of tourists or is in the recovery period.
- 3.) Tourism for the treatment of diseases of tourists

From the data on the health and beauty market value in year 2020 is 136,500 Bath which shown that is considered to be quite a high number and in spa business is worth more than 136,500 million Bath

and the tendency of spa business opportunities is more growth. The famous spa in Thailand were divide in 3 types as.

- 1.) Hotel & Resort Spa which were distributed throughout every region particularly at hotel in resort close to tourist attractions destinations similarly Phuket, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Samui, Pattaya, Hua Hin.
- 2.) Destination Spa that focuses on taking activities continuously to promote and retreat health. Then target in food and drink for health in type of Spa Cuisine.
- 3.) Day Spa is a spa with no overnight rooms. Takes a short time of treatment about 1-5 hours. Most of service provide a beauty and relaxing. Day spa is the type of spa that are most establish nowadays.

From the reasons mentioned the researcher was involved to study about the development of marketing potential in terms of a demand of Thai herbs in spa business to promote medical tourism and could bring the country able to compete with competitors in ASEAN countries as well.

2. PURPOSE OF STUDY

- 1.) To study a marketing potential and demand of herb for spa entrepreneurs.
- 2.) To study a relation between service procedures and Marketing Mix (7Ps) of travelers.

3. RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

The Development of Marketing Potential in terms of Needs of Thai Herbs in Spa Business to Promote Medical Tourism.

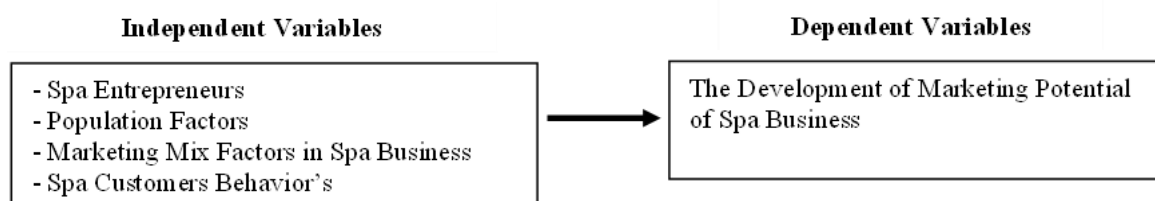


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Frame Work.

4. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORIES

4.1. Marketing Mix Theory (7P's)

Siriwan Serirat, et al. (1998) explain that concept of marketing strategy for service business, buying decision process will be in order which found that consumers who have through a 7-step decision-making process are Marketing Mix or 7Ps.

Kotler (2012) defined marketing mix as the set of controllable tactical tools that, satisfaction's and demand in a target market. The 7 components of marketing, called 7 Ps of marketing: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence and Processes. Hence, it is necessary to use the 7 p's of Marketing. In this sense, it is essential to manage the 7 components of marketing, called 7 Ps of marketing.

4.2 Medical and Health Tourism

Public Relations Department (2017) Medical & Health Tourism is traveling to visit beautiful tourist attractions in natural and cultural attractions with a conscience towards promoting and preserving health and the environment. For example, medical examination, plastic surgery, dentistry, operation, recuperation. In addition, Thai alternative medicine including Thai massage and spa service have been world-famous.

Currently, the expansion of the health tourist target has engendered various medical facilities to focus on expanding to promote health, prevention of disease, recuperation Especially the foreign patient market which is an important program in driving the private hospital business There are 61 hospitals in Thailand that are accredited with international criteria JCI (Joint Commission International Accreditation). Divided into 47 hospitals and 14 clinics. Moreover, Samitivej hospital is only one of Asia which has been top as one of the 5 best healthcare facilities in the world, comfort medical tourism from the ranking of the world's best hospitals for medical tourism 2018 by The Medical Travel Quality Alliance (MTQUA).

4.3 Thai Spa Business

Ministry of Public Health (2008) spa business is a business, provides care and promotes health with core service about health massage, hydrotherapy and additional service. For instance, sauna, steam, exercise, therapeutic nutrition, yoga, meditation, herbal or health products.

4.4 Spa Elements

The spa element could be touch from 5 senses as. 1.Sight; a place where the atmosphere was created to be cheerful, calmful made a feeling of relaxation from natural. 2.Taste; provide food and beverage derived from nature, 3. Smell; naturopathic, herb, aromatherapy with essential oil. 4.Sound; water running, music, bird singing, natural sound. 5.Touch; relaxing massage cold be get the blood flowing, muscle and nervous system.

4.4. Herbs

Herbs were a plant or plant part valued for its medicinal, savory, or aromatic qualities. Using of the herbal plant from various parts of plants will be used, including roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits

(Spa in Thailand, 2006). Posted (2019) the spa business is a service that depends on many factors lead to the growth. Create a exclusive identity for their own business. Herbs are once of element to create outstanding for them as well. There are many local Thai herbs which are useful in spa treatments such as turmeric, Phlai, turmeric, lemongrass, tamarind leaves these are widely used as an ingredient in spa treatment.

4.5 Consumer's Behaviours Concepts

Armstrong & Kotler (2005) process of consumers' decision-making commences with an identification of demand or need, evaluating the alternatives, selecting the best choice and purchase the product or service.

5. RELATED RESEARCHES

Jutatip Junead et al., (2017). The study on potential of Thai identity in spa business and traditional Thai massage toward world class health tourism sector. The research found that 1. Currently, there are 526 Thai spa and massage businesses registered with the Division of Healthy Establishments in 5 regions. They have own identity. For example, 1. Northern region; Lanna or local Lanna, Lanna Characteristic Massage. 2. Eastern region; Diversity, used blue and white colour and Abhaibhubej Herb. 3. Southern region; Nora Dance, colourful, southern sea, seashell massage and Langkasuka massage. 4. Northeastern region; Northeastern Civilization call "Isaan Ban Hao", used Brick colour which represented "Ban Chiang Ceramic", Isaan Massage.

Rasika Angkura (2019). Gain that acquiring the identity of the community to create concrete benefits using tourism activities is an important element meanwhile, bringing the community's identity to create a brand apply for marketing communications.

Jitpisut Hongkajorn (2017). The 7Ps of marketing mix affecting decision making in health tourism at Raksawarin hot spring, Ranong province acquire that Thai tourists who come for hot spring health tourism have their opinions about marketing mix.

Siwarit Pongsakornrunsilp (2015). The marketing potential of tourism industry in the Southern of Thailand: inbound tourists explore that the tourism industry in the Southern has market potential from the perspective of tourists in terms of tour business, residence, tourism activities and tourist attraction, product for develop competitive advantages.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Design

The study of marketing potential development in terms of needs of Thai herbs in spa business to promote medical tourism use mixed methods research to study a potential of spa market in a demand of Thai Herbs and a tourist behaviour in this service.

6.2 Population and Sampling Group

The study of marketing potential development in terms of needs of Thai herbs in spa business to promote medical tourism use mixed methods research to study a potential of spa market in a demand of Thai Herbs and a tourist behaviour in this service.

6.2.1 Population

The selected population for this study consisted of spa entrepreneurs in Bangkok and surrounding areas and tourists who have used the spa business services.

6.2.2 Sample Group

The sample group that was consisted in this study are as follows:

- Spa entrepreneur in Bangkok and surrounding which establish business more than 5 years and more 10 staff by snowball sampling methods.
- Tourists were a purposive of 400 people who had used the spa services by questionnaires interview sampling because the exact population is not known or Infinite population Infinite population (Kanlaya Wanitbancha, 2015). Sample size was calculated according to Taro Yamane 1973. (Prasopchai Pasunon, 2010). Set the size of the 95% Reliability and deviation is not more than 5% selected by purposive sampling.

According to Taro Yamane 1973. (Prasopchai Pasunon, 2010). Set the size of the 95% Reliability and deviation is not more than 5% selected by purposive sampling.

6.3 Tools or Data Collection

This study the researchers have questionnaire interview as followed.

- Questionnaire for interview tourists.
- Literatures review and document analysis.
- Interview the expert who related in term of the study.
- Analysed data collection to develop questionnaire for structure interview.
- Bring completed questionnaire to considered by 3 experts in marketing, statistic and improve content validity.

Then selected only question which are Index of Item objective congruence: IOC more than 0.50. Then test reliability of questionnaire with 33 sampling group that have to reliability of Cronbach's Alpha in 0.967 more than 0.7 shown that its validity and pretest with tourist.

6.3.1 Questionnaire for Interview Spa Entrepreneurs

Interview spa entrepreneurs who have been in business for more than 5 years. Which are 10 locations in Bangkok. Snowball sampling was used as structured interview about business management and marketing strategies towards herbal demand for spa businesses.

6.4 Data Collection

6.4.1 Data collection according to the objectives.

The researcher collected the data using a questionnaire and then analysed the data using a computer program.

6.4.2 Using open-ended questions interview.

The informants could free respond all questions without by order. The researcher record data by audio machine record for analysed and synthases and summarize.

6.5 Data Analysed

6.5.1 Analysed of tourist sample group from data collection and used computer statistical programs to calculate as followed.

6.5.2 Personal information of the informants, including gender, age, status, education, revenue, occupation, analyzed by frequency distribution and percentage.

6.5.3 Analysed of data from a sample of entrepreneurs by descriptive from open-ended questions.

7. RESULTS

7.1 Interview Spa Entrepreneurs

7.1.1 General information of spa entrepreneurs.

Most of them have establish business more than 5 years were women and men in equal proportions. The spa type was day spa. The investments include personal capital and bank credit which starting at 400,00, Baht or more. There are employees in the spa from 10 or more people, open every day without holidays. Most of the spa business's customers were foreigners 70% and Thai people 30% etc.

7.1.2 Marketing Mix & (7Ps).

Table 1: The Results of Marketing Mix (7Ps) Analyzed.

<i>Marketing Mix (7Ps)</i>	<i>Results</i>
Product	Thai massage at any point of the body, Swedish massage, oil massage for relax and body and face spa with scrub, mask for beauty.
Price	Price from 200 – 2,000 Bath per hour from fixed and variable costs and treatment.
Place	Have a shop in department stores, office building, apartment and standalone.
Promotion	Public relations, brochure, event, words of mouth, outdoor media, online media, influence
People	Professional License, good communication skill, dress well as simple, elegant, good-
Physical Evidence and Presentation	Spa shop decorations in various styles. Most of them were smooth, good looking, easy on the eyes, and have natural proportions. The sound
Process	Service process was started from the moment the customer comes to pick it up including customers call to inform or book in advance.

7.1.3 Spa Business management.

Table 2: The Results of Spa Business Management Analyzed.

<i>Spa Business Management</i>	<i>Results</i>
People	- Recruitment - Staff service
Financial	The entrepreneur's investment or credit from
Raw materials used in the spa	Purchasing from ready-made raw materials.
Problems and obstacles in the spa business	Lack of employee who have knowledge or specialist in spa business, high of turn-over of employee. High competition and good location
Trend and demand of herbs for spa business	Entrepreneurs have consisted about the trend of this business that artificial intelligence (AI) could not be replaced. Demand of herbs for

7.2 Interview 400 foreigner’s tourists which analysed by descriptive statistics

7.2.1 Spa Business Management.

Personal characteristic.

The data consisted with gender, age, education, revenue, career. “Marketing potential development in terms of needs of Thai herbs in spa business to promote medical tourism” could be simplified the results as following.

Most of sampling group were female 273 people, 68.30 percentage. Male 127 people, 31.70 percentage. Age around 20- 30 years, 38.80 percentage, next 31-40 years 31.80 percentage and 41-50 years 14.80 percentage. Marital status single 49.50 percentage, married 45.80 percentage. Education, Bachelor's degree 72.50 percentage, second Sub-degree programmed 14.30 percentage. Revenue, over 40,001 Bath 133 people 33.30 percentage, next around 30,001-40,000 Bath 28.50 percentage. Career, private sector employee 162 people, 40.50 percentage, nearby business owner 125 people 31.30 percentage.

Analysis of behavioral data of spa customers sampling group.

Program of spa service as Thai massage 271 people 25.80 percentage, next foot reflexology 187 people 17.80 percentage. Purpose of used service relaxing 169 people 42.3 percentage, following body relaxant 154 people 38.5 percentage. The frequency of use was 1 time per month, 278 people 69.5

percentage, 2-3 per month 89 people 22.3 percentage. Time or day of use service, most on weekend 141 people 35.3 percentage, afterward on vacation 128 people 32.0 percentage. The influence person in selection service most were themselves 126 people 31.5 percentage, beside family members 103 people 25.8 percentage. The cost per use service lower than 1,000 Bath 208 people 52.0 percentage, second around 1,001 – 2,000 Bath 135 people 33.8 percentage. Period time per used as around 1-2 hours 215 people 53.8 percentage, following 30 minutes 91 people 22.8 percentage.

Marketing Mix factors

Price; A price satisfaction level have clear price tags. Very satisfied level average satisfaction was 3.82, followed by reasonable price, very satisfied level average satisfaction 3.78.

Place; Satisfaction level at first was opening-closing, average satisfaction was 3.85, followed by the location of the spa shop where being close to the road satisfied level average satisfaction 3.79.

Promotion; There were a sale promotion and a staff who inform about a service satisfied level average satisfaction was 3.84, next have a document to explain about treatment or service was very satisfied average satisfaction 3.79.

People; The staff clearly explains the benefits of receiving services was high level of satisfaction the average satisfaction was 3.82 followed by employees giving importance to all service recipients are equal was very satisfied level average satisfaction 3.80.

Physical evidence and presentation; The level of first satisfaction of the service were cleanliness room and bathroom. Level of satisfaction was very satisfied with an average of 3.90, followed by having the store name or logo clearly visible memorize easy level of satisfaction was very satisfied, average satisfaction 3.86.

Process; Satisfaction first level includes health inquiries, notification of service procedures and things should to do first at high level of satisfaction. The average satisfaction was 3.94, followed by the service of serving warm water or herbal drink that were beneficial to health very satisfied level average satisfaction 3.92.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Marketing Mix (7Ps) Factors

Marketing Mix	Mean	S.D.	Level of satisfaction
1. Product	3.75	.699	High
2. Price	3.74	.472	High
3. Place	3.76	.508	High
4 . Promotion	3.79	.472	High
5. People	3.78	.516	High
6. Physical	3.82	.468	High
7. Process	3.88	.468	High
Total	3.78	.514	High

The table 3 have shown that mean and standard deviation of Marketing Mix factors overall at a high level (Mean=3.78, SD. =.514) by considered each aspect was found that a process, physical, promotion, people aspect, place aspect, product and price were at high level respectively.

8. DISCUSSION

Objective 1: To study a marketing potential and demand of herb for spa entrepreneurs.

8.1 Marketing Aspects

Product; Massage service in spa such as acupressure Thai massage or finger pressures, Swedish Massage, oil massage for relaxing, body and face spa by scrub, mask for beauty.

Price; There were various price which were begun from 200-2,000 Bath per hours.

Place; The spa business were located in department store, office building or apartment and standalone.

Location; Most of spa business were focused on target of customers, proportion rooms for serve customers which more than 4 rooms.

Promotion; Sale promotion during low selling were different in each month. Including encourage by public relation, brochure, event, store decoration, word of mouth which concerned with a study of Jureerat Leejongpermpoon et al. (2010). Brochure and word of mouth from customers were general way in sale promotion management.

People; Staff should to dress in simple and glorious style, easy or comfort during give a service and clean as well. There were 3 respond of spa staff were manager who have to experience and good communication in foreigner language which concerned with Jutarat Piriyabenjawat (2018) explain that spa manager has to graduated Bachelor of Health Science or take certificate or diploma in health spa entrepreneur for 100 hours which guarantee by Ministry of Public Health from the institute with

qualified also.

Physical evidence and presentation; There were many styles of spa decoration and most of them in simple, good looking, easy on the eyes, natural manner, music, good smell or aroma, clean, comfortable and soft related with Jureerat Leejongpermpoon et al. (2010). Day spa business entrepreneurs have decorated location and environment to be cheerful, appropriate and hygienic.

Process of Service; Process started from when customers have arrived or book the queue for take service. The staff have ask about customers, serve herbal drinking and prepare for service or treatment. Jureerat Leejongpermpoon et al. (2010) expressed that service process were fast facile and uncomplicated. The Investigation Upper-Northern Thailand Wellness Spa Business Service Quality for Customer Satisfactions. Ploykwan Jedeejit (2022). A study of “The investigation Upper-Northern Thailand wellness spa business service quality for customer satisfactions” explained that products and services by applying materials and ingredients which were found in ow local areas into especial products, such as rare local herbs, local wisdom, local promotional media design, etc.

Financial; The entrepreneur's investment or credit from the bank which have been divided into proportions based on fixed cost and variable cost. Sittichai Thammasane (2011) express that the entrepreneurs who have short business plan bring the investment from personal and credit from financial institute that similar with Oraphan Sittichai (2006) found that 60 percentage of entrepreneurs who establish business around 1-3 years and used the investment from financial institutes.

Raw materials; Most of entrepreneurs have purchased from ready-made raw materials. In addition, they provide raw materials from many area. For example, Santi Asok, Chatuchak Market, Wat (Temple) Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklararm Rajwaramahavivarn Wat Pho, etc.

Problems and obstacles in the spa business; Lacking of employee who have knowledge or expertise in spa service and business, high of turn-over of employee. High competition and good location were high cost and rare. Pakdee Manaves (2017) stated that undermanned, have no skill in English and create connection network, factor of to be ASEAN Medical Health Hub. Porjai Singhanate (2016) established that problems about people in spa business have to provide staffs with massage skill which concerned with Sittichai Thammasane (2011) stated that the spa business lack of high skill of employee.

Trend and demand of herbs for spa business; The entrepreneurs have attitudes towards the trend of artificial intelligence (AI) which could not be replaced human in spa service industry. Need of herbs for use in spa business were general herbs such as turmeric, phlai, oil massage, tamarind, kaffir lime, balm, essential oil. At present, there are sufficient quantity demand.

Objective 2: To study a relation between service procedures and Marketing Mix (7Ps) of traveler.

8.2 Marketing Aspects

General in formation and tourist behaviors in Marketing Mix (7Ps) shown that most of tourists were

female, age around 31-40 years and 21-30 years in resemble. Single status, revenue more than 40,001 Bath. Career in private sector employee.

Treatment of spa service were Thai massage, foot reflexology. Aim of used service was relaxing. The frequency of use were 1 time per month, 278 people 69.5 percentage, 2-3 per month. Period or time of use service, most on weekend, vocations at 13.00-18.00 pm. The expense per use service lower than 1,000 Bath per time.

Jureerat Leejongpermpoon et al., found that day spa customers frequently used on weekend during 18.01-22.00 pm. The purpose for used service was releasing a stress. The influence factors were reasonable price, got refoment from family. Tourists focused on satisfaction in spa service process, people, place, price and products in ordered. Panuwat Kitgesacharoen and Poschanan Boonchuai (2018) explain that important factors of spa business in term of process, physical, promotion, people, place, price and product appropriately. In addition, Wasana Intasang (2016) showed that Marketing Mix factors of beauty clinic in customers decision making and loyalty were 4 aspects in products, people, physical environment and process that concerned with Sittichai Thammasane (2011) presented that customers have an total intention on products, price, location, sale promotion, people, physical environment and service process at high level.

9. SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE WORK

The government should provide budget to promote and develop health tourist destination for attract and encourage tourists and provide or increase credit or loan for the entrepreneurs in health business as well. Moreover, Mistry of Public Health should support and pay attention in Health tourist market by encourage to improve service quality and criteria to become world class quality or approving.

CONCLUSION

Marketing potential development in terms of needs of Thai herbs in spa business to promote medical tourism, a tourist has focused on process, physical environment, sale promotion, people, place price and products correspondingly. For business management have pay attention on people or staff, financial, material include problems and obstacles also trend of herb demand.

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