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# The Antecedent Attributes of Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty in the Coffee Shop Business Domain

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Pongsakorn Limna<sup>1\*</sup>, Tanpat Kraiwanit<sup>2</sup>, Kris Jangjarat<sup>3</sup>, Prin Maskran<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1\*,2,3</sup>Rangsit University, Lak-Hok, Mueang, Pathum Thani, Thailand

<sup>4</sup>Pathum Thani University, Ban Klang, Mueang, Pathum Thani, Thailand

Email: <sup>2</sup>tanpat.k@rsu.ac.th, <sup>3</sup>kris.ja64@rsu.ac.th, <sup>4</sup>prin.m@ptu.ac.th

Corresponding Email: <sup>1\*</sup>pongsakorn.l65@rsu.ac.th

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to explain the antecedent attributes of customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop business domain in Krabi, Thailand. The marketing mix approach (4Ps), consisting of the four fundamental elements of product, price, place, and promotion, was utilized in this study. The research strategy employed in this study was qualitative, utilizing in-depth interviews with six key informants who were selected using purposive sampling. The collected data was analyzed using content analysis and the software NVivo. The study's results showed that the 4Ps marketing mix approach, comprising product, price, place, and promotion, had a notable influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry of Krabi, Thailand. The findings of this study could be useful not only for coffee shop owners and marketers but also for other industries, by providing valuable insights into how to develop effective strategies that address the key factors driving customer satisfaction and loyalty. Implementing these strategies could lead to improved business performance and outcomes.*

**Keywords:** *Customer, Loyalty, Satisfaction, 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion).*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The coffee shop industry is not only globally popular, but it also represents a significant segment of the hospitality industry. People allocate a significant portion of their budget to coffee consumption as these shops offer various activities such as socializing, meetings, dining, work, and studying. According to Waxman (2006), coffee shops can also serve as a center of society. In Thailand and many other countries, coffee shops rank as the third most essential location after home and the workplace for many people. As reported by Jitpleecheep and Hicks (2019) in the Bangkok Post's business special report section, the coffee business in Thailand is flourishing, with an annual market estimated to be 36 billion baht and growing. In the past,



Thai coffee drinkers were limited to Kafae Boran or instant coffee. However, over the last two decades, the country has seen a significant shift towards a coffee culture. As a result, more consumers now crave freshly brewed coffee and are willing to pay a premium for a quality cup of coffee. Angkasith (2001) has stated that coffee, in Thailand, is one of the major incomes for the country. Moreover, both Northern and Southern Thailand are agricultural regions with strong reputations for growing coffee. Arabica coffee is produced in Northern Thailand, and robusta coffee in Southern Thailand. Krabi is one of 14 provinces in the South, 77 provinces in Thailand. Krabi is one of the main Thailand's coffee growing regions, and the majority coffee bean type produced is robusta. In the areas of Krabi, robusta coffee is primarily grown in the districts of Klong Thom and Ao Luek. Furthermore, Krabi is blessed with some fantastic coffee shops (Hulme, 2017). In the hospitality industry, like coffee shop business, customer satisfaction is one of the essential elements of the service business because it may be linked to positive business outcomes such as higher levels of sales and customer loyalty. According to Hoyer and MacInnis (2021), customer satisfaction leads to repeat purchase, customer loyalty, and positive word of mouth. Therefore, this study aims to explain the antecedent attributes of customer satisfaction in the coffee shop business domain in Krabi, Thailand. Since consumer is a basic unit of coffee sales, investigating attributes that can influence satisfaction is essential for the success of coffee shop sales. This study uses four attributes (Marketing Mix: 4Ps) that are identified as having potential to be antecedent of customer satisfaction and loyalty: product, price, place, and promotion. The findings of this study may provide valuable insights for not only coffee shop business owners and marketers, but also other industries, to develop effective strategies that address the factors driving customer satisfaction and loyalty. As a result, high business performance will incur.

## **Literature Review**

### **Customer Satisfaction**

Satisfaction refers to an individual's emotions of contentment or discontentment, which arise from comparing the perceived performance of a product or service with their expectations (Limna & Kraiwanit, 2022). Customer satisfaction is a subjective emotional response to purchasing, retail, or the action of purchasing and acquisition, as well as a customer experience assessment criterion used to compare desired product properties with actual ones (Pei et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in ensuring sustained business success. Organizations must strive to exceed their competitors by offering superior quality products or services that meet customer needs, in order to maintain or enhance their market share (Limna & Kraiwanit, 2022). In addition, customer satisfaction is a critical aspect of maintaining a competitive advantage in the marketplace (Yeboah & Ewur, 2014). Moreover, attaining high levels of customer satisfaction is closely linked to customer loyalty, retention, and positive word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing. Customers who are satisfied with a company's products or services are more likely to become loyal customers, making repeated purchases and recommending the company to their friends and family, leading to positive WOM marketing for the company. All of these factors contribute to not only a company's success, but also a competitive advantage in the marketplace (Nasir, Adil, & Dhamija, 2021; Manyanga, Makanyeza, & Muranda, 2022; Sitthipon et al., 2022).



### **Customer Loyalty**

Customer loyalty is characterized by a brand's favorable attitude (attitudinal loyalty) and repeated purchase behavior (behavioral loyalty) towards service providers. It entails the inclination to revisit or repurchase products or services, as well as to recommend the service provider to one's peers and relatives (Kanyama, Nurittamont, & Siripipatthanakul, 2022; Limna & Kraiwanit, 2022). Customer loyalty is an essential aspect of a company's long-term success, and research has shown that it is closely linked to customer retention and profitability (Adobe, 2020). In addition, loyal customers are more likely to make repeat purchases, provide positive word-of-mouth marketing, and be less price-sensitive, which ultimately leads to increased revenue and profitability for the company (Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2020). Loyal customers tend to have a higher lifetime value than new or occasional customers, making them an essential asset for the company's long-term growth (Reinartz & Kumar, 2002). Building customer loyalty requires a comprehensive understanding of customer needs, effective communication, personalized experiences, and excellent customer service, among other factors (Kumar, Batra, & Choudhary, 2020).

### **Marketing Mix (4Ps: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion)**

The classification of the 4Ps for creating an effective marketing strategy was originally introduced in 1960 by E. Jerome McCarthy, a marketing professor and author, in his book *“Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach”*. The 4Ps refer to product, price, placement, and promotion, which make up the primary components of a marketing mix. This framework seeks to create a comprehensive plan that sets a product or service apart from its competitors while simultaneously adding value for the customer. Depending on the industry and target audience, marketing managers may take different approaches to each of the 4Ps. While each element can be evaluated individually, in practice, they are often interdependent on one another (Kenton, James, & Jackson, 2023).

The product is a tangible or intangible offering that aims to satisfy consumers' wants and needs and can come in the form of goods or services (Yoyada & Kodrat, 2017).

Price is the amount of currency used to exchange goods and services between the buyer and seller. Pricing is a crucial factor in a company's success, and determining the right price level requires a thorough analysis of various factors. It's important to set the appropriate price level that meets the consumer's satisfaction while generating adequate utility for the price (Karim et al., 2021; Siripipatthanakul & Chana, 2021).

Place refers to the physical or online location where the product is available and how it is displayed. Placement also includes advertising the product through appropriate media to attract target consumers (Twin, Anderson, & Eichler, 2023). Distribution encompasses all of the company's operations and is used to transport goods from the business to the market to meet consumer demands. The distribution channel manages the movement of goods from the manufacturer to consumers, determining the location, delivery channel, and scope of distribution to consumers (Yoyada & Kodrat, 2017).

Promotion is a mix of sales, advertising, and personal selling techniques that include sales channels and other marketing and selling methods (Chana et al., 2021).

A comprehensive and effective marketing plan considers various areas of focus, such as the marketing mix (Kenton, James, & Jackson, 2023). The 4Ps represent the key considerations

that must be carefully evaluated and implemented to successfully market a product or service. These factors include understanding consumer needs and wants, assessing how the product or service meets those needs, evaluating the product's perception in the market, identifying unique selling points compared to competitors, and managing customer interactions (Saipheth, 2023; Twin, Anderson, & Eichler, 2023).

### **Previous Research Supporting the Qualitative Study**

Al-Sabbagh and Ismail (2020) investigated the impact of marketing mix elements on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the fashion retail industry in the United Arab Emirates. The study found that all four elements of the marketing mix (product, price, promotion, and place) had a significant impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty, with product quality having the strongest effect on both variables. The study also found that customer satisfaction mediated the relationship between the marketing mix and customer loyalty, indicating that customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in building customer loyalty. These findings suggest that companies need to carefully design and manage their marketing mix to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Ghosh and Mondal (2020) investigated the impact of the marketing mix (4Ps) on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the retail industry in India. The study found that all four elements of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) significantly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty. Specifically, product quality was found to have the strongest impact on customer satisfaction, followed by price, promotion, and place. The study suggests that retail businesses should focus on improving these marketing mix elements to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately leading to increased profitability.

Sohn and Lee (2020) investigated the impact of the marketing mix on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hotel industry. The study found that the marketing mix, comprising product, price, promotion, and place, had a positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Specifically, the study found that product quality, pricing strategy, and promotion significantly influenced customer satisfaction, while product quality and place had a significant impact on customer loyalty. These findings suggest that a well-designed marketing mix can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hospitality industry.

Kim and Lee (2021) investigated the relationship between customer satisfaction, loyalty, and customer engagement in the coffee shop industry in South Korea. The study found that customer satisfaction and loyalty were positively associated with customer engagement, and that customer engagement mediated the relationship between satisfaction, loyalty and repurchase intention. These findings suggest that customer engagement is an essential factor in building customer loyalty in the coffee shop industry.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The present study adopted a qualitative approach as a research strategy, where in-depth interviews were conducted with participants. Qualitative research methodology typically



involves four fundamental stages, namely research design, data collection, data analysis, and report writing (Viphanphong et al., 2023). The primary objective of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of the circumstances in which individuals or groups make decisions and take actions, as well as to provide an explanation for the occurrence of a specific phenomenon in a particular manner (Limna & Kraiwanit, 2022). In addition, in-depth interviews are useful in providing comprehensive responses to specific research topics, yielding precise information to meet the research objectives (Moore, 2004; Queirós, Faria, & Almeida, 2017; Limsakul & Kraiwanit, 2020). The present study employed the documentary method to conduct in-depth interviews and examined relevant survey questions from secondary data to obtain primary data results. Purposive sampling is a widely adopted qualitative research technique, which involves the deliberate selection of a sample that would best suit the study's objectives, based on the researchers' expertise. This method aims to gather comprehensive knowledge about a specific population or phenomenon of interest (Siripipatthanakul et al., 2022). In this study, a sample of six key informants who were coffee shop customers in Krabi Town, Thailand, was selected using purposive sampling. The data collection process employed this sampling technique, and participants met three inclusion criteria: 1) they were Thai customers of coffee shops in Krabi Town, Thailand, 2) they visited a coffee shop at least twice a month, and 3) they were at least 18 years old.

The use of content analysis as a qualitative methodology involves a systematic and objective approach to describing and quantifying specific phenomena by making valid inferences from verbal, visual, or written data (Namraksa & Kraiwanit, 2023; Woodeson, Limna, & Nga-Fa, 2023). The software NVivo is a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis tool that facilitates the organization and analysis of large data sets (Brandão, 2015). Consequently, content analysis and NVivo were employed to analyze the data in the present study.

### **3. RESULT**

Referring to the interviews, the 4Ps marketing mix approach – product, price, place, and promotion – plays a significant role in influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry in Krabi, Thailand. The factors that influence customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry include high-quality coffee and complementary products such as pastries and snacks, competitive pricing, ambiance, and location. Effective promotional strategies, such as social media marketing, can also attract and retain customers. Overall, these factors are crucial for coffee shop owners and marketers to consider to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty. By addressing these factors, coffee shops can build strong relationships with customers and increase their chances of long-term success.

“Starting with the product, customers are very particular about the quality of their coffee and other complementary products such as pastries or snacks. Therefore, coffee shops must ensure that their products are of high quality to attract and retain customers.” – Respondent A, interviewed on March 15, 2023.

“In terms of pricing, customers prefer competitive pricing without compromising the quality of the products. Coffee shops need to find the right balance between price and quality to keep their customers satisfied and loyal.” – Respondent B, interviewed on March 15, 2023.

“When it comes to place, customers appreciate a coffee shop's ambiance and location. Creating a cozy, welcoming, and comfortable environment can go a long way in enhancing the overall customer experience, which can ultimately lead to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty.” – Respondent C, interviewed on March 17, 2023.

“Effective promotional strategies such as loyalty programs and social media marketing play a vital role in attracting and retaining customers. Promotions can help businesses build brand awareness and create a loyal customer base, leading to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty.” – Respondent D, interviewed on March 17, 2023.

“Customers are always looking for high-quality coffee and complementary products such as pastries and snacks, so the quality of the products is essential. Competitive pricing is also a factor; customers expect to pay a fair price for quality products. A coffee shop's ambiance and location can also play a role in customer satisfaction and loyalty. Finally, effective promotional strategies such as loyalty programs and social media marketing can attract and retain customers.” – Respondent E, interviewed on March 18, 2023.

“Excellent customer service is critical. Employees should be knowledgeable and attentive to customer needs. The training and development of employees are essential to ensure they can provide excellent customer service. Community engagement can also play a role. Customers appreciate when coffee shops are involved in the community and support local events and initiatives.” – Respondent F, interviewed on March 18, 2023.

### NVivo Analysis

The interpretation of interviews and analysis were based on NVivo. To make the results more understandable, a word frequency query was run in NVivo. The words that are frequently used by respondents during interviews are displayed in the word cloud in Figure 1.



Figure 1. A Word Frequency (Word Cloud)



#### **4. DISCUSSION**

The study's findings indicated that the 4Ps marketing mix approach (product, price, place, and promotion) had a significant impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry in Krabi, Thailand. The findings of this study are in line with previous research that has shown that the 4Ps marketing mix approach is critical to achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty. For instance, Kuo and Wu (2018) found that product quality, pricing, location, and promotions were significant predictors of customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry in Taiwan. Similarly, in a study on the fast-food industry in Pakistan, Hussain et al. (2020) found that the 4Ps marketing mix approach had a significant impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Regarding products, the study found that customers are highly sensitive to product quality, including the taste and presentation of coffee, as well as the quality of complementary products such as snacks and desserts. This finding is consistent with Kotler and Keller's (2016) emphasis on the importance of creating high-quality products to attract and retain customers. In terms of price, the study found that customers prefer affordable and competitive pricing without sacrificing the quality of the products. This finding aligns with Kotler and Keller's (2016) assertion that businesses need to strike a balance between pricing and product quality to satisfy customer needs and preferences. Moreover, the study highlighted the importance of the location and ambiance of coffee shops in influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Kotler and Keller (2016) also emphasize the significance of place, or the distribution channel, in marketing strategy development. Finally, the study demonstrated that effective promotional strategies, such as loyalty programs and social media marketing, play a vital role in attracting and retaining customers. Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasize the importance of promotion in marketing strategy development, as it enables businesses to communicate with their customers and build brand awareness. Overall, the study's findings provide support for the importance of the 4Ps marketing mix approach in driving customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry, consistent with Kotler and Keller's (2016) emphasis on these key elements in marketing strategy development.

The present study extends the previous research by providing insights into the factors that influence customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry in Krabi, Thailand. The study's findings suggest that businesses need to prioritize product quality and affordability, create a comfortable and welcoming environment, and invest in various promotional strategies to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty. In summary, the findings of this study support the importance of the 4Ps marketing mix approach in achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry, which has been demonstrated in previous research across different countries and industries.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

This study aimed to explain the factors that contribute to customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry in Krabi, Thailand. The study focused on the four fundamental elements of product, price, place, and promotion to gain insight into how each of these factors



influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study's findings suggest that the 4Ps marketing mix approach is a valuable framework for understanding the factors that influence customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry in Krabi, Thailand. The study found that each of the four elements of the marketing mix had a significant impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Product quality was found to be the most influential factor in driving customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry. Customers were found to be highly sensitive to the quality of the products, including the taste and presentation of coffee, as well as the quality of complementary products such as snacks and desserts. In addition, price was found to be an important factor as well, with customers preferring affordable and competitive pricing without sacrificing the quality of the products. The study also found that the location and ambiance of the coffee shop, as well as the quality of service provided by staff, significantly contributed to customer satisfaction and loyalty. Customers were found to prefer coffee shops that provided a comfortable and relaxing environment with a friendly and accommodating staff. Last but not least, the study found that effective promotional strategies, such as offering discounts and promotions, loyalty programs, and social media marketing, were essential in attracting and retaining customers. The study's findings highlight the importance of carefully managing the 4Ps marketing mix elements to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry.

### **Practical Implications**

The practical implications of the study are noteworthy, as the results provide important insights for coffee shop proprietors, marketers, and other industries to create successful strategies that target the factors influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty. By executing these strategies, businesses can anticipate better performance outcomes, leading to enhanced profitability and competitiveness in the market.

### **Research Implications**

This study adds to the existing literature on the 4Ps marketing mix approach, customer satisfaction and loyalty. Hence, this study's findings may aid scholars in broadening their research by incorporating more potential elements. The measurements could be used to guide future research on the 4Ps marketing mix approach, customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

The limitation of this study is that the respondents were coffee shop customers in Krabi, Thailand. Thus, it is proposed that additional sampling be conducted in other areas for future research. Although the 4Ps marketing mix approach is crucial, achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty in the coffee shop industry requires considering other factors such as excellent customer service, employee training, and community engagement. It is recommended to include additional factors in future research to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors that impact customer satisfaction and loyalty in this industry. Moreover, it is recommended that a quantitative study, such as a self-administered questionnaire, be conducted as it may provide ideas for future research.



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