

Factors Influencing Thai Customer Decision in Purchasing Electronic Products from China

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Abstract:- With an increased number of internet users in Thailand, mostly people are engaged in using an online platform to purchase goods which result in a rapid growth of cross border e-commerce. Chinese electronic products are one of the most imported good in Thailand. The study mainly conducted on Thai customer in order to find the most influencing factors on Thai customer decision in purchasing Chinese electronic products through an online platform. The study used a primary data and based on a survey on Thai customer response from 399, in Thailand. The questionnaire was used for data collection, Hypothesis test was conducted to verified the research question by using ANOVA and bivariate regression to analyzed the data. The result showed that all four factors such as cost, customer needs, communication and convenience factors have an influenced on Thai customer decision which means the hypothesis is accepted. The study concludes that although all the factors have an influenced on Thai customer decision but the most influencing factor is cost factor. The limitation of this study is the sample collected are within the researcher society such as friends, family and workplace. The finding will be benefited for the business in term of improving on each factor that influenced Thai customer decision.

Keywords:- Customer Decision, Cross Border-E-Commerce, Electronic Products

I. INTRODUCTION

With the rapid evolution of technology has led to significant changes in the world, most of the businesses adapt by integrating e-commerce platforms. Nowadays, every business operates in both online and offline channels, which facilitate on customer convenience level. The online channel has become a standard choice for consumers to purchase goods from various sellers. This practice is particularly advantageous for individuals with busy schedules or those who prefer shopping outside of regular store hours. Research data [1] show that 77.8% of Thailand's population are internet users, with a 0.2% increase in just one year. With the increase use of internet, mainly the customers used the internet in purchasing goods through an online platform. Thai customers do purchase goods both in the country as well as foreign country which leads in cross-border e-commerce, sourcing products from foreign countries. China is known for a large amount of production and goods available with a competitive pricing due to high production capabilities it has become a

key player in this global market. [2] Platforms like Alibaba and Taobao offering a complete end to end online shopping process including product information, ordering, payment, and post-sales services which bring a positive in customer experience. Since cross border e-commerce have developed it enabled customers to access to a quality product with a reasonable price. In addition, online platform also often offered discounts and promotions to drive sales.

Chinese electronic products had improved and result in global recognition. China had led in becoming the main manufacturer in electronic products which includes both branded and non- branded. [3] These products include smartphones, laptops, home appliances, and smart gadgets. Chinese electronic products not only be competitive in affordable price but also in superior quality as compared to European brands. [4] The price of European electronic brands is much higher than Chinese electronic products as a result many customers would like to explored on Chinese electronic products. Chinese electronic product also facilitates customers in a daily life in various aspect as in term of convenience and user friendly

Referring to Thai customer attitude on purchasing the goods online,[5] states that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and trust are the factors that have an influenced on Thai customer decisions. Trust plays a significant role in the online shopping process, as customers must trust on the products they intend to purchase before making payment. Additionally, the online platform also plays a critical role in consideration for Thai consumers as it should be user friendly as well as convenience.

According to international trade data center, [6]the data for 5 years which classified the products categories in which Thailand import from China since 2018 to the current year 2022, the most imported product category is in an electronic product which have the highest value for Thailand's imports. Referring to international trade center data 2022[6], it was states that a type of an electronic product in which Thailand import from China the most is smartphone. The value of importing smartphone is growing rapidly which increasing year by year

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ *Customer Decision*

Customer decision is a process in which the customers considered on various options and they end up in choosing the best one according to their needs and preferences. [7] states the stages that involved in customer decision process like at the beginning stage customer recognized a need then they begin to gathered all the information regarding the products. After customers have an enough information about the product, they started to evaluate the alternatives and then makes their choice according to their needs and the last is a post-purchase evaluation. While making a purchase decision customers may consider on a various factors like price, quality, brand reputation, reviews, and personal preferences when making decisions. [8] states that some factors like social characteristic also have effect on customer decision such as reference group which depends on personal attitudes and opinion. Second, customer's family also plays an important role in influencing their decision in term of their ethnic and society and thirdly the role and status of customer also influenced on customer decision as in organization or institution, the person will have some role in it so when purchasing goods, it will also influence their decision with reference to their image and status in that society. With a various factor that have influenced on customer decision, if a business is able to understand on these factors, then it will become successful in order to meet customer needs.

➤ *Factors Influencing Customer Decision (Marketing 4C's)*

There is various factor which influenced customer decision [9] mentioned the two main factors which have influenced on customer decision such as social factors and personal factors. Social factors influenced the customer decisions in term of culture and buyer reference group in the friend, family and social organization. To some extent, social norms also control and create some limitation as what we should do or not which definitely will have an influenced on their decision. Personal factor likes age, personal preference, attitude and characteristic of customers will have influenced on their decision. In addition, besides personal and social factor [10] have mentioned that marketing mix factors also have influenced on customer decision in term of purchasing the products. [11] The previous 4P's marketing mix factors include price, product quality, promotion and place whereas the new model of marketing mix it change to 4C's including cost, customer needs, communication and convenience.

➤ *Cost*

In marketing mix theory, [12] cost was the inverse version of price in the 4P's traditional marketing mix. Cost is an expense that incurred by a business in producing, promoting and distributing of its products and service whereas the price is the amount that a customer pays for the product and it should be worth the value in terms of customer point of view. [11] mentioned that cost is a very important and crucial factors for the customers in which business needs to understand and when pricing the product cost need to be take into consideration carefully.

- *H1: Cost Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision.*

➤ *Customer Needs*

In an era of new marketing mix, it basically focused on customer needs than a product offered by the company thus its result in shifting from a product oriented to customer oriented. [13] Earlier, the business produced the product according to what they want or they have as a result the customer have less option in choosing a product. As the changes occur, business offered the products according to customer needs in order to satisfied them. [14] Customer needs is defined as desires, requirement and expectation when selecting the product in order to solve their problems. Customer purchase a particular product to solve their problem so with the help of product the customer has a high expectation on a product feature and quality. While customers make a purchase decision, the product feature and quality can also influence their decision.

- *H2: Customer Needs Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision.*

➤ *Communication*

Communication is the new concept of 4C's marketing mix theory which is the inverse of promotion. [12] Communication is a process of exchanging an idea and information between individual or groups. In other word, it is the passing of information from one person to others. Communication in marketing mix can either be a one-way communication as sellers passed the information to buyers through a marketing campaign or advertisement. Other is a two-way communication where buyer and seller have a direct contact for which seller can provide an information regarding the product directly to the buyer and persuade them and at the same time buyer can give a feedback or respond back to the seller. [15] Communication helps the business to maintain a good relationship with a customer and it can influence customer decision in buying products. Therefore, business should build up a good communication skill in order to communicate and reach out to many customers and at the same time help to increase in sales as the product is well known in the market.

- *H3: Communication Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision*

➤ *Convenience*

Convenience refers to the state of being easy to get access or use without causing a trouble or face difficulty. In term of marketing mix, it means the customer can easily access to the products as product are available in mass. In addition, the easy use of platform is also included as the place where customer can complete the buying process. Convenience is the inverse of place in the 4 P's marketing theory. [16] Business after created the product it should make the product available for the customer to buy and placed in a right time. Fast shipping also has a significance on convenience factor as it is considered that it can meet the customer needs on time.

- *H4: Convenience Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision*

➤ *Research Model*

Figure 1. depicts the research model developed in accordance with the study’s objectives.

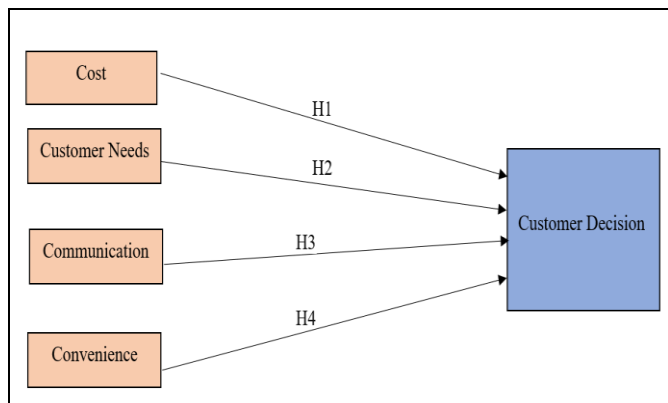


Fig 1 Research Model

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This research aims to find out the most influencing factors on Thai customer’s decision and also to analyzed the independent variables with the dependent variables. A primary data was used in this research. 474 respondents were obtained but only 399 respondents meet the researcher’s criteria. The requirement for respondents is a customer who have experienced in purchasing Chinese electronic products through an online platform. Therefore 399 respondents were surveyed through a questionnaire to find out the responses to those factors. Cronbach’s Alpha was used for reliability analysis. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Hypotheses were tested by applying ANOVA and bivariate regression analysis.

➤ *Data Collection and Sampling*

The primary data was used in this research as the research tools used is a designed questionnaire with the guide from literature review. The questionnaire consists of 2 sections which include section A (Demographic variables) and section B (related to the factors influencing customer decision). For measuring the response, the measurement scale

was a 5-point Likert Scale containing the following metrics: Strong Agree (SA = 5), Agree (A = 4), Neutral (N = 3), Disagree (D = 2) and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1). After the questionnaire was framed, pilot test was conducted with 50 respondents in order to obtained high efficiency result in term of understanding and simplicity of the questionnaire. The result of 50 respondents had positive feedback therefore the same set of questions were used to distribute to another sample. The questionnaire was distributed to other respondents and a total of 399 respondents who have an experienced in purchasing Chinese electronic products through an online platform were obtained as a sample size in this paper.

➤ *Data Analysis*

The SPSS software was used to analyzed the data collected in this study. Descriptive analysis was carried out to present the frequency and percentage of demographic profiles of respondents. In order to carried out hypothesis test, regression and ANOVA were used.

➤ *Demographic Profile*

Referring to Table 1, after the survey period of two months in which data had been collected in China through URL link. According to the data obtain, among 399 respondents, 322 respondents liked to used Chinese electronic products and the rest 77 respondents do not. The number of females is likely more than male which show as female has 176 respondents, male has 159 respondents and the rest did not disclose their gender. Most of the respondents age group are in 25-40 and 41-60 years old. They either have a bachelor’s degree or a master’s degree holders. The majority of respondents are employee and some are doing business. The most of respondent’s income range are 55,001-75,000. In addition, survey also disclosed in term of customer’s preference in choosing Chinese electronic product origin that Thai customers are likely to prefer a Chinese brand (Made in China). And mostly the type of products they purchase is a home-appliances which includes refrigerator, kettle, microwave and dish washer in the questionnaire.

Table 1 Presentation of Respondents’ Demographics

Demographics	Total	Percentage%
Gender		
Male	159	39.7
Female	174	43.9
Others	66	16.5
Age		
18-24	28	7.2
25-40	208	52.1
41-60	154	38.4
More than 60 years	9	2.2
Highest education		
High school	51	12.7
Bachelor degree	205	51.6
Master degree	134	33.4
PHD and above	9	2.2
Occupation		

Student	31	8
Business	162	40.4
Employee	187	46.9
No occupation	19	4.7
Income range (THB)		
Lower than 15,000	32	8.2
15,001-35,000	83	20.7
35,001-55,000	69	17.5
55,001-75,000	116	28.9
Above 75,000	99	24.7
Marital Status		
Single	230	57.9
Married	169	42.1

Source: Data Collected, 2023

➤ *Descriptive Statistics*

According to the mean value and standard deviation in Table 2, it is revealed that all four variables have a significant impact on customer decision. However, by comparing to the other variables, the Cost factor have the most significantly impact on the Thai’s customer.

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis of Influencing Factors 4C’s

Item	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Customer Decision	399	3.67	0.980	0.967
Cost Attribute	399	3.82	0.818	0.678
Customer needs Attribute	399	3.74	1.135	1.290
Communication Attribute	399	3.24	1.012	1.024
Convenience Attribute	399	3.32	0.963	0.928

Source: Researcher’s Analysis using SPSS, 2023

➤ *Reliability Test*

The reliability of the research instrument was tested through the use of the Cronbach alpha reliability procedure. The instrument is said to be reliable if a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above is obtained (JF, 2014) Other authors have argued that the reliability score can be 0.6. The

data gathered by the researcher were analyzed for reliability using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, version 23). Table 3, According to Cronbach’s alpha, the data obtained had an internal consistency and reliability that ranged from .703 to .817. This indicates that the data had high internal consistency and reliability.

Table 3 Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient Reliability Estimate

Variables	No of Items	Reliability
Cost Attribute	5	0.817
Customer needs Attribute	5	0.781
Communication Attribute	5	0.703
Convenience Attribute	5	0.775

Source: Researcher’s Analysis using SPSS, 2023

➤ *Bivariate Regression*

This study consists of a dependent variable (Customer Decision) and four independent variables (Cost, Customer needs, Communication and Convenience Factors). The Bivariate Regression is used to explain the variability of another variable in which the relation of two variables is presented by a straight line on a scatter plot.

Table 4. shows the standard deviation-model summary estimation, which reveals that the first independent variable, cost factors, is a significant predictor in term of customer decision. which indicates that it has a significant variance in customer decision. The model is also significant based on the values of F, p, and R2

Table 4 Model Summary of the Cost on Customer Decision

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F Change	Significance F
1	0.454a	0.206	0.204	0.747	103.229	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cost

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Decision

Source: Researcher’s Analysis using SPSS, 2023

Table 5. shows the standard deviation-model summary estimation, which reveals that the second independent variable, customer needs factors, is a significant predictor in term of customer decision. which indicates that it has a significant variance in customer decision. The model is also significant based on the values of F, p, and R2

Table 5 Model Summary of the Customer needs on Customer Decision

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F Change	Significance F
2	0.435a	0.189	0.187	0.963	92.712	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer needs
 b. Dependent Variable: Customer Decision
 Source: Researcher’s analysis using SPSS, 2023

Table 6. shows the standard deviation-model summary estimation, which reveals that the third independent variable, communication factors, is a significant predictor in term of customer decision. which indicates that it has a significant variance in customer decision. The model is also significant based on the values of F, p, and R2

Table 6 Model Summary of the Communication on Customer Decision

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F Change	Significance F
3	0.217a	0.047	0.045	0.992	19.571	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Communication
 b. Dependent Variable: Customer Decision
 Source: Researcher’s analysis using SPSS, 2023

Table 7 shows the standard deviation-model summary estimation, which reveals that the fourth independent variable, convenience factors, is a significant predictor in term of customer decision. which indicates that it has a significant variance in customer decision. The model is also significant based on the values of F, p, and R2

Table 7 Model Summary of the Convenience on Customer Decision

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F Change	Significance F
4	0.272a	0.074	0.072	0.926	31.764	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Convenience
 b. Dependent Variable: Customer Decision
 Source: Researcher’s analysis using SPSS, 2023

➤ *Test of Hypothesis*

In order to test the effect of the independent variables (cost, customer needs, communication and convenience) on the dependent variable (Customer decision), there is a need to make some assumptions to enhance the data analysis. ANOVA model was used to determine the independent variable whether or not it significantly differed. By using

ANOVA, it is signified that when customer plan to purchase Chinese electronic product through online platform, their decision is influenced by various factors such as cost, customer needs, communication and convenience etc. The ANOVA of each of the four regression predictor models is summarized in Table 8.

Table 8 Variance Analysis (ANOVA) of the Variables

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	57.611	1	57.611	103.229	.000
Residual	221.562	397	0.558		
Total	279.173	398			
2 Regression	85.969	1	85.969	92.712	.000
Residual	368.126	397	0.927		
Total	454.095	398			
3 Regression	19.258	1	19.258	19.571	.000
Residual	390.652	397	0.984		
Total	409.910	398			
4 Regression	27.215	1	27.215	31.764	.000
Residual	340.144	397	0.857		
Total	367.358	398			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Decision
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Cost Factors
 c. Predictors: (Constant), Customer needs Factors
 d. Predictors: (Constant), Communication Factors
 e. Predictors: (Constant), Convenience Factors
 Source: Researcher’s analysis using SPSS, 2023

Table 9 Coefficients Regression of the Variables

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std.Error			
(Constant)	0.609	0.131		4.647	.000
Cost	0.535	0.053	0.454	10.160	.000
Customer needs	0.415	0.043	0.435	9.629	.000
Communication	0.212	0.048	0.217	4.424	.000
Convenience	0.195	0.050	0.193	3.922	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Decision

Source: Researcher’s analysis using SPSS, 2023

The value of coefficient regression of four variables are presented in Table 9. It is shown from values of Beta, t, and p that all four independent variables significantly influenced customer decision. This indicates that when Thai customers plan to purchase Chinese electronic products, their decision are affected by various factors such as cost factors, customer needs factors, communication factors and convenience factors.

➤ *Below is the Hypothesis Test and its Result*

- *H1 Cost Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision*

Hypothesis 1 is accepted. This signifies that cost factors have an influenced-on customer decision. Thai customers are more concerned on cost factor because of the product should be affordable and valued for money in order bring them satisfaction.

- *H2 Customer Needs Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision*

Hypothesis 2 is accepted. This signifies that customer needs factors influenced on customer decision

- *H3 Communication Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision*

Hypothesis 3 is accepted. This signifies that communication factors influenced on customer decision

- *H4 Convenience Factor have an Influence on Customer Decision*

Hypothesis 4 is accepted. This signifies that convenience factors influenced on customer decision

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to the dataset collected on Thai customers, it was found that all the four factors based on marketing mix such as cost, customer needs, communication and convenience have influenced on customer decision. This signifies that when Thai customer plan to purchase Chinese electronic products through an online platform, they considered on these four factors. Referring to a descriptive analysis, it was shown that the most influencing factors on customer decision is cost. However Thai customer does take cost into an account in term of purchase consideration. According to [17] finding it was found that cost had influenced Thai’s customer decision at a very high level they would consider to buy a cheaper price in which Chinese electronic products offered than a higher price of other foreign

country product also it was states that for some customers they would consider a reasonable price of a good quality product. Second factor that Thai customer would consider is a customer needs as shown in the Table 2. then followed by convenience factor and finally is the communication factor.

The hypothesis test was carried out through a regression analysis to measure whether independent variables have a significant on dependent variable (customer decision). As a result, it was found that all independent variables (cost, customer needs, communication and convenience) have a significantly influenced on customer decision.

Hypothesis 1 the study was accepted and signifies that cost factors have an influenced-on customer decision. According to the survey, most of the respondent have a strongly agreed on cost factor for the value of money and also affordable price for purchasing Chinese electronic products. With a limited amount of income distributed most of the customer would prefer the products which is worth their money spend in order to bring them satisfaction. [18]

Hypothesis 2 the study was accepted and signifies that customer needs factors have an influenced-on customer decision. Referring to the survey collected, Thai customer would make their decision in purchasing Chinese electronic products accordance with their needs and it should meet up to their requirement and standard in order to reach a high satisfaction level. To some extent, they also purchased Chinese electronic product because of its feature and function. [19] also explained that meeting customer needs while making the product is one of the most important key factors for a business to become successful.

Hypothesis 3 the study was accepted and signifies that communication factors have an influenced-on customer decision. The study findings suggested that some of Thai customer’ decision depends upon the advertisement shown by the company and also the information regarding the products provided. [20] In addition, the promotion campaign such as gift voucher, free sample and discount also have an influenced-on customer decision in choosing Chinese electronic products. Thai customer when comes to choosing Chinese electronic product they would compare different brands of product according to cost and their needs then the next factor would be discount and promotions available in order to make decision for a high satisfaction level.

Hypothesis 4 the study was accepted and signifies that convenience factors have an influenced-on customer decision. An outcome of the present study show that Thai customer tends to considered convenience factor when buying Chinese electronic products because of its availability of product on an online website and the user- friendly website also affect their decision. In addition, while purchasing on online website the customer not only considered the product availability but also the fast shipping was also taken into account for decision making. [21] Most of the customer would prefer a fast-shipping service as they decided to purchase because of their needs so they would not like to wait for a long period of time in order to experience the goods.

Based on the result of study, all the factors tend to have an influenced on Thai customer decision whether more or less it would be suggested that the business should take into consideration of these 4 factors such as cost, customer needs, communication and convenience factors in order to increase customer satisfaction level.

➤ *Implication of Study*

The present study of Thai adult customer will significantly help the business to understand more on Thai customer behavior while making decision in purchasing Chinese electronic products. It also helps the Chinese electronic company in China to understand Thai customer well. In addition, this study finds out which factors based on marketing mix do influence Thai customer decision the most. The outcome of the study will also help the company to considered and focus more on which factors do influence customer decision the most in order to improve the company sells. As a result, if company works on these factors clearly then it will help them in the future direction. The study also contributes to the development of economy in the country as well as foreign investment.

V. CONCLUSION

In recent years, Thai customers preferred to buy an electronic product from China due to various factors so the research was carried out to study furthermore as on which factors it have influenced on Thai customer decision. In the study, four factors including cost, customer needs, communication and convenience factors were choose based on marketing mix theory. As a result, all the four factors have an influenced on Thai customer decision as more or less by conducting ANOVA model. Apart from that, the descriptive analysis was used to find out the most influencing factor on Thai customer decision.

According to the result, cost factor is the most influencing factor on Thai customer decision this is because in term of purchasing Chinese electronic product, Thai customer do consider cost as the first factor as while considering cost they think of two aspects as one is value for money and the second is affordable price. When the two aspects reached customer satisfaction then they would purchase the product.

Second factor after cost that influenced on Thai customer decision is a customer needs factor. In this Thai customer do consider on a product quality according to their needs and requirement. Customer needs includes friendly and convenient used of the product and because of its unique function Thai customer choose Chinese electronic product.

Third factor that influenced Thai customer decision is convenience factor. Thai customers consider convenience factor as availability of the products and also the user-friendly online platform influenced on Thai customer decision.

The last factor Thai customer considered is communication factor. In the communication factor, it included the information provided to the customer, the advertisement that reached to the customer and also the marketing promotion and campaign. These all including under communication factor have an impact on Thai customer decision.

Based on the study, it helps to clarify the four crucial factors that influenced Thai customer decision. However, there is a limitation on the study as one of the main is the sample collected is within a small group of researcher's society such as workplace, family and friends so for further improvement the future researcher can expand the sample to different group of people in Thailand.

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