

Factors Influencing Customer Loyalty to Coffee Shops in Pranakhon Si Ayuthaya Province

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to 1) investigate the level of coffee shop factors: product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation and customer loyalty in Pranakhon Si Ayuthaya Province 2) study relationship among the coffee shop factors and customer loyalty and 3) identify the influence of coffee shop factors on customer loyalty. The target population were 500 customers of the coffee shops during July–October 2022. 250 customers were selected as the samples by means of accidental sampling technique. Questionnaires were used for collecting data. Descriptive statistics and Multiple linear regression with stepwise process were used for data analysis. The research results are the followings. The findings revealed that the coffee shops have generally provided product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation at a good level whereas they have gained customer loyalty at a high level as well. All coffee shop factors and customer loyalty have significant relationship with one another. However, only 3 out of the 4 coffee shop factors were selected into the regression equation with 61.19 percent of the variation in the customer loyalty was explained. Those 3 factors were service quality, product quality and physical environment ranking in accordance with the significant influence on the customer loyalty from the most to the least.

Keywords: service quality; customer loyalty; coffee shop

Introduction

A coffee shop is a kind of restaurant that sells coffee, tea, cakes, and sometimes sandwiches and light meals (Collins, 2022). Coffee has become a very social drink. Mornings at the local coffee shop are the place to hang out with friends or meet to discuss business. People tend to drink coffee at these gatherings whether or not they like it. Coffee drinkers say they drink coffee to relax. Some people, even regular coffee can relax the senses and help them wind down and calm their nerves. Finally, there are millions of people who simply love the taste of coffee. This taste is different for every coffee drinker because of the vast variety of coffee flavors, roasts and varieties available on the market. Regardless of the flavor, people are enticed to their morning cup of coffee (Brennan, 2023). Coffee shops have become so popular over the last decade is the feeling of comfort and relaxation they can provide. Aside from the social benefits offered by coffee shops, they also provide a wonderful space to work and study. As working from home and flexible work hours become more popular, more people are migrating from their usual office to spend at least some portion of the working day setting up shop in a coffee shop.

Thailand has a population of approximately 70 million people. The population is responsible for coffee market revenues totaling \$3.185 billion in 2022. The US has the highest coffee market revenue, with its 330 million people giving revenues of \$85 billion in the same period. Thailand traditionally prefers tea over coffee. However, while tea might remain a more popular beverage than coffee, coffee is gaining in popularity. In 2019, the country's population consumed the equivalent of 1.4 million bags of coffee. In 2009, this figure was just 0.7 million, or half the amount. Coffee is a very popular hot beverage in Thailand, and its popularity is growing. The average Thai person consumes the equivalent of 300 cups of coffee per day at the current rates. Coffee consumption in Thailand is on the rise, with 15% more of it being drunk every year. However, growth is expected to continue, both for instant coffee and premium coffee as well as in the number and revenue of coffee shops (MacDonnell, 2022).

The coffee shop business is a very profitable venture. According to an estimate, people drink approximately 2.5 billion cups of coffee every day around the world. Experts say that the figure would increase to 67% by the end of 2022. The interesting fact about coffee and other ready-to-drink business is that they're resistant and can survive easily in the volatile markets. Almost every coffee shop provides some unique taste, and that becomes its reputation. Of course, they're providing a quality service. But it doesn't mean that there's the only seller in the market. That's

why it'd difficult to make a unique name in this category. When they open their coffee shops in a certain market, it's not something that people can't copy and create the same product. Competitors can easily enter the market and you'll have no option but to share the profit with them (Shaw, 2022). In case of Pranakhon Si Ayuthaya, there are approximately 50 coffee shops in this province (Vymaps, 2022). So, it means that the coffee shop business seems to be very highly competitive. The importance of running a coffee shop business is to make the business survive and grow. Since, customer is one of the most important factors. Therefore, how to make customers choose our coffee shop services, come back again and convince others to purchase the shop services are very important issues. To investigate factors influencing customers' loyalty to the coffee shop should indicate why I do this research.

Objectives

1. To investigate the level of coffee shop factors: product quality, service quality, physical environment brand innovation and customer loyalty
2. To study relationship among coffee shop factors: product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation and customer loyalty
3. To identify the influence of coffee shop factors: product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation on customer loyalty

Scope of the study

1. Population and Sample

Population and Samples: The target population were 500 customers of the coffee shops located in Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Province (Vymaps, 2022). The sample size needed for this research was approximately 250 which relevant to the acceptable sample size of 10–20 people per variable for multiple regression analysis (Hair, et al. 2010). Accidental sampling technique was used to select whoever available to answer those questionnaires as the study samples.

2. Content of the study

This research content consisted of the 4 factors including perceived coffee shop product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation as independent variables and

customer loyalty to the coffee shops as the dependent variable. It aimed to study how the overall and each aspect of the 4 hypothesized factors influencing on customers' loyalty to the coffee shops.

3. Duration of the study

The researcher spent 4 months for the study. It started from July to October 2022.

Review of the Related Literature

Coffee Shops

A coffee shop is a kind of restaurant that sells coffee, tea, cakes, and sometimes sandwiches and light meals (Collins, 2022). It is an establishment that primarily serves coffee of various types. Some of them may serve cold drinks, such as iced coffee and iced tea, as well as other non-caffeinated beverages. *Coffee shops* have become *so popular* as they can provide the feeling of comfort and relaxation and also a wonderful space to work and study (Brennan, 2023). The coffee shop business is a very profitable venture. According to an estimate, people drink approximately 2.5 billion cups of coffee every day around the world. Experts say that the figure would increase to 67% by the end of 2022. But it doesn't mean that there's the only seller in the market. When they open their coffee shops in a certain market, it's not something that people can't copy and create the same product. Competitors can easily enter the market and you'll have no option but to share the profit with them (Shaw, 2022). In case of Pranakhon Si Ayuthaya, there are approximately 50 coffee shops in this province (Vymaps, 2022). So, it means that the coffee shop business seems to be very highly competitive.

Product Quality

Product refers to what the business offers for sale and may include products or services. This element is an object or service an organization produces on a large scale in a specific volume of units. (Van Vliet, 2011) In terms of product quality, it is based on the personal experience of potential customers with the brand, i.e. it reflects their evaluation of product they purchased with respect to quality (Walter et al., 2002). According to Utami and Oetomo (2015), consumers purchase product to fulfill their needs and wants. In any case, consumers purchase a product not exclusively because of the physical state of the product but because of the benefits contained in the items

obtained. Besides, one of the qualities that got to be considered on the product is the quality of item. (Jahanshahi et al., 2011). With a tall level of acknowledgment of perceived product quality, it will contribute logic of pleasure to consumers because the company is considered to realize consumer desire. In a few cases, consumers use the physical characteristics to judge product quality (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000).

Service Quality

Service quality is generally conceptualized in the context of service marketing literature (Lee, Lee & Yoo, 2000). Therefore, it deals with the concept of perceived service quality. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1990), perceived service quality is the degree to which a firm effectively serves the reason of clients. Clients decide the seen or cognitive esteem of benefit based on their involvement with the benefit conveyed. The key research instruments for measuring quality in service industries is the SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985 & 1988). The model includes 22 items for evaluating customer perception and expectation regarding the quality of service. This SERVQUAL model offers five common dimensions of service quality, namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Service quality analysis formulates an effect on the improvement of the customer loyalty concept–service quality can be respected as one of the most frequently analyzed customer loyalty determinants. Tangible and intangible components of service quality were important in evaluating either customer vision of an organization or customer faith in an organization (Doney & Cannon, 1997; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999).

Physical Environment

The physical environment in which benefits are conveyed affects human behavior according to Bitner (1992). Till 1960s there were exceptionally few analysts who worked in this range but after that lot of psychologists and researchers have appraised effect of physical environment on human manners (Stokols and Altman 1987). Substantive organizing of service scape alludes to the physical frame of the benefit environment (Arnould, Price & Tierney, 1998; Siu, 2013). The area in which people dwell and the amenities to which they have access can have important effect for their health and well being according to Lloyd and Auld (2002) Physical environment influences the service givers, the workers as well as the service recipient that are customers'. According to Elsbachs and Pratt (2007), physical environment entails all the material objects (e.g. constructions, equipment, furnishings and ambient conditions such as lighting and air quality) as well as those courses of action

of those objects that people gather and interact within organizational life. The effects of physical surrounding on service quality have been studied also by Wall and Berry (2007). They expressed that physical environment could basically impact customer's desire of service quality and service (loyalty) because clients need tangible clue to create a picture in order to appraise the quality.

Brand Innovation

These days customers have to typically deal with a variety of product items where mere brand building is not sufficient since the trail off of time will get consumers numb with discernment and freshness; therefore, brand innovation points to communicate both undeviating or roundabout experiences throughout every interaction of advancement concepts to customers. This is the finest promoter of brand publicity to form the concept attitudes and initiative for the brand (Chang, 2011). Brand innovation is characterized as a trademark similarly to a story being the up coherence and affiliation and permitting unused concept being additional to a brand advantage and existing in human intellect (Grant, 2006). In confront of different product items, the establishment of brand not sufficient for advanced consumer as would paralyze the freshness and perception of a brand in an extended period of time. Brand innovation represents the creation of a new product by an organization that satisfies its customers and raises the market share because the function of innovation is to convey something new and unique which competitions do not have. Grant (2006) therefore proposed the major conception of brand innovation such as the new tradition, belief system and time, herd instincts, connecting and control and luxury and provocative.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is defined as “a deeply held promise to rebuild an item or service in the prospect even with situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior (Oliver, 1999). Dependability building requires the company to focus its importance of the product and services to explicate that is implicated to fulfill the desire or build the relationship with customers (Griffin, 2002). Moreover, a connection with a client is similarly imperative in client devotion and this requires that company works in a broader setting that amplifies past itself. Loyalty is an optimistic feeling from the clients side in the direction of the consumed item. This notion is formed by comparing the customer expectation opposed to the actual product performance according to Kotler (2000), and Belin (2002).

Methodology

This study is a causal-comparative research by which this study content consisted of the 4 factors including perceived coffee shop product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation as independent variables and customers' loyalty to the coffee shops as the dependent variable. It aimed to study how the overall and each aspect of the 4 hypothesized factors influencing on customers' loyalty to the coffee shops.

Population and Samples: The target population were 500 customers of the 50 coffee shops located in Phranakorn Si Ayutthaya Province (Vymaps, 2022). The sample size needed for this research was approximately 250 which relevant to the acceptable sample size of 10–20 people per variable for multiple regression analysis (Hair et al, 2010). Accidental sampling technique was used to select (10 customers per coffee shop) whoever available to answer those questionnaires at the coffee shops on the given time as the study samples.

Research Instrument: Questionnaires were used to collect data for the study. Each questionnaire consists of three sections. Section 1 is a checklist and fill-in the blank form of customers' personal data. Section 2 consists of Likert 5-level scale of perceived coffee shop product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation and customers' loyalty to the coffee shops and Section 3 consists of Likert 5-level scale of customers' loyalty to the coffee shops. The questionnaire was assessed by 3 experts for content validity with the coefficients of .67–1.00 and Cronbach 's Alpha coefficient for overall reliability and each element of .82–.95

Procedure of collecting data: There are approximately 25 coffee shops in Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Province participated in the research project. The researcher went to contact the target coffee shops managers in person for permission to conduct the collecting data and also to distribute the questionnaires. The research team set up a plan and schedule to visit customers at coffee shops daily throughout the month. During the period for collecting data each day, the spa shop managers were met, along with the customers at each coffee shop at a break or an appropriate time and they were asked for permission to distribute the questionnaires. Furthermore, the research team had to keep in mind trying to avoid repeating the collection of data from the same customers. Approximately 250 questionnaires were distributed and the researcher had collected about 250 perfect questionnaires or 100 percent of all respondents.

Data Analysis: The Statistical Package for The Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. The data analyses for this research were conducted in accordance with the research objectives; descriptive statistics were applied for sections 1, 2 and 3 of the questionnaires. Multiple linear regression analysis with stepwise regression process were used to find out the relationship among all 5 variables and the influence of overall and each independent variables on the dependent variable.

Results of Analysis

There are 5 variables selected for the study: product quality, service quality, physical environment as well as brand innovation as independent variables and customers' loyalty as dependent variable.

Part 1 Levels of Each Variable for the Study

Table 1 Mean, Standard deviation, Quality/Quantity of Each Variable

Variables	\bar{X}	SD	Quality/Quantity
1 product quality	3.79	.66	good
2 service quality	3.74	.72	good
3 physical environment	3.66	.81	good
4 brand innovation	3.59	.71	good
5 customers' loyalty	3.79	.76	high

According to Table 1, the product quality (\bar{X} =3.79), service quality (\bar{X} =3.74), physical environment (\bar{X} =3.66) and brand innovation (\bar{X} =3.59) were at a very good level whereas the quantity of customer loyalty was at a high level (\bar{X} =3.79)

Part 2 Relationship among the product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation and customer loyalty

Table 2 Correlation coefficients of Relationship among the product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation and customer loyalty

variables	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5
X1 product quality	1	.709**	.687**	.718**	.717**
X2 service quality		1	.598**	.640**	.713**
X3 physical environment			1	.706**	.658**
X4 brand innovation				1	.596**
X5 customer loyalty					1

** p < .01

The data analysis results in Table 2 show that all variables of the product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation had statistically significant positive correlation at .01. ($r = 0.596 - 0.718$)

Part 3 The Influence of the product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation on customer loyalty

3.1 Relationship of Coffee Shop Variables and Customer Loyalty

Table 3 Values used to determine the relationship of coffee shop variables and customer loyalty variable

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard Error of the Estimate
3	.792	.627	.619	2.035

The data analysis results in Table3 show that variables of coffee shop variables altogether related to and of which 61.19 percent accounted for customer loyalty. ($R = .792$, Adjusted $R^2 = .619$)

3.2 The Influence of Overall Coffee Shop Variables on Customer Loyalty

Table 4 Statistics used to test the influence of overall coffee shop variables on customer loyalty variable

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
3 Regression	1029.942	3	343.314	82.903**	.000
Residual	612.894	148	4.141		
Total	1642.836	151			

** p < .01

The data analysis results in Table 4 show that there are at least 1 variable of service quality influences customer loyalty. ($F = 82.903$, Sig at .01)

3.3 Investigation of Regression Coefficient of each Service Quality Variable Influencing Customer Loyalty Variable

Table 5 Regression coefficients of each service quality variable influencing customer loyalty variable

variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig
	B	std error	β		
constant	3.681	0.999		3.686**	0.000
X1 product quality	0.250	0.067	0.301	3.739**	0.000
X2 service quality	0.322	0.066	0.357	4.894**	0.000
X3 physical environment	0.244	0.072	0.238	3.364**	0.001

*\p< .01

The data analysis results in Table 5 show that there are 3 variables of coffee shop factors influencing customer loyalty variable: X1 product quality ($\beta = 0.301$, Sig at 0.01), X2 service quality ($\beta = 0.357$, Sig at 0.01), X3 physical environment ($\beta = 0.238$, Sig at 0.01)

Discussion

According to the objectives of this research, the discussion of the findings were classified into 1. levels of coffee shop factors: product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation together with customer loyalty 2. relationship among product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation as well as customer loyalty and 3. the influence of overall and each aspect of coffee shop factors on customer loyalty.

1. According to the results of analysis, the coffee shops in Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Province have generally provided products, services, physical environment and brand innovation with high quality at good levels for their customers so far. Moreover, it was found that they have gained acceptable customer loyalty at a high level as well. Nevertheless, It is not satisfied because coffee shop business is very highly competitive. Not surprisingly, due to increase in a number of competitions within the business, they have to raise up the quality of products, services, physical environment, brand innovation together with physical environment so that they would be able to increase more customer loyalty. To survive this business, especially remaining profitability, it is vital to highlight on service quality, productive operation (Papadimitriou & Karteliotis, 2000) as well as customer loyalty (Durongdumrongchai et al., 2019).

2. The analysis results of simple linear correlation indicated that all 5 variables analysed in this study (products, services, physical environment, brand innovation and customer loyalty) had statistically significant positive correlation at 0.01 ($r = 0.596 - 0.718$). It shows that those variables have strong relationship with one another (Heckman, 2016). Furthermore, Multiple linear regression (MLR) was used to examine how coffee shop factors (products, services, physical environment, brand innovation) are related to a customer loyalty variable. According to the results of the analysis, it indicated that the adjusted R^2 is .619 It means 61.90 percent of the variation in the customer loyalty variable is explained by the coffee shop factors. So, in simple terms, higher the adjusted R^2 , the more variation of customer loyalty is explained by coffee shop factors and hence better is the model (Kenton, 2020).

3. Multiple linear regression was used to identify the strength of the influence that the coffee shop factors have on customer loyalty variable. According to the results of the analysis, it indicated that three variables(factors) out of four factors (variables) namely; service quality ($\beta = 0.357$), product quality ($\beta = 0.301$) and physical environment ($\beta = 0.238$) influencing customer loyalty ranking from the most to the least. In other words, they capture customers' attention to be satisfied with the coffee shop and they possibly contributed favorable customer loyalty outcomes to the shops. These findings are closely relevant to the conceptual model of influencing on customer loyalty proposed by Badrul (2020), Durongdumrongchai et al., (2019), and Loem and Thanabordeekij (2019). Therefore, it could be confirmed that coffee shop factors, product quality and physical environment have strong influence on customer loyalty variable respectively.

Conclusion

The objectives of this research were to 1) investigate the level of coffee shop factors: product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation and customer loyalty in Pranakhon Si Ayuthaya Province 2) study relationship among the coffee shop factors and customer loyalty and 3) identify the influence of coffee shop factors on customer loyalty. 500 coffee shop customers were the population of this study. 250 samples needed for the research were selected by means of accidental sampling technique. Questionnaires were used for collecting data. Descriptive statistics, multiple linear regression analysis with stepwise regression process were used for data analysis.

The findings revealed that the coffee shops have generally provided product quality, service quality, physical environment and brand innovation at a good level whereas they have gained acceptable customer loyalty at a high level as well. Moreover, all coffee shop factors of product quality, service quality, physical environment, brand innovation and customer loyalty have strong relationship with one another. The findings also indicated that 61.90 percent of the variation in the customer loyalty variable is explained by the coffee shop factors. In addition, it revealed that three factors of service quality, product quality and physical environment out of the four influencing customer loyalty ranking from the most to the least.

Recommendation

Implication

The following suggestions needed to be maintained/improved in the interest of managements to enhance quality of coffee shop factors as well as customer loyalty in order to raise up better coffee shop business.

1. The Ministry of Commerce should consider integrating all the coffee shop factors but focus on especially product quality, service quality, physical environment as well as customer loyalty into the policy of upgrading coffee shop business for both local and foreign tourists.
2. Coffee shop managers should strongly focus on the high quality of ingredients, different variety, strongly flavorful taste and decent aroma of coffee served in the shops.
3. Coffee shop managers have to pay attention to all the details and keep trying to improve service quality. Appropriate service hours for various customers should be considered and set up. Staff personnel should have good possession of required knowledge and skills about coffee shops. They should provide impressive services to customers by welcoming and taking care them well quickly politely and attentively. They must have great communication and good responding when there is any complaint and provide a consistent service to the customers.
4. Facilities and environment of the space are required to look out carefully. The managers might need to assure those other assets such as modern equipment, the appearance of decoration and these things will be attractive as service materials to the customers.

Future research

1. This research focuses on the coffee shops in Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Province excluding those in others. So, the next research should focus more in the other provinces.
2. There might be other variables influencing customer loyalty. Therefore, future researchers may investigate more on variables relating to customer loyalty to coffee shops.
3. Since coffee factors and customer loyalty are latent variables, for more accuracy and deeply understanding people interested in this issue, require a fairly high level of statistical sophistication. So, Structure Equation Model (SEM) should be considered for their research analysis.

New Knowledge

The new research findings revealed that the coffee shops in Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Province have generally provided 4 factors of product quality service quality, physical environment and brand innovation at a good level whereas they gained acceptable customer loyalty at a high level as their feedback. In terms of the connection among the coffee shop factors together with customer loyalty, there was significant relationship among them. Nevertheless, there were only 3 out of 4 factors service quality, product quality and physical environment influencing customer loyalty. According to beta value from the research findings, it was ranked from the most to the least in the following equation.

$$y = \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_3 x_3 + c \quad (y = .357 x_2 + .301 x_1 + .238 x_3)$$

y = dependent variable (customer loyalty)

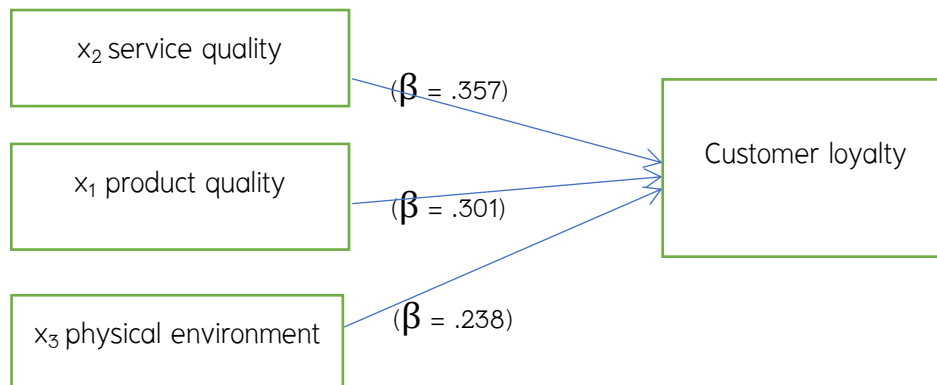
β = Standardized coefficients

X = independent variables (x_2 service quality, x_1 product quality, x_3 physical environment)

c = the error in predicting the value of y

The new research findings mentioned above can be used to create not only a new regression equation but also a new conceptual model indicating causal relationship that can explain how the coffee shop factors selected into the regression equation influence customer loyalty variance.

Conceptual Model



The beta value (β) shown in the model were used in measuring how effectively the coffee shop factors significantly influence customer loyalty by which x_2 service quality having the greatest influence followed by x_1 product quality and x_3 physical environment respectively. Therefore, the 3 factors with significant influence on the customer loyalty should be more focused on and implemented so that the coffee shop service quality can be raised up more effectively.

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