A STUDY OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE SELECTION OF HOTELS AND RESRORTS
IN CHANTHABURI PROVINCE

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Abstract

This study aimed at comparing the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi Province categorized by personal factors and customer behavior and studying the relationship between the marketing mix and the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi. The samples were 385 tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi. Samples were randomly selected by the multi-level method. The statistics used in the research were percentage, mean, standard deviation, the *t* test, the *F*-test, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

The research findings showed that the tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi rated their opinions at a high level in terms of marketing mix, and at a high level in terms of the overall selection of hotels and resorts. The differences among the samples in terms of personal characteristics, which consisted of gender, age, education, occupation, and income resulted in the differences in the selection of hotels and resorts. Additionally, the tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi differed in terms of customer behavior, which consisted of the number of visits to Chanthaburi, the purpose of traveling to Chanthaburi, accommodation type, duration of each visit, the nature of the visit, the location of the hotel and resort, the average room rate per night, the appropriateness of the room rate, communication with the reservation desk, and the reservation method. This all resulted in differences in hotel and resort choices. The differences in marketing mix, which consisted of products, prices, distribution channels, marketing promotion, the service mind of hotel staff, service process and physical environment, also influenced the differences in hotels and resorts choices in Chantaburi.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Hotels and Resorts, Chanthaburi Province

Introduction

Tourism is an important industry in the Thai economy as its success extends to the country's economy, society, culture and the environment. One of the main contributions the tourism industry has played over years is to the state of the economy. It can be said that the tourism industry is a leading source of revenue for the country.

Thailand's tourism industry in 2017 generated up to 2.76 trillion baht in revenue, accounting for 20% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). As a result of the marketing plan by

the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) since the beginning of the year, the country has generated approximately 1.8 trillion baht from approximately 35 million foreign tourists and 950 billion baht from Thais traveling domestically (Department of Tourism, 2017).

The Ministry of Commerce and its ministerial executives held a meeting with the leaders of the private sector in 8 eastern provinces on February 4, 2018 to listen to recommendations for developing the economy of the eastern region, mobilizing the strategy for fruits of the eastern region, developing Chanthaburi Province into a gemstone and jewelry trade hub, promoting border trade, supporting trade and investment, supporting tourism and the grassroot economy, promoting trade and investment in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) with plans of developing premium-grade fruits in order to add value and raise prices, finding market opportunities for secondary grade fruits, developing new products, packaging development for Thai fruit, as well as developing distribution channels, systematic fruit distribution, and enhancing the capabilities of businesses.

The Ministry of Commerce aims to push Chanthaburi to become a trade hub for precious stones by pushing for increased commerce among foreigners as the province is an important source of raw materials for the country. It will also collaborate with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) on a gem route to attract tourism by compiling information on store locations and product lists as a guidebook for tourists (Thai Government, 2018). This coincides with the with the Eastern Development Direction in the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017–2021) that outlines the development of the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) as the most advanced special economic zone in ASEAN by developing transportation connectivity to facilitate the development of industries and cities; supporting the development of high-tech and future industries within the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC); developing personnel, education, research and technology; developing diverse coastal tourist attractions in the Chonburi – Rayong to generate income and jobs for communities; and improving the environment of major cities in the province to increase livability.

In regards to tourism, the development plan has outlined ways to improve product standards and tourism businesses by rehabilitating and improving the tourism industries in Nakhon Nayok, Chachoengsao, Chanthaburi and Trat Province to become destinations for ecological, agricultural, health tourism, as well as tourism led by communities and promoting restoration and conservation in Prachinburi and Sa Kaeo Province to become destinations for archeological tourism (Multilateral Environmental Agreements Knowledge and Strategic Development Think Tank Project, 2018).

Chanthaburi is an eastern coastal province of long historical importance due to the discovery of numerous archeological sites in the province once inhabited by prehistoric humans. Polished stone tools and equipment dating back approximately 2,000 years were found in the districts of Makham, Tha Mai, and the hillside plains of Ban Khlong Bon in Pong Nam Ron District. The province is especially famed for its gemstones and gemstone cutting techniques and has long been a leader in gemstone burning as a value addition. Today, Chanthaburi is the largest gem trading center in Thailand and Southeast Asia, bringing in tens of billions of baht in revenue for the province and employing over 50 thousand people. This is one of the country's national strategies that has

garnered hundreds of billions of baht for the country. In addition, the province is famed for its variety of fruits and is a famous destination for agricultural and archeological tourism in Thailand. The province's wide range of natural attractions such as mountains, forests, waterfalls, and beaches, as well as its prominent industries have resulted in the expansion of hotel and resort businesses. The Chanthaburi Statistics Office has gathered the compiled the statistics of tourists that visited the Chanthaburi 2012 and 2016, displayed on Table 1. Comparing the statistics of tourists in the years 2012–2016 indicates that tourism in Chanthaburi is quite popular and on the rise. In addition to travel and restaurants or souvenirs, hotel and resort preference is one of the key factors of consumer behavior (Chanthaburi Provincial Administration, 2018).

Table 1 shows the comparison of tourist statistics in Chanthaburi Province in the years 2012–2016

Year	Thai Tourists	Foreign Tourists
2012	1,488,038	71,332
2013	1,571,614	74,197
2014	1,626,262	74,537
2015	1,791,080	78,389
2016	1,891,433	82,364

Source: Chanthaburi Provincial Administration. Information on Chanthaburi Province. Sourced from http://www.chanthaburi.go.th/new/?page_id=145#&panel1–1 .

Hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi are growing rapidly while their operation and management has come a long way compared to when there were few competitors. Today, numerous large hotels have arisen, offering more rooms and facilities to impress guests and create incentives for staying. In addition, transportation has become faster and more convenient. Therefore, the hotel business requires strategic planning in accordance to international management standards.

Due to the Eastern Development Direction to push Chanthaburi to become a trading center for gemstones to attract tourism, coupled with the growing number of hotels and resorts in the province, the hotel and resort industry in province has become increasingly competitive. The researcher has taken an interest and realizes the importance of the situation and has therefore conducted a study on factors affecting the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi so that the results can be used as reference for decision making for those who are interested in investing in the hotel and resort industry. Furthermore, the study will be beneficial to businesses as a guideline for planning and developing their hotels and resorts and help raise the quality of service and industry standards.

Research Objectives

1. To study the behavior of consumers who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi Province

2. To study the marketing mix of consumers who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi.

3. To study the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi

4. To compare preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi classified by personal factors and by consumer behavior.

5. To study the relationship between the marketing mix and the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi.

Research Hypothesis

1. Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi with different demographic factors, such as gender, age, educational level, occupation, and income have different preferences in hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi.

2. Travelers who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi with different consumer behaviors, which consists of of the number of visits to Chanthaburi, the purpose of traveling to Chanthaburi, accommodation type, duration of each visit, the nature of the visit, the location of the hotel and resort, the average room rate per night, the appropriateness of the room rate, communication with the reservation desk, and the reservation method have different preferences in hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi.

3. Marketing mix factors such as product, pricing, distribution channels, marketing promotion, staff service, service process, and physical environments affect the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi.

Related Literature

Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior

Walters (1974: 4) stated that consumers make their own decisions based on their purchasing power, special offers of products or services, or personal satisfaction when assessing their needs and desires towards the item, while also influenced by environmental factors.

Environmental factors that influence the consumer's purchase can be divided into 4 factors as stated by Kumnai Apiprachyasakul (2015): cultural, social, personal, and psychological, which are detailed as follows:

1. Cultural Factors. Culture is the tool that binds individuals into groups. Individuals will learn of their own culture under the social processes. Culture is what determines the needs and behaviors of the person.

2. Social Factors. Society is a subset of culture. Therefore, it is another factor in the daily lives of consumers and influences their buying behavior. Social factors include reference groups, family, and the role and status of the buyer.

3. Personal Factors. The decision of the buyer is influenced by personal conditions such as family life cycle, occupation, economic situation, education, lifestyle and personality.

4. Psychological Factors. Consumer choices are influenced by four psychological processes: motivation, perception, learning, and beliefs and attitudes.

Concepts and Marketing Mix Theories

Kotler (1991) stated that the analysis of consumer behavior is a search or research related to buying and consumption behavior in order to understand consumer preferences and behaviors. The answers produced can help in developing a marketing strategy that satisfies the needs of consumers. As for the marketing mix for the service business, most academics say that business management is the management of the marketing mix in order to create a sales proposition that results in the sale of goods and services.

Siriwan Serirat et al. (2009) stated that the marketing mix concept for service businesses is comprised of the following 7Ps:

1. Product: is the answer to the needs and desires of humans. Products are divided into 2 types: tangible and intangible products.

2. Price: the value of the products in monetary terms. Price is the cost for the customer. The customer will compare the product value with the price of the product. If the value is higher than the price, the customer will decide to purchase the product. Therefore, pricing strategies must take into account the values that determine the cost of goods or services in the form of currency. Pricing must take into account the customer's perceived value.

3. Place: the location of the business. The location determines the consumer group that travels for the service. The service location must cover the maximum area of service available for the target audience while also taking into consideration the location of the competition.
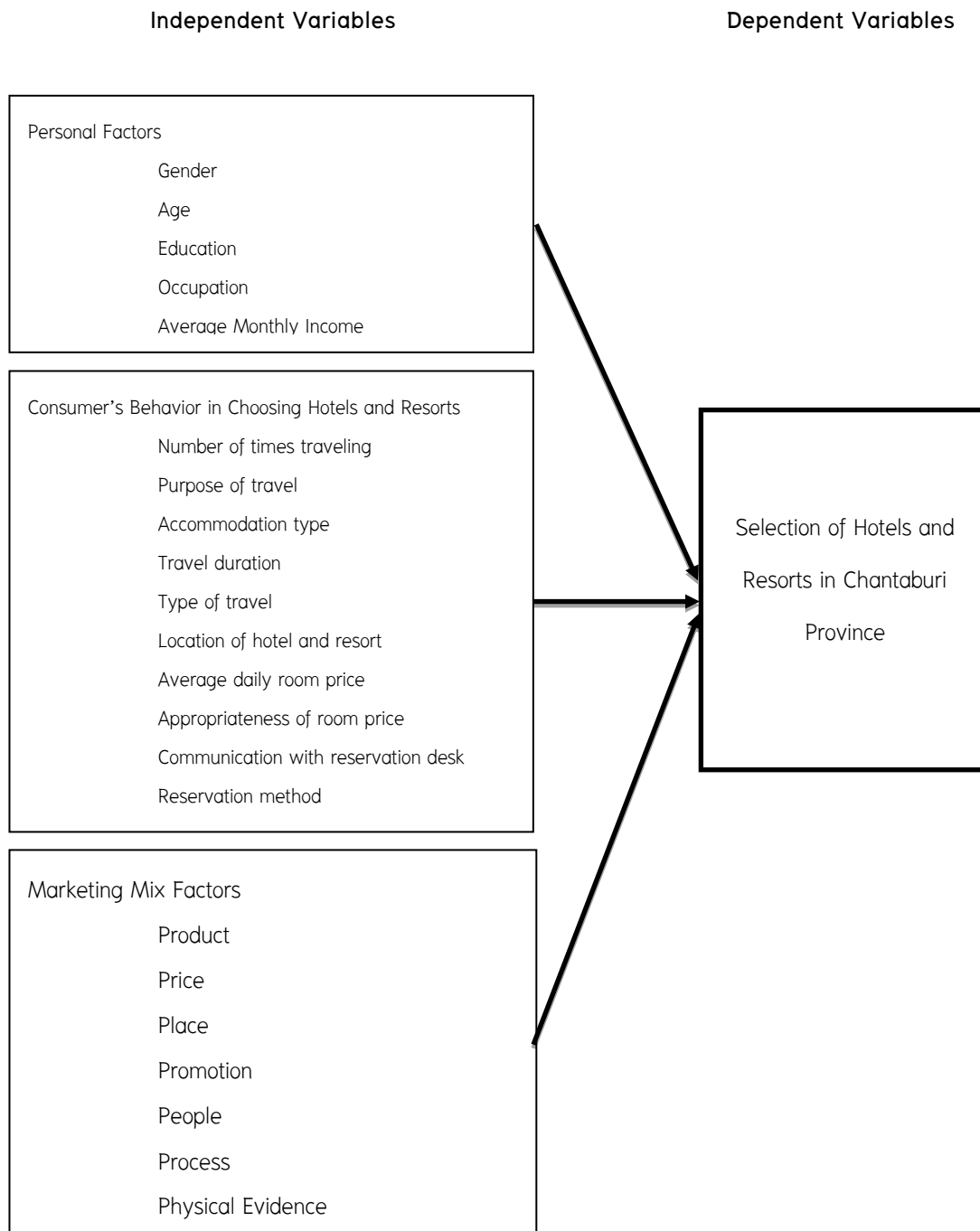
4. Promotion: an important tool in communicating information between the seller and the customer. The purpose is to inform or induce attitudes and behaviors that lead to the decision to use the service.

5. People, or employees: the personnel responsible for making contact with customers, making sales offers to motivate customers into making a purchase.

6. Physical evidence and presentation: the display of overall quality or the quality of the service through the use of visible evidence.

7. Process: an activity related to the methodology and practice of services and offers to the customer to ensure proper, fast, and impressive service to the customer.

Research Framework

Independent Variables   Dependent Variables

Personal Factors
- Gender
- Age
- Education
- Occupation
- Average Monthly Income

Consumer's Behavior in Choosing Hotels and Resorts
- Number of times traveling
- Purpose of travel
- Accommodation type
- Travel duration
- Type of travel
- Location of hotel and resort
- Average daily room price
- Appropriateness of room price
- Communication with reservation desk
- Reservation method

Marketing Mix Factors
- Product
- Price
- Place
- Promotion
- People
- Process
- Physical Evidence

Selection of Hotels and Resorts in Chantaburi Province

Population and Sampling

Population Used in Research

The population used in this study were Thai tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi Province.

Research Samples

The sample used in this study were 385 Thai tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi with the formula for calculating the unknown sample population as follows (Boonchom Srisa-ard, 2010):

The sample size for this research was 385, with a tolerance of ± 5 at a confidence level of 95% using a multi-stage random sampling method. The sampling consists of 3 steps as follows:

Step 1: Simple random sampling by randomly choosing 24 out of 96 hotels.

Step 2: Quota sampling of 385 people, with around 17 people per location.

Step 3: Convenience sampling to collect data using a questionnaire that was prepared to collect data from Thai tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi in Step 2.

Research Tools

Part 1 General information of the respondents. A closed form surveying Thai tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi Province, consisting of a checklist for gender, age, education, occupation, and average monthly income.

Part 2: A closed form surveying the behavior in selecting hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi, consisting of the number of visits to Chanthaburi, the purpose of traveling to Chanthaburi, accommodation type, duration of each visit, the nature of the visit, the location of the hotel and resort, the average room rate per night, the appropriateness of the room rate, communication with the reservation desk, and the reservation method.

Part 3: A closed form surveying the opinion of tourists on the marketing mix of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi, consisting of product pricing, distribution channels, marketing promotion, staff service, processes, physical environment on a category rating scale.

Part 4: A closed form surveying comments on the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi on a category rating scale.

Part 5: An open end form surveying other additional recommendations from Thai tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi where respondents can freely express their opinions.

Quality Assurance of Research Tools

The researcher examined the tools in the questionnaire on the marketing mix of consumers who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi Province and questions about the marketing mix of consumers who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi by finding the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) between question and purpose using a criteria of rating the response (Puangrat Thaweerat, 2000) of over 0.5 for every item. The IOC was then used to determine its reliability using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (Cronbach, 1984). Questions regarding the marketing mix of consumers who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi were valued at 0.793. Questions regarding the marketing mix of consumers who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi

were valued at 0.798 with a discriminative power (Luan Saiyos and Angkana Saiyos, 2000) higher than 0.2 for all questions.

Data Analysis

The study used a program to process and display statistical tables for descriptive and inferential analysis according to defined assumptions.

Statistical values used in data analysis:

1.Percentage

2.Mean

3 Standard Deviation

4.T-test to assess the difference between the average of two independent sample tests (Kanlaya Vanichbuncha, 2000).

5.One Way Analysis of Variance: One Way ANOVA. One-way analysis of variance used to test the difference between the average of two groups (Kanlaya Vanichbuncha, 2000).

6.Analysis of the correlation coefficient using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Luan Saiyos and Angkana Saiyos, 2000).

Research Results

By collecting 408 questionnaires, 385 questionnaires were completed and validated, accounting for 94.36% of all questionnaires.

1.The general information survey revealed that tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi were majority female, aged 40-49 years old, completed a bachelor's degree, worked at private companies, and had an average monthly salary of 35,001-45,000 baht.

2.The consumer behavior survey revealed that most tourists who used hotel and resort services

in visited Chanthaburi for the first time, with the purpose of traveling for leisure, stayed for a duration of 2 days and 1 night, traveled with friends/colleagues, stayed at hotels and resorts nearby tourist attractions, paid an average daily room rate of 500-999 baht, felt that the price of the room was appropriate, made reservations before checking in, and make reservations directly with the hotel or resort.

3.The opinions on the marketing mix survey revealed that overall opinion of tourists who used hotel and resort services in visited Chanthaburi was high, averaging at 3.86. The rating of each marketing mix component at the individual level, which consisted of product, price, distribution channels, marketing promotion, the service mind of hotel staff, service process and the physical environment were also high. The highest average rating was staff service at 4.14, followed by physical environment at 3.96, service process at 3.90, product at 3.86, marketing promotion at 3.78, distribution channels at 3.75, and price at 3.66.

4.The opinion survey on the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi revealed an average high score of 3.74. When considering the ranking on specific topics, it was found that the topic "you selected your accommodation based on location and convenient travel" scored the highest average rating of 4.49, followed by "you selected your accommodation to suit your personal needs" at 4.26, with the lowest rating being "you selected your accommodation because of its proximity to the local museum attraction" at 3.09.

5.The results of personal factors and the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi according to Hypothesis No.1

Hypothesis 1: Tourists who use hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi with different personal data which consists of gender, age, educational level, occupation, and income have different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the comparison of preferences in hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi classified by personal information.

Variables Studied	Factors in Selecting Hotels and Resorts	
	Hypothesis Testing Value	Sig. (2–tailed)
Gender	t = 3.025*	0.003
Age	F = 16.062*	0.000
Education Level	F = 9.592*	0.000
Occupation	F = 21.837*	0.000
Average Monthly Income	**F = 30.405***	**0.000**

*Statistical Significance of 0.05

– Gender. Respondents of different genders had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Age. Respondents of different ages had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Education Level. Respondents of different education levels had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Occupation. Respondents of different occupations had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Average monthly income. Respondents of different average monthly incomes had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

6. The results of consumer behavior and the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi according to Hypothesis No.2

Hypothesis No. 2: Tourists who use hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi with different consumer behaviors which consists of the number of visits to Chanthaburi, the purpose of traveling to Chanthaburi, accommodation type, duration of each visit, the nature of the visit, the location of the hotel and resort, the average room rate per night, the appropriateness of the room rate, communication with the reservation desk, and the reservation method have different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3 *shows the comparison of preferences in hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi classified by consumer behavior*

Variables Studied	Factors in Selecting Hotels and Resorts	
	Hypothesis Testing Value	Sig. (2–tailed)
Number of Visits to Chanthaburi	F = 23.203*	0.000
Purpose of Traveling to Chanthaburi	F = 6.238*	0.000
Accomodation Type	t = 10.939*	0.000
Duration of Each Visit	F = 5.230*	0.006
Nature of Each Visit	F = 0.493	0.611
Location of Hotel and Resort	F = 15.325*	0.000
Average Room Rate Per Night	F = 18.799*	0.000
Appropriateness of the Room Rate	t = 3.311*	0.001
Communication with the Reservation Desk	t = 2.119*	0.035
Reservation Method	**F = 4.542***	**0.004**

Statistical Significance of 0.05

– The number of visit to Chanthaburi. Respondents of different numbers of visits to Chanthaburi had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Purpose of traveling to Chanthaburi. Respondents of different purposes of traveling to Chanthaburi had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Accomodation type. Respondents of different accommodation types had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Duration of each visit. Respondents of different durations of each visit had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Nature of each visit. Respondents of different natures of each visit had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Location of hotel and resort. Respondents of different locations of hotel and resort had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Average room rate per night. Respondents of different average room rates per night had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Appropriateness of room rate. Respondents of different notions of appropriateness of room rates per night had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Communication with the reservation desk. Respondents of different methods of communication

with the reservation desk had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Reservation method. Respondents of different reservation methods had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

7.An analysis of the relationship of the marketing mix with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi according to Hypothesis No. 3

Hypothesis No.3: The marketing mix which consists of product, pricing, distribution channels, marketing promotion, staff service, processes, and physical environment are correlated to factors affecting the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4 *shows the relationship between the marketing mix and the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi Province*

Marketing Mix	Factors affecting the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi Province		
	correlation coefficient (r)	Sig.	Correlation
Product	0.225*	0.000	Low
Pricing	0.420*	0.000	Medium
Distribution Channels	0.113*	0.000	Very Low
Marketing Promotion	0.484*	0.000	Medium
Staff Service	0.300*	0.000	Low
Processes	0.359*	0.000	Low
Physical Environment	0.418*	0.000	Medium
Overall	**0.566***	**0.000**	**Medium**

* Statistics significance of 0.05

– The overall marketing mix is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Product is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Pricing is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Distribution Channels is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Marketing promotion is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Staff service is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Processes is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

– Physical environment is correlated with the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi with a statistical significance of 0.05

Discussion

The comparative study of hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi classified by personal characteristics based on the results of Hypothesis No.1 found that tourists using hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi with different personal characteristics which consists of gender, age, education level, occupation, and income had different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi. This is consistent with research by Nattaya Charoenphon (2012) of factors affecting the selection of accommodation in Ko Samui District in Surat Thani Province by foreign tourists from Asia and Europe. The study found that the different personal characteristics of Asian tourists consisting of gender, age, marital status, education, birthplace, occupation, and annual income resulted in different preferences for accomodations in Ko Samui District in Surat Thani Province with a statistical significance of 0.05. The study in Chanthaburi is also consistent with research by Susaree Jattanon (2015) of the marketing mix affecting the selection of hotels in Ubon Ratchathani Province. The study found that

tourists of different genders, ages, marital status, occupation, education level, and income had different preferences for hotels.

The comparative study of hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi classified by personal characteristics based on the results of Hypothesis No.2 found that tourists using hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi with different consumer behaviors which consists of the number of visits to Chanthaburi, the purpose of traveling to Chanthaburi, accommodation type, duration of each visit, the nature of the visit, the location of the hotel and resort, the average room rate per night, the appropriateness of the room rate, communication with the reservation desk, and the reservation method have different preferences for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi. This is consistent with the concept of Siriwan Serirat et al. (2009) who divided factors affecting consumer decision into 2 categories consisting of internal factors – which are factors arising from the individual, and external factors – which are factors arising from the individual's environment. The study in Chanthaburi is also consistent with research by Prapatsorn Chaiwang (2013) of the behavior of tourism and factors affecting the selection of hotels and resorts in Pai District in Mae Hong Son Province by tourists. The study in Pai District found that factors affecting the selection of hotels and resorts are price, amenities, and duration of stay.

The study of the relationship between the marketing mix and the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi based ou the results of Hypothesis 3 found that the marketing mix which consists of product, price, distribution channels, marketing promotion, staff service, processes, and physical

environment are correlated to factors affecting the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi. The correlation between product and the selection of hotels and results is consistent with the study by Schumann and Amado (2010) which found that Guam was a popular destination among Japanese tourists. Hotels in Guam had supported niche markets by equipping hotels for hosting weddings, creating a variety of wedding and honeymoon packages for couples, providing up to 200 rooms for guests, offering airport shuttle service, collaborating with Japanese wedding planners to make cheaper offerings, and presenting points of differentiation and distinguishing characteristics of products to appeal to and impress guests.

The study in Chanthaburi is also consistent with the study by Puthinan Panyaputhinan (2017) of the marketing mix that affected selection of accommodations in Khao Lak in Phang Nga Province by Thai tourists. The study found that the marketing mix that affect the selection of accommodations were price, distribution channels, staff service, and physical environment with a statistical significance of 0.05.

The study in Chanthaburi was also consistent with the study by Susaree Jattanon (2015) of the marketing mix that affects the selection of hotels in Ubon Ratchathani Province. The study found that the marketing mix is correlated with the selection of hotels.

The study in Chanthaburi is consistent with the study by Choosak Choosri (2011) of factors affecting selection of hotels and resorts in Ko Samui District in Surat Thani Province by foreign tourists. The study found that the marketing mix that affect the

selection of resorts were location, amenities, and price, respectively.

The study in Chanthaburi is consistent with the study by Tippayarat Kongsoonthonkitkul (2009) of factors affecting selection of hotels by retired European tourists. The study found that factors that most affecting retired European tourists' selection of hotels are processes, distribution channels, price, and marketing promotions, while the the marketing mix of price, distribution channels, marketing promotion, and marketing promotions were highly correlated and service processes was moderately correlated to European tourists' selection of hotels with a statistical significance of 0.05.

The study in Chanthaburi is consistent with the study by Pikkemaat and Schuckert (2007) of factors affecting the success of amusement parks by gathering related literature to determine factors that may affect the influence of amusement parks. The study found that variety of rides, differentiation from competitors, constantly innovating and improving on services, and the quality and safety of service reflected the influence of factors affecting the product marketing mix and branding, while the success of the amusement park reflected the influence of the marketing promotion marketing mix, the management to ensure that the amusement park created a unified theme reflected the influence of the physical environment marketing mix, and the ability to accomodate and manage queues reflected the influence of the service process marketing mix.

Results and Benefits Summary

The study concludes that personal characteristics, consumer behavior, and the marketing

mix affect the selection of hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi Province. This shows that impressing customers with quality service results in service demand. Therefore, quality service must emphasize all affecting factors, whether it be product, price, distribution channels, marketing promotions, service staff, service processes, and physical environments. Furthermore, businesses must make improvements according to recommendations. Hotel and resort businesses can draw upon this study as a guideline for developing and improving the marketing mix to suit the target customer and for establishing a marketing strategy for hotels and resorts in Chanthaburi to coincide with customer behavior in selecting hotels and resorts so that businesses can better meet the needs of customers.

Recommendations from the Research

1.Most tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi Province visited the province for the first time, with the purpose of traveling for leisure, stay for a duration of 2 days and 1 night, travel with friends/colleagues, stay at hotels and resorts nearby tourist attractions, pay an average daily room rate of 500–999 baht, feel that the price of the room was appropriate, made reservations before checking in, and make reservations directly with the hotel or resort. Therefore, hotel and resort operators should plan their marketing to coincide with group travelers or organize group activities in order to create interest. Businesses could also organize tour packages to popular destinations, offer value added services or promotions, and create media plans to disseminate information to provide comprehensive and thorough information and offer services that can attract tourists.

2.Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi place great importance on the product marketing mix. Therefore, businesses should ensure the functionality and availability of amenities in the hotels and resorts. Rooms should be regularly cleaned and renovated accordingly.

3.Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi place great importance on the price marketing mix. Therefore, businesses should ensure the appropriateness of room rates and provide a range of prices.

4.Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi place great importance on the distribution channels marketing mix. Therefore, businesses should provide a range of reservation options such as online, phone, tour agencies, representatives on various social networks and should consider waiving reservation fees.

5.Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi place great importance on the marketing promotion marketing mix. Therefore, businesses should have strong marketing plans and strategies, such as setting up promotional booths at various locations, offering seasonal/festival promotions, and organize tour packages.

6.Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi place great importance on the staff service marketing mix. Therefore, businesses should put care into the selection of employees, their personality, and job skills. Employees should be regularly trained to provide attentive and courteous service and be able to recommended services and provide definitive answers to questions. This would

ensure that the staff will be able to effectively service guests.

7.Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi place great importance on the service processes marketing mix. Therefore, businesses should train and assess their staff on fast service to ensure customer satisfaction.

8.Tourists who used hotel and resort services in Chanthaburi place great importance on the physical environment marketing mix. Therefore, businesses should create a safe and hospitable environment and provide sufficient and convenient parking services.

1.A study of the needs of tourists in other areas such as transportation, facilities, and management of communities that are involved in tourist attractions.

2.A Study of the impact of the increasing number of tourists on tourist attractions and ways to develop tourist attractions in the future.

3.A study of the expectations of elderly or retired tourists on hotels and resorts.

4.A study surveying satisfaction and perceptions towards tourism, accommodations, safety, and travel in Chanthaburi to encourage tourism development.

Suggestions for Further Research

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