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Factors Related to the Satisfaction of Car Consumers

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***Abstract*—**The objective of this research was to study the factors related to the satisfaction of consumers who purchased a Toyota SUV Fortuner. This paper was a survey data which collected 400 samples from 65 car dealerships. The survey was conducted mainly in Bangkok, Thailand. The statistics utilized in this paper included percentage, mean, standard deviation and Pearson Product-Moment. The findings revealed that the majority of respondent were male with an undergraduate degree, married and live together. The average income of the respondents was between 20,001 - 30,000 baht. Most of them worked for private companies. Most of them had a family with the average of 4 members. The hypotheses testing revealed that the factors of marketing mix in terms of product (ability, gas mileage, and safety) were related to overall satisfaction at the medium level. However, the findings also revealed that the factors of marketing mix in terms of product (image), price, and promotion, and service center were related to the overall satisfaction at the low level.

***Keywords*—**Car Consumers, Factors related, Overall Satisfaction.

I. Introduction

THE four basic human needs from the Thai perspectives includes food, clothes, medicine, and shelter. Nowadays, a car is considered to be the fifth basic need for many Thais. The car market in Thailand is very competitive. Every brand and every dealership often uses marketing campaigns to attract their customers. Even though there may be ups and downs with the economy as well as the price of gas, the trend in the car market seems to increase and new car models keep coming to lure consumers to make decision to buy a new one.

The car market for SUV, for example, in May of 2009, Toyota SUV was the number one selling in the market with 3,027 cars, the second one was ISSZU, and the third one was FORD.

In modern day of Bangkok, cars play an important role for its population. The expanding economy means a high demand for cars. Cars are still the most convenient transportation of middle class and upper class in Bangkok. Public transportation in Bangkok is not sufficient for the demand, therefore, middle class still need to use cars despite of the high price of gas. The high gas price means consumers now consider cars with better gas mileage. Therefore, most automobile makers tend to produce an SUV with better gas mileage but with a comfortable room for 4-6 passengers. Since Toyota SUV gains the highest market share with about 41 percent, it is very interesting to study the success of Toyota in this segment. This research is a quest of understanding the important factors related to the level of satisfaction and is aimed to bring the findings to make car dealers to understand what consumers need and want.

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II. Methodology

A. The Objectives of this Research

1. To compare the level of satisfaction of Toyota SUV of consumers according to the demographics.
2. To study the relationship between attitude of the marketing mix and the overall satisfaction of Toyota SUV consumers.
3. To study the relationship between behavior of using the Toyota SUV and the overall satisfaction of Toyota SUV consumers.

B. Research Hypotheses

Based on literature survey the following hypotheses have been derived:

1. Consumers with different demographic background have different overall satisfaction.
2. The attitude of the marketing mix has a relationship with the overall satisfaction of Toyota SUV consumers.
3. The consumers' behavior of using the Toyota SUV has relationship with the overall satisfaction of Toyota SUV consumers.

C. Research Framework

Research framework was actually drawn from many high impact papers which offer very interesting theories concerning satisfaction and the researcher has chosen Kotler to be used as the main model for designing a questionnaire [1]. In addition, a questionnaire sampling was designed by using ideas from Taro Yamane [2].

D. Sampling Technique

The population used in this study was consumers who already purchased Toyota SUV and used it in the vicinity of Bangkok**.** A total of 400 respondents were selected by using purposive sampling proportional stratified sampling technique. There were four stages in the process of selecting respondents.

Stage one: Set the list of 65 shopping malls around the Bangkok area.

Stage two: A stratified random sampling was used to cover the respondents to make certain that the respondents cover all characteristics of the population.

Stage three: A Quota sampling was used to set 40 samples for 10 shopping malls around Bangkok.

Stage four: A Convenience sampling was used to distribute a questionnaire to the consumers who own a Toyota SUV.

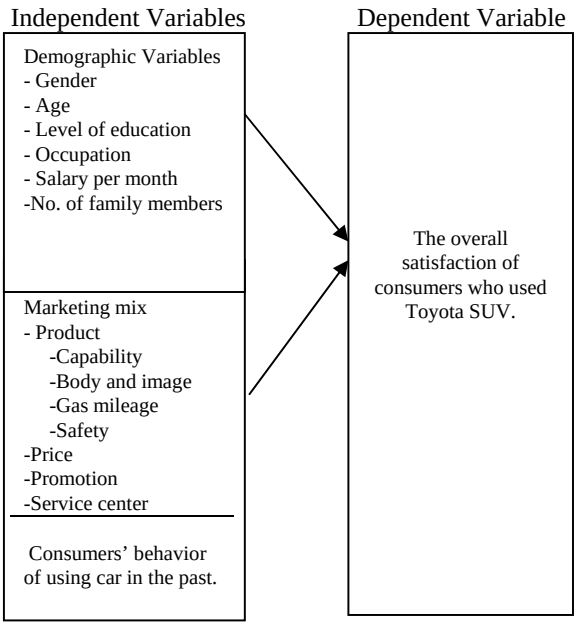


Fig. 1 Represent Conceptual Framework of Research

III. Findings

The findings disclosed that the majority of respondents were male with the age between 31 - 35 years old, 36-40 years, more than 40 years old, and less than or equal to 30 years old. Most of the respondents had an undergraduate degree, were married and live together. The two major occupations of the respondents were working for private companies and for the government. The average income of the respondents was 20,001- 50,000 baht per month. Most of the respondent had about 4 members in their family.

The attitude of the respondents in terms of marketing mix such as product (capability, body and image, gas mileage, and safety), price, promotion, and service center was at the low level. The major decision for choosing Toyota SUV was big space for the whole family. The average number of cars in the family was two. The average number of Toyota cars in the family was one. The respondents rated very high satisfaction for these factors: expectation, value for money, overall satisfaction.

From the hypotheses testing, the attitude of marketing mix for product (capability, gas mileage, and safety) had a relationship to medium level of satisfaction with a 0.01 level of significance. The relation was medium and went to the same direction. The attitude of marketing mix for product (image), price, promotion, and service center had a relationship to level of satisfaction with a 0.01 level of significance.

IV. Discussion

1. The attitude of marketing mix for product (capability, gas mileage, and safety) had a relationship to level of satisfaction with a 0.01 level of significance. This result concurred with the study of Puttanlek which studies the satisfaction of consumers who purchased Honda cars and found that attitude of marketing mix such as product (capability, gas mileage, and safety) had a relationship to level of satisfaction with a 0.01 level of significance [3]. This result also concurred with the study of Penglekpol which studied the level of satisfaction and found that the marketing mix: product, price, and promotion were related to the level of satisfaction [4].
2. The attitude of marketing mix for product (capability, body and image, gas mileage, and safety), price, promotion, and service center had a relationship with the overall satisfaction of Toyota SUV consumers. The result concurred with Suraponsawat who studied the attitude that affected the level of satisfaction of consumers who purchased the 7 seats KIA and found that the attitude of marketing mix for product (capability, body and image, gas mileage, and safety), price, promotion, and service center had relationship with the overall satisfaction [5].

V. Suggestions

1. The marketing manager should bring the result of this study to create a strategic marketing plan to focus on target consumers who are male with the age of 31-35 years old, with an undergraduate degree, working for private companies and has the average income of between 20,001 -30,000 baht.
2. The marketing manager should reduce the down payment and interest rate in order for the target consumers to be able to afford it. In addition, this would be a motivation factor for them to purchase Toyota SUV. Since the findings revealed that the level of satisfaction in terms of price was only medium, there should be a need to reduce the price or make it easy for consumers to pay.
3. The marketing manager should build an awareness of consumers to understand the Toyota SUV is a premium product with high quality to make sure that consumers have a high confidence in purchasing SUV. Moreover, the marketing manager needs to create brand loyalty by creating consumers satisfaction.
4. The marketing manager should do the promotion consistently and use media such as television, radio, and billboard to create an image of big space for 4-6 members of family. The advertising message should focus on the theme of a family car.
5. The marketing manager should focus on modifying the car image to be more luxurious and offer more accessories since the consumers taste has change continuously.

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VI. Limitations and Future Studies

There were some limitations of this paper which came from the small population of consumers who own the Toyota SUV only in the Bangkok area. Therefore, the sample may not be representative of the consumers of Thailand and the results may not be generalized to represent the whole nation. Therefore, future research should use random sampling not only of consumers but also of passengers. The future research also needs to study the broader perspective of marketing mix. Since nowadays, the marketing mix is not just 4ps of price, place, product, and promotion, but may also include the 7ps which are price, place, product, promotion, package, process, and people.

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